

U.S. Tech Hiring Moderates as Employers Prioritize Quality Over Quantity

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Experis survey: Nearly half of tech employers still plan to hire, but persistent skills gaps are driving investment in reskilling and flexible workforce strategies

MILWAUKEE, Jan. 15, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Tech hiring in the United States is showing clear signs of moderation as 2026 begins. According to Experis' latest [Tech Talent Outlook](#), U.S. tech employers report a Net Employment Outlook (NEO) of 33% for the first quarter of 2026. This represents a 10-percentage point decline from the prior quarter, and a 19-point drop year-over-year. For the first time, the U.S. has fallen below the global average, which stands at 35%.



Despite the slowdown, hiring intent remains resilient. Nearly half (49%) of U.S. tech employers still plan to add staff in Q1, while just 16% expect workforce reductions. The constraint is not demand. It is access to skills — and that persistent gap is prompting organizations to rethink how they build and sustain tech talent.

"The tech labor market is recalibrating," said Kye Mitchell, President of Experis U.S. "Employers are being more thoughtful and strategic in how they hire, but demand for specialized skills remains strong. What we're seeing is a move from broad, volume hiring to precision hiring. The competition for high-impact tech talent is as strong as ever."

With tech talent scarcity persisting globally, employers are doubling down on strategies to close the skills gap:

- Upskilling and reskilling current employees (32%)
- Targeting new and underrepresented talent pools (26%)
- Increasing wages to remain competitive (25%)

Globally, tech hiring expectations remain strongest in emerging and high-growth markets. Brazil leads with an NEO of 58%, followed by Peru (51%) and India (50%). At 33%, the U.S. sits alongside Belgium and China, reflecting a broader cooling trend across more mature tech economies.

For tech professionals with in-demand capabilities, particularly in AI, cloud, and data, the shift toward precision hiring presents opportunity. Employers are prioritizing candidates who can deliver immediate business impact, making specialized expertise more valuable than ever.

To view the full Q1 2026 Experis Tech Talent Outlook, including detailed U.S. and global findings, visit experis.com. The next report, covering Q2 2026 hiring expectations, will be released in March 2026.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

This research is based on results from the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey — the longest running, most comprehensive, forward-looking employment survey of its kind, used globally as a key labor market indicator. ManpowerGroup interviewed 3,796 Tech & IT Services employers across 41 countries on hiring intentions for the first quarter of 2026.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Survey responses were collected from October 1-31, 2025. Size of organization and sector are standardized across all countries and territories to allow international comparisons.

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