

Building Future-Forward Tech Teams

Technology Skills and Solutions to
Drive Business and IT Transformation



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The Tech Skills Shortage: A Growth and Transformation Inhibitor

Tech leaders today face a critical challenge: They must move fast to keep pace with rapid technology advancements and evolving business demands. Yet, they're hindered by a persistent shortage of skilled tech and IT talent that threatens to delay or derail their strategic priorities.

According to Robert Half research, a majority of technology leaders are expanding their teams to keep up with company growth, but it remains a challenge to find skilled professionals. The inability to staff open roles is leading to missed deadlines or extended project timelines for many teams. Prolonged staffing challenges can also impact team morale and undermine efforts to retain employees.

This report expands on findings from our 2024 edition of Building Future-Forward Tech Teams and can help technology and business leaders succeed at creating highly adaptable teams ready to support digital initiatives. Our new research includes data and insights from Robert Half, our subsidiary and global consulting firm [Protiviti](#), and industry experts. It examines the challenges your peers are facing and how they're navigating them in 2025.

A particular focus of this report is the continued need for tech leaders to close skills gaps and build next-generation teams to help their organizations reduce technical debt, modernize IT operations and drive digital transformation. Many teams today are short on skill sets that are crucial for not only everyday IT needs but also more complex initiatives.

HIRING: BY THE NUMBERS

74% of technology leaders with hiring plans are recruiting to support company growth.

87% of technology leaders report difficulty finding skilled candidates.

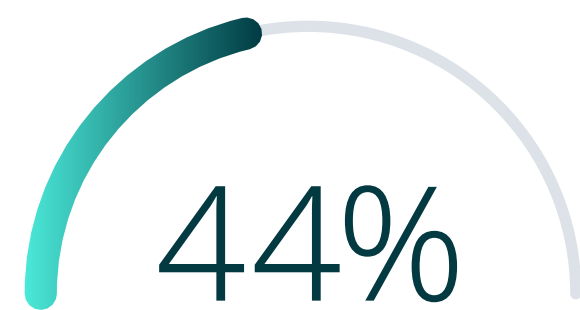
45% have seen staffing challenges negatively impact projects.

Source: Robert Half survey of more than 250 technology leaders in the U.S.

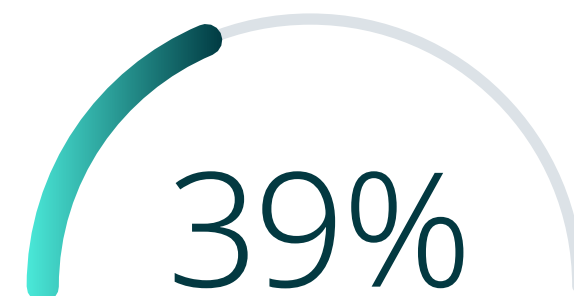
BUILDING FUTURE-FORWARD TECH TEAMS

Where Technology Leaders Say Skills Gaps Are Most Evident

76% of technology leaders report a skills gap in their department, most notably in:



AI, machine
learning and
data science



IT operations
and support



Cybersecurity
and privacy



Technology
process
automation



Software and
web applications
development



Cloud architecture
and operations

“The skills needed to operate effectively in an AI environment—from understanding prompt engineering to developing content to training AI agents—are no longer the domain of data scientists. They are critical skills for many technology professionals, and soon knowledge and use of AI will be needed for almost every type of job.”

James Johnson

Executive Vice President and Chief Technology Officer
Robert Half


Source: Robert Half survey of more than 250 technology leaders in the U.S.

From Security to AI: Top Tech Priorities and Challenges for 2025

Top priorities for tech leaders in 2025 reflect a dual focus: increasing business resilience and effectiveness through improved risk management and operational efficiency, and embracing emerging technologies like AI. Each of the priorities outlined on the next page creates new talent needs or widens existing tech skills gaps.

In this chapter, and elsewhere in this report, we offer our take on how these and other priorities and challenges are closely connected. Organizational approaches will vary based on the overall scope and importance of leaders' priorities, what their business hopes to achieve by accomplishing them, how much time and resources are devoted to these efforts, and how tech leaders choose to staff these initiatives.

Company size, for example, plays a significant role. If you are a tech leader at a small or midsize business, you may need to close skills gaps that could undermine your organization's ability to operate reliable and secure IT functions, safeguard data and protect users. Or, if you are working at a large enterprise, you might need to hire an array of specialized talent—and enlist additional resources—to help manage and resolve technical debt and support digital transformation.



"There is no endgame in cybersecurity. Organizations must continuously adapt their staffing strategies to stay ahead of evolving threats and take a deliberate approach to assembling the right mix of tools and resources to safeguard data and systems while keeping business priorities on track."

Michael Monday

Managing Director, Security and Privacy
Protiviti

CHAPTER 1: FROM SECURITY TO AI: TOP TECH PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR 2025

While some of these technology priorities and challenges may not be relevant to your organization today, these trends can help you understand what other businesses are focusing on and how that impacts the demand for skilled talent in the labor market.



Not only does the **security of IT systems and information** top the leaderboard of priorities again this year, but managing **cybersecurity threats** also ranks high among the challenges for tech leaders. According to the 2025 edition of Protiviti's [Executive Perspectives on Top Risks Survey](#), cyber threats represent the second-highest near-term risk for business leaders globally. And they're the No. 1 long-term operational risk when looking out 10 years to 2035.

Keeping up with rapidly evolving threats, from ransomware to phishing scams, requires constant vigilance, advanced cybersecurity measures and skilled talent. However, cybersecurity and privacy are areas where technology departments across industries are still experiencing significant skills gaps.



As businesses pursue digital transformation, **AI, machine learning and automation initiatives** are central to driving competitive advantage. AI and machine learning can help organizations enable real-time, data-driven decision making, optimize operations and create highly personalized customer experiences. Automation plays a crucial role in enhancing overall productivity, increasing efficiency and reducing manual work, and while it can be implemented independently, it is often used in conjunction with AI and machine learning to create intelligent workflows.

Embedding these technologies into existing systems and processes and scaling them across business functions are complex undertakings, requiring specialized skills and robust infrastructure. Notably, the tech leaders surveyed for this report identified **AI integration** as their most significant IT-related challenge for 2025.

TECH LEADERS' PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR 2025

PRIORITIES

1. Security of IT systems and information
2. AI, machine learning and automation initiatives
3. AI governance
4. Technology modernization
5. Cloud initiatives

CHALLENGES

1. AI integration
2. Cybersecurity threats
3. IT budget constraints
4. Employee technology training
5. Infrastructure enabling remote productivity and collaboration

Source: Robert Half survey of more than 250 technology leaders in the U.S.

CHAPTER 1: FROM SECURITY TO AI: TOP TECH PRIORITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR 2025



As the use of AI grows, along with the need for organizations to practice **AI governance**, demand is rising for professionals who specialize in AI ethics, compliance and regulatory affairs. AI governance requires professionals with expertise in the frameworks, policies and processes a business uses to help ensure it takes an ethical, transparent and responsible approach to developing and deploying AI tools and systems.



Digital transformation projects and **technology modernization** often go hand in hand because legacy tools, systems and processes can hinder innovation and efficiency. These efforts are complex and sometimes require years to complete. So, it's not surprising to see tech leaders' continued focus in this area.

While critical for organizations to stay competitive and responsive to market demands, modernizing technology and addressing the issue of technical debt can be resource-intensive and disruptive. Tech leaders must balance the costs of updating systems with the need to meet the business's ongoing operational demands. This pressure is reflected in tech leaders' ranking of **IT budget constraints** among their top five IT-related challenges for 2025.



Rounding out the list of top technology priorities for 2025 are **cloud initiatives**, including enterprise data projects. Cloud technology remains foundational to companies' efforts to grow and scale their operations and improve IT processes and support functions. It also increases agility and speed to market, enables and secures remote and hybrid teams, reduces infrastructure costs, and delivers better customer experiences. Also, many cloud and data projects support other tech priorities, like AI, machine learning and automation initiatives, and technology modernization.



Technical Debt: The Growing Burden Businesses Can't Ignore

Technical debt doesn't look the same for every organization. It can build up when companies prioritize quick fixes or short-term solutions over more flexible, scalable approaches that require more time, budget or planning upfront. For some organizations, technical debt might stem from legacy systems that haven't kept pace with business needs. For others, it could come from developing custom tools in house that require ongoing maintenance, updates and optimization, all of which contribute to technical debt over time.

Left unchecked, technical debt can drain resources and become a significant impediment to progress on digital transformation, including implementing AI, cybersecurity solutions and cloud platforms. It also increases risk by adding complexity to the IT environment and making it more challenging for businesses to adapt to change and deliver products and services to market.

Deploying sophisticated capabilities like AI, machine learning and cloud requires clean and organized data and seamless integration with existing systems and processes. Half of tech leaders said they expect to encounter implementation complexity as they try to move ahead with new projects in 2025.

Another Tech Modernization Challenge: Lack of Specialized Skills

Modernizing technology and addressing the issue of technical debt demands skills in areas like AI development, cloud architecture and cybersecurity. However, many organizations struggle to recruit and retain professionals with these specialized skills, and 45% of technology leaders said they're concerned that an insufficient supply of skilled talent could impede their ability to implement new technologies this year.



of technology leaders cited technical debt as a major obstacle to achieving their strategic priorities in 2025.

Source: Robert Half survey of more than 250 technology leaders in the U.S.

"Companies need a strong IT foundation to realize the full value of new technology innovations. Nobody can afford to wait until every piece of tech debt is resolved. Successful leaders strike the right balance between today's realities and tomorrow's possibilities: thinking strategically and keeping an eye out on the horizon while managing risk and running the business."

Anjana Harve

Executive Vice President and Chief Information Officer
BJ's Wholesale Club, Inc.

CHAPTER 2: TECHNICAL DEBT: THE GROWING BURDEN BUSINESSES CAN'T IGNORE

These concerns are not limited to technology leaders. The C-suite is worried about tech skills gaps, too. Protiviti's Executive Perspectives on Top Risks Survey notes that three of the top 10 near-term risks relate to AI, including how the adoption of AI and other emerging technologies requires new skill sets in short supply. A related risk—the ability to attract, develop and retain top talent—ranked third.

Training tech teams to work effectively with emerging technologies can help bridge skills gaps. But this takes time, and technology leaders often need immediate expertise for critical projects. This tension between long-term skills development and immediate project needs explains why tech leaders rank employee technology training among their top five challenges this year.

Another skills-related struggle for many organizations is recruiting and retaining professionals who possess the expertise to work with legacy systems that the business needs or wants to maintain. Because many industries still depend on these systems, professionals with these skill sets can be challenging to find and command higher salaries. This could draw from a company's hiring budget and undermine its ability to compete effectively for talent with future-forward skills.

By prioritizing technology modernization, tech leaders and their teams can help their organizations achieve benefits such as reduced costs, improved efficiency, enhanced agility and a stronger competitive edge. Importantly, modernizing IT and eliminating technical debt are critical steps in clearing the path for effective digital transformation.

SKILL SETS FOR REDUCING TECHNICAL DEBT

Addressing technical debt takes more than updating outdated systems. Below are key skills technology teams need to ensure long-term stability as they evolve:

- **Code modernization:** Proficiency in refactoring techniques, agile development practices and design patterns to streamline and improve outdated code
- **Language versatility:** The ability to work with both legacy programming languages (e.g., COBOL, C) and modern ones (e.g., Python, Go) to ensure smooth transitions
- **DevOps and CI/CD:** Experience with continuous integration and delivery pipelines to automate testing and deployment
- **Testing and QA:** Strong knowledge of unit, integration and automated testing to maintain stability during software updates
- **Collaboration and communication:** Ability to align and gain buy-in from stakeholders and explain technical concepts effectively to nontechnical audiences

CHAPTER 3

Talent Strategies for Ongoing Digital Transformation

Most C-level executives recognize that digital transformation is no longer a choice but a business imperative. They understand the company must digitize its operations and many products and services so it can adapt quickly to shifting market demands, address data integrity issues to deploy and use AI confidently, and enhance customer experiences to drive growth and unlock new revenue streams.

For most organizations, the primary forces fueling digital transformation are diverse but interconnected:



AI and machine learning: These technologies help power digital transformation by automating repetitive tasks, enhancing data-driven decision making and enabling predictive insights. By harnessing AI and machine learning effectively, businesses can accelerate innovation, improve risk management and find new opportunities to optimize their operations.



Cloud engineering: The shift to cloud-based tools and strategies is transforming how businesses store, process and protect their data. Cloud solutions provide scalability, cost savings and enhanced collaboration capabilities, especially for businesses with distributed teams or evolving infrastructure needs. They also enable faster innovation, allowing businesses to rapidly adopt emerging technologies like AI, machine learning and advanced analytics.



“The expectation of time to results has changed for digital transformation projects. Teams need to work collaboratively, fail fast, and adjust and deliver value quickly. And they must do this knowing they need to be ready to adapt to the next wave of technological change.”

Johan van der Walt

Managing Director, Technology, Strategy and Architecture
Protiviti

CHAPTER 3: TALENT STRATEGIES FOR ONGOING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



Data ecosystems: Organizations of all sizes are consolidating vast datasets to improve data quality, broaden internal access to data and use tools like generative AI to surface insights. Building a modern data ecosystem is essential for data-driven decision making. A well-designed data foundation helps businesses predict trends, optimize processes and deliver more personalized customer experiences—giving companies of any size a competitive edge.



Security and compliance: As companies expand and accelerate transformation, their increasing reliance on cloud computing, AI and data ecosystems requires them to safeguard sensitive information against ransomware, malicious insiders and other security threats. Regulatory compliance and data privacy are also integral to digital transformation efforts. With laws and industry-specific mandates tightening data governance requirements, businesses must implement robust security frameworks to protect customer data and maintain trust.

While these drivers all create a sense of urgency for organizations to transform digitally, the reality is that fundamental change—whereby companies become cloud-first, AI-enabled and data-driven—can take years to achieve. And in many respects, transformation never ends because the technology and business landscapes constantly evolve. That’s why it’s vital for tech leaders and other project stakeholders to plan and staff digital initiatives with an eye toward the future. Digital transformation is a continuous process—and for many businesses, transformation never ends.

Tech Implementation Priorities and Challenges Across the Enterprise

Robert Half’s research highlights how tech leaders and their teams are instrumental in supporting company-wide digital transformation. Business leaders outside of IT shared their technology priorities and challenges.

PRIORITY TECHNOLOGIES

Customer relationship management systems

43%

AI or machine learning

42%

Data analytics tools

36%

Cybersecurity solutions

35%

Enterprise resource planning systems

33%

Project management software

32%

TOP BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTING NEW TECH

Cost

51%

Lack of staff with the necessary skills

48%

Implementation complexity

39%

Source: Robert Half survey of more than 1,400 business leaders in finance and accounting, marketing and creative, legal, administrative and customer support, nonclinical healthcare, and human resources in the U.S.

CHAPTER 3: TALENT STRATEGIES FOR ONGOING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The Evolving Roles of PMOs and Business Analysts in Digital Transformation

Project management offices (PMOs), project managers and business analysts are crucial players in helping move digital transformation initiatives from planning to implementation. As organizations take on more complex digital projects, the roles of these groups are expanding and evolving.



PMOs are becoming more embedded in organizations so they can promote cross-functional collaboration and prevent teams from operating in silos. A decentralized PMO is often more agile and responsive to shifting priorities in fast-paced digital environments than a traditional or centralized PMO. Many PMOs can also advise on project management best practices and resource allocation.



Project managers are taking on more dynamic and strategic roles. In many organizations, they are evolving into scrum masters or agile coaches who help drive continuous improvement on digital projects. Rather than simply managing timelines and deliverables, they actively promote cross-functional collaboration and ensure teams stay aligned on business objectives and customer needs.



Business analysts no longer focus on just collecting and documenting project requirements from stakeholders. They're now helping set the stage for digital project success by deeply analyzing organizational challenges and identifying process inefficiencies. In many cases, business analysts are expanding their influence by taking on product owner-like responsibilities, such as defining features and prioritizing development efforts.

In these expanded roles, PMOs, project managers and business analysts can help tech leaders and their teams drive continuous improvement, strategic alignment and business agility across the enterprise on all types of digital transformation projects, from cloud migration to AI integration.

IN-DEMAND SKILLS, CERTIFICATIONS FOR PROJECT MANAGERS AND BUSINESS ANALYSTS ON DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS

KEY SKILLS

- **Agile project management:** Familiarity with Scrum, Kanban, SAFe® and iterative delivery
- **Strategic planning and stakeholder alignment:** Connecting business goals to technical execution
- **Data analysis and reporting:** Using key metrics to measure project success and ROI
- **Change management:** Facilitating the smooth adoption of new tools and processes
- **Technology fluency:** Understanding cloud and AI fundamentals and project-relevant software
- **Risk and compliance:** Mitigating security, legal and governance challenges

IN-DEMAND CERTIFICATIONS

- Agile Analysis Certification (AAC)
- Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP)
- Certified Change Management Professional (CCMP)
- Certified Product Owner (CPO, ICP-APO, CSPO, IIBA-CPOA)
- Certified ScrumMaster (CSM)
- PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)
- PRINCE2 Foundation/Practitioner
- Project Management Professional (PMP)
- SAFe® for Architects (ARCH)

CHAPTER 3: TALENT STRATEGIES FOR ONGOING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Sourcing Talent for Digital Transformation Projects

Project scope and complexity, stakeholder requirements, and business priorities are all factors in how companies decide to staff their digital transformation initiatives. It's important to explore various sourcing channels, such as engaging domestic, nearshore or offshore resources, to determine the best approach for project success.

High-stakes projects—like those involving AI integration—demand technical expertise as well as an understanding of a company's mission and values. And while nearshore or offshore resources may excel in technical execution, onshore professionals often shine in their ability to align with enterprise business strategy.

Some companies opt for a hybrid approach when planning digital transformation projects, leveraging a combination of onshore, nearshore or offshore resources. For example, they may tap:

- **Onshore teams** to manage and execute projects that require heavy precision, frequent collaboration and cultural sensitivity
- **Nearshore or offshore teams** to handle repetitive tasks like coding, testing or system maintenance

This model allows organizations to gain cost efficiencies on transformation projects while maintaining high standards for quality and alignment with business objectives.



Future-Focused Resource Planning for Enterprise Systems Projects

Enterprise systems, like ERP, CRM and business intelligence systems, are central to digital transformation and IT modernization—and are evolving rapidly. By becoming more cloud-based and modular, these systems are more flexible, scalable and cost-efficient than traditional on-premises solutions. Today's systems also integrate AI, machine learning and advanced analytics, allowing businesses to adapt more quickly to evolving market conditions and advance their digital transformation goals.

As organizations seek to modernize ERP and other enterprise systems, the importance of strategic technology resource planning—from tools to talent—can't be overstated. Companies are increasingly looking for customizable and cost-effective solutions to maximize and evolve their enterprise systems' capabilities. According to our research, 75% of tech leaders anticipate demand for employees with ERP expertise and skills to increase in 2025. And 92% report they are already facing challenges hiring for roles that require ERP expertise and skills.

Top Obstacles When Hiring for Enterprise Systems Projects:

1. Lack of candidates with specific ERP module experience
2. High salary expectations
3. Difficulty assessing candidates' skills



"Whether it's an enterprise modernization or transformation project, tech leaders need to comprehensively understand the proposed initiative, the problem it is meant to solve, and how it will impact employees and customers. This requires standing back and looking at things through a business lens first—and then, applying technical expertise."

Bryan Emerson
Chief Information Officer
TEC Equipment

CHAPTER 4: FUTURE-FOCUSED RESOURCE PLANNING FOR ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS PROJECTS

Benefiting From Consultants' Expertise on ERP Projects

By working with skilled consultants, businesses can access valuable insights and guidance throughout their enterprise systems projects. Many organizations rely on these professionals during all phases of the ERP system life cycle, from pre-implementation to maintenance and evolution. The contributions of skilled consultants can include:

- 1. Providing expert guidance** to recommend tailored approaches, and offer best practices for selecting, implementing and optimizing ERP solutions while helping organizations plan and manage change effectively
- 2. Creating and executing training and upskilling programs** to address specific ERP module gaps and assist with change management
- 3. Developing scalable solutions** that are cost-efficient and evolve with the business to suit future needs

Organizations of all sizes also look to talent solutions providers to help them assemble the contract professionals and permanent hires to fulfill their ERP technology staffing needs.

TOP CHALLENGES THROUGHOUT THE ERP LIFE CYCLE

Upskilling employees

49%

Implementing data analytics and governance

43%

Migrating data

39%

Managing costs and budget constraints

39%

Quantifying ROI

33%

Source: Robert Half survey of more than 240 technology leaders in the U.S. who use enterprise systems in their organization

ERP PHASES WHERE TECH LEADERS WOULD MOST BENEFIT FROM USING OUTSIDE SERVICE PROVIDERS

Integration

55%

Optimization

49%

Implementation

48%

Customization

43%

Source: Robert Half survey of more than 250 technology leaders in the U.S.

CHAPTER 4: FUTURE-FOCUSED RESOURCE PLANNING FOR ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS PROJECTS

Future-Focused Technology Resource Planning

Taking a proactive, forward-thinking approach to project resource planning can help overcome ERP life cycle challenges. In addition to forging relationships with skilled consultants and specialized talent solutions providers, technology leaders and other drivers of enterprise systems projects should strive to identify future skills requirements. Staying on top of industry trends to determine the firm's emerging needs and investing proactively in relevant training can help.

Top professionals value the ability to work with the latest technology. Giving team members access to the tools and knowledge they need to more readily adapt to technological change and new processes is essential—not only for talent recruitment, but also retention. And by using advancements in AI, machine learning and automation to enhance enterprise systems capabilities, tech and IT teams can focus more on strategic work instead of tedious and time-consuming manual tasks.

CURRENT AND FUTURE-FORWARD ERP SKILLS IN HIGH DEMAND

- Advanced proficiency in ERP platforms like Microsoft Dynamics 365, SAP, Oracle and Workday
- Data analytics and reporting capabilities
- Business process optimization expertise
- Integration of AI and automation tools within ERP systems
- Cloud-based enterprise system management skills

ADDITIONAL TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR ERP INITIATIVES

- [From Complexity to Clarity: Best Practices for ERP Transformation Projects](#)
- [Building a High-Performing ERP Project Team: Roles and Skills That Help Drive Success](#)

CHAPTER 5

Developing Your Next-Gen Tech Team

Building a next-generation tech team requires more than hiring skilled professionals. You also need to invest in the professional evolution and retention of your staff. Taking the four steps outlined in this chapter can help ensure your employees will be well prepared to meet future changes, demands and risks head-on.

1. Foster a Learning-Driven Work Environment

Encourage and empower your team to build expertise in emerging technologies by offering structured learning opportunities that align with both individual career aspirations and your company's business objectives. Provide employees access to certification programs, hands-on workshops and online courses, particularly in high-demand fields such as AI, cloud computing and cybersecurity.

Invite your team members to upskill or reskill—and give them the time and resources to do so. It will help them grow professionally so they can step into new roles, mitigating your department's critical skills gaps. Consider creating mentorship programs, including traditional, reverse and peer-to-peer arrangements, to promote knowledge transfer and skills building.



CHAPTER 5: DEVELOPING YOUR NEXT-GEN TECH TEAM

2. Encourage Experimentation and Cross-Departmental Collaboration

Inspire your team to view problems—like the need to eliminate technical debt or overcome ERP life cycle challenges—as opportunities to drive innovation and growth for your department and the broader business. As a tech leader, you can help promote this mindset by encouraging experimentation and thinking outside the box, rewarding your employees for taking the initiative to solve problems by trying new approaches, and normalizing occasional missteps as part of the learning process.

Cross-departmental collaboration can help inspire this type of thinking. It's also essential for accomplishing technology priorities and projects that drive business success. Prepare your tech and IT staff to partner with teams in other departments by exposing them to different functions and roles within the organization. Strategic cross-training can enhance their understanding of how various departments work together. That, in turn, can improve coordination and efficiency on digital projects.

3. Recruit for Potential, Not Just Experience

Hiring high-potential candidates with an adaptive mindset, intellectual curiosity and a proven track record of learning is another strategy to work around the talent shortage and invest in your department's future. Emerging technologies often demand that tech professionals lean into change and acquire new skills on the fly. Employees who embrace the opportunity to pivot and innovate when needed will be invaluable to your team over the long term.

To identify high-potential candidates, focus on their problem-solving abilities, willingness to take initiative and history of tackling new challenges. Behavioral interview questions and scenario-based assessments can also help you gauge how a candidate has navigated change in the past. You can broaden your talent pool further by looking beyond traditional requirements and prioritizing candidates with transferable skills.

“Effective leaders build future-ready teams by promoting continuous learning, nurturing potential, and prioritizing talent recruitment and retention. They inspire and challenge their employees to take risks and turn ideas into outcomes.”

George Denlinger

President of Technology Talent Solutions
Robert Half

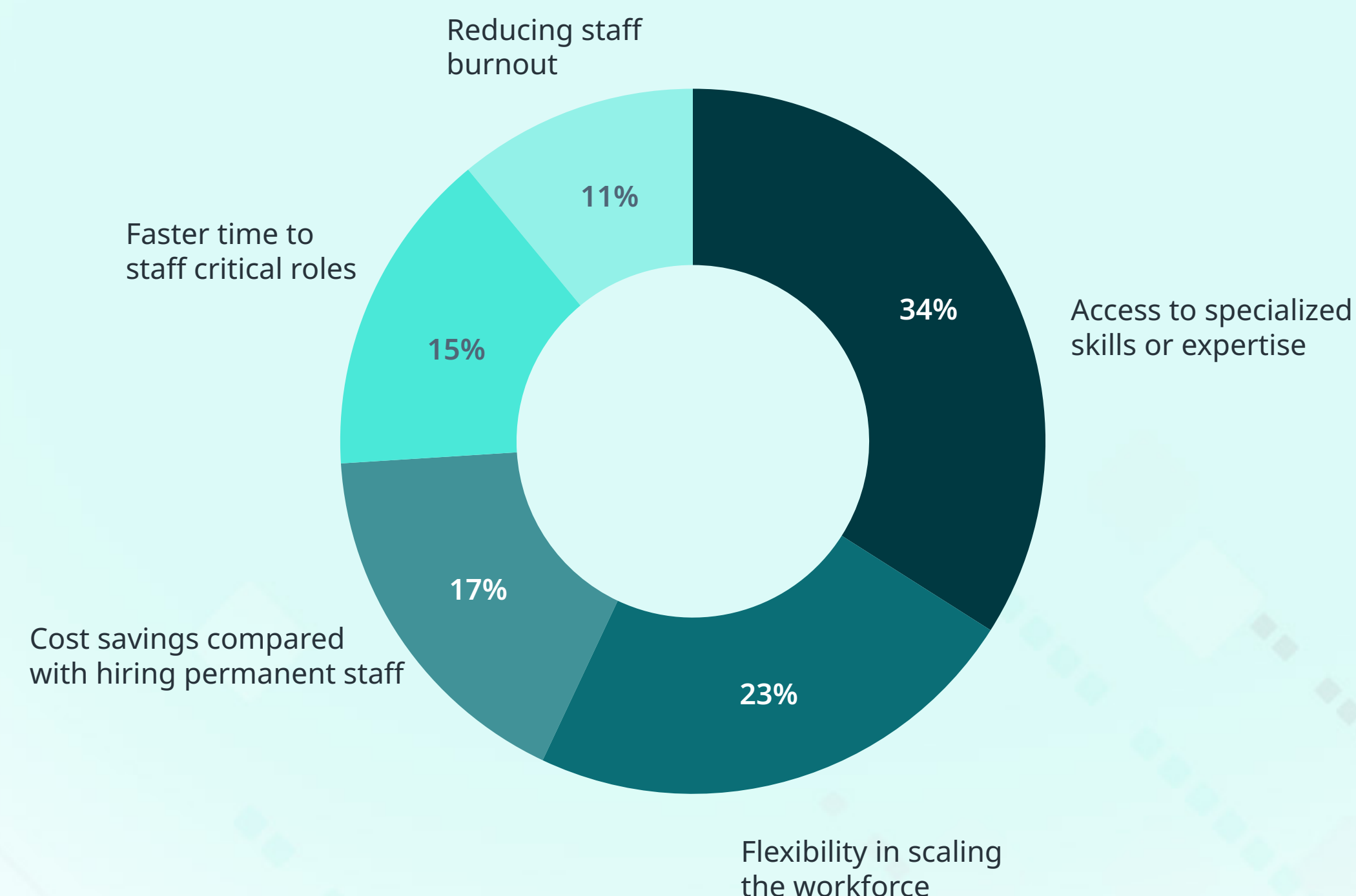
When interviewing, be sure to dig into details about in-demand tech skills candidates present on their resume. For example, asking for more specifics about AI and machine learning skills listed is good practice when interviewing technology professionals at any level, as using a generative AI application to support everyday work is different from building a generative AI model.

4. Adopt an Adaptive and Flexible Talent Model

A flexible talent model can help with talent pipeline planning now and in the future. It's an approach that helps ensure you always have access to specialized professionals to meet changing business demands while continuing to advance tech priorities. Flexible talent strategies support your core, permanent team members by allowing them to do what they do best, focusing their skills on what can add the most value.

Interim staffing solutions, a popular talent management approach, are a cost-efficient way to access talent with specialized skills whenever needed and for as long as required. In our survey of technology leaders, 65% at organizations across industries said they are increasing their reliance on interim or contract professionals. And nearly three-quarters (73%) said they plan to increase their budget for technology consulting this year.

Where Technology Leaders See the Greatest Value in Engaging Contract Professionals



Source: Robert Half survey of more than 250 technology leaders in the U.S.

CHAPTER 5: DEVELOPING YOUR NEXT-GEN TECH TEAM

Adapting Your Tech Staffing Strategy to Your Situation

An effective talent strategy should change and evolve with project needs and business priorities. Here are questions to keep in mind as you develop your tech workforce:

- Does our business have significant technical debt? Should we outsource the maintenance or modernization of our legacy systems, engage skilled interim resources to support those projects, or focus our core team on reducing technical debt through modernization efforts?
- Does our technology department need additional support and expertise for a major transformation initiative or transaction (e.g., a merger or acquisition)? Can contract professionals provide the required assistance and skills, or do we need to hire permanent staff? Or do we need both?
- Which skills are required to achieve progress on our most urgent priorities, and what other skills should we consider investing in now because they will be important in the future?



Next-Gen Is More Than Future-Ready

Being future-ready implies being prepared for what's next. But next-gen tech teams go beyond readiness. They are dynamic by design and can scale in size, capabilities and focus as business needs evolve. They offer:

- **Increased agility:** Next-gen teams are adaptable and can respond more effectively to market changes, technological advancements and disruptions.
- **Enhanced innovation:** These teams think creatively and take calculated risks, helping the business remain competitive by shaping and accelerating digital change.
- **Strategic impact:** Next-gen teams understand how to align technology initiatives with strategic objectives and reduce risks and costs so every digital project can deliver meaningful and measurable business value.

Cultivating a tech team that's truly next-gen requires more than traditional hiring practices. It demands forward-looking resource planning for technology projects, from AI to cloud to ERP, and a commitment to team members' continuous learning and growth. By also adopting flexible talent approaches, organizations can achieve today's tech and business priorities while positioning themselves for tomorrow's opportunities.

"Friction can naturally arise when multiple teams work on technology initiatives, leading to lost time and efficiency. A better approach is for everyone involved—from data science to engineering to subject matter experts—to view themselves as one team from the beginning. Daily communication and collaboration, along with shared goals, help break down barriers and accelerate the achievement of tech priorities."

James Johnson

Executive Vice President and Chief Technology Officer
Robert Half

Resources for Technology Leaders

- [Robert Half's Technology Talent Solutions](#)
- [Technology Consulting Solutions from Robert Half and Protiviti](#)
- [2024 Building Future-Forward Tech Teams report](#)
- [The Demand for Skilled Talent report](#)
- [Robert Half Salary Guide](#)

Research Methodology

The data in this report is from a survey developed by Robert Half and conducted by an independent research firm in October and November 2024, unless indicated otherwise. The survey contains responses from more than 250 technology leaders at the director level or above, as well as more than 1,400 business leaders across finance and accounting, marketing and creative, legal, administrative and customer support, nonclinical healthcare, and human resources professions at companies in the United States.

About Robert Half

Robert Half is the world's first and largest specialized talent solutions and business consulting firm. We offer contract talent and permanent placement solutions in major professional fields, including technology, and we also provide executive search services. We find skilled technology professionals across domains including software and applications development, systems integration, infrastructure management, cybersecurity, networking, and data science. In addition, our full-time engagement professionals bring continuity to technology initiatives best handled by the same person either on a recurring or long-term basis. Our industry-leading network of technology professionals can assist with projects on an on-site, remote or hybrid basis. Robert Half is the parent company of Protiviti[®], a global consulting firm that delivers internal audit, risk, business and technology consulting solutions. In the last 12 months, Robert Half has been recognized as one of America's Most Innovative Companies by Fortune and, with Protiviti, has been named one of the Fortune[®] World's Most Admired Companies[™] and 100 Best Companies to Work For.

Explore our comprehensive solutions, research and insights at roberthalf.com.