

Work Futures

2025

dexian®

INTRODUCTION

Dexian's latest research, the 2025 Work Futures Study, highlights a tech landscape poised to be a high-speed, high-stakes arena, with many companies betting on it to provide a competitive edge. Artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and 5G technology will drive everything, pushing industries to evolve faster than ever before. However, there's a twist: as transformative technologies emerge, the demand for top-tier talent will soar. Companies won't just seek technical wizards — they'll need visionaries capable of thinking beyond code and anticipating the future. This need may explain the rise of skills-first hiring and the abandonment of traditional requirements such as education or experience.

In this brave new world, tech and talent will be more interconnected than ever, and the companies that nail both will lead the charge. From key information technology (IT) priorities and investments to hiring headwinds, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), and upskilling — Dexian uncovers what's trending in the world of work this year.



TECH IN 2025

In today's fast-evolving business landscape, emerging technologies play a crucial role in maintaining a competitive edge. In fact, roughly half (52%) of employers anticipate emerging technologies will have a transformational/significant impact on their organization in 2025. And 63% think technology will provide a significant/moderate competitive advantage for how they compete in their marketplace this year.

So, which technologies are businesses banking on this year, and how prepared are they to capitalize on their investments?

According to IT decision-makers and workers, AI/machine learning (ML) and 5G expansion are the top two emerging technologies that will have the biggest impact in 2025 and the most significant impact on job creation over the next five years. In fact, 84% of IT decision-makers will be investing in AI and 44% will invest in cloud platforms.

Their hope is that investing in technical advancements this year will significantly benefit their:

- Operations and efficiency (28%)
- Marketing and sales (24%)
- Product development and innovation (19%)
- Customer experience and engagement (17%)
- Human resources and employee management (11%)

However, only 38% of employers say their organization is very prepared to integrate AI/ML into business operations in 2025, and there are a range of challenges they anticipate when implementing new technologies within their organization.

Challenges Anticipated During AI/ML Implementation

- 37%** High Costs of Implementation
- 37%** Training and Skill Development
- 35%** Integration with Existing Systems
- 34%** Data Security and Privacy Concerns
- 26%** Resistance to Change



TECH IN 2025

Differing Opinions on Top IT Priorities

In 2025, a significant gap exists between IT decision-makers and IT workers, with leaders often prioritizing strategic initiatives like cybersecurity and digital transformation, while workers focus more on practical concerns such as upskilling and day-to-day efficiency.

IT Decision-Makers' Top Priorities	IT Workers' Top Priorities
Further digital transformation initiatives	Upskill the IT workforce to adapt to new technologies
Improve cybersecurity resilience and compliance	Research and implement AI-enabled products
Implement agile methodologies	Improve cybersecurity resilience and compliance
Research and implement AI-enabled products	Strengthen IT and business collaboration
Improve the employee experience	Improve the employee experience
Optimize IT spending	Optimize IT spending
Invest in data governance and analytics platforms	Improve the customer experience
Strengthen IT and business collaboration	Invest in data governance and analytics platforms
Upskill the IT workforce to adapt to new technologies	Further digital transformation initiatives
Improve the customer experience	Implement agile methodologies

While IT decision-makers and IT workers may disagree on priorities, they both agree that AI/ML, cloud computing, and cybersecurity skills will be most in demand in 2025 – and that there will be several hiring headwinds to face in 2025.

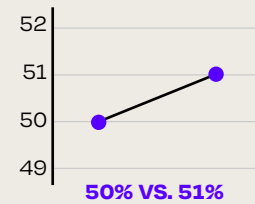


HIRING HEADWINDS

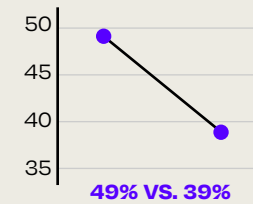
While all employers expect a range of challenges to hiring talent in 2025, they diverge when it comes to hiring tech talent – particularly around salary expectations, remote work dynamics, and competition for top talent.

IT Decision-Makers' Top Hiring Challenges	All Decision-Makers' Top Hiring Challenges
Competition for top IT talent (67%)	Rising salary expectations (40%)
Shortage of specialized IT talent (54%)	Skill gaps (32%)
Remote position expectations (44%)	Competition for top talent (30%)
Rising salary expectations (39%)	Integration of AI and automation into recruiting (29%)

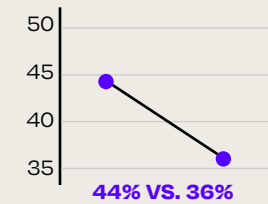
The good news is when it comes to the top strategies IT decision-makers will use to help solve IT hiring challenges, IT workers are largely in agreement.



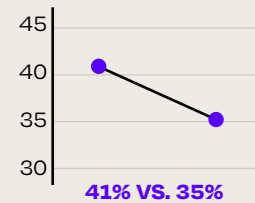
Focus on skills and potential over traditional credentials



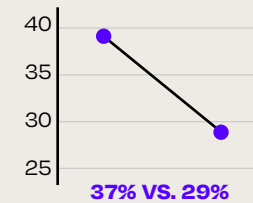
Offer more remote positions



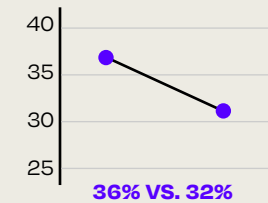
Invest in internal talent development and mobility



Prioritize hiring skills over geographic location



Hire more contract IT talent



Relax degree-centric hiring requirements



HIRING HEADWINDS

While IT decision-makers and IT workers are highly aligned on the top strategies to solve hiring challenges, it's a different story for non-IT employers and workers.

Non-IT Employers

- 43%** Focus on skills and potential over traditional credentials
- 32%** Invest in internal talent development and mobility
- 30%** Hire more temporary, contract, or gig talent
- 30%** Offer more remote work positions
- 29%** Prioritize hiring skills over geographic location
- 23%** Relax degree-centric hiring requirements

Non-IT Workers

- 44%** Focus on skills and potential over traditional credentials
- 37%** Offer more remote work positions
- 24%** Invest in internal talent development and mobility
- 22%** Relax degree-centric hiring requirements
- 21%** Prioritize hiring skills over geographic location
- 12%** Hire more temporary, contract, or gig talent



HIRING HEADWINDS

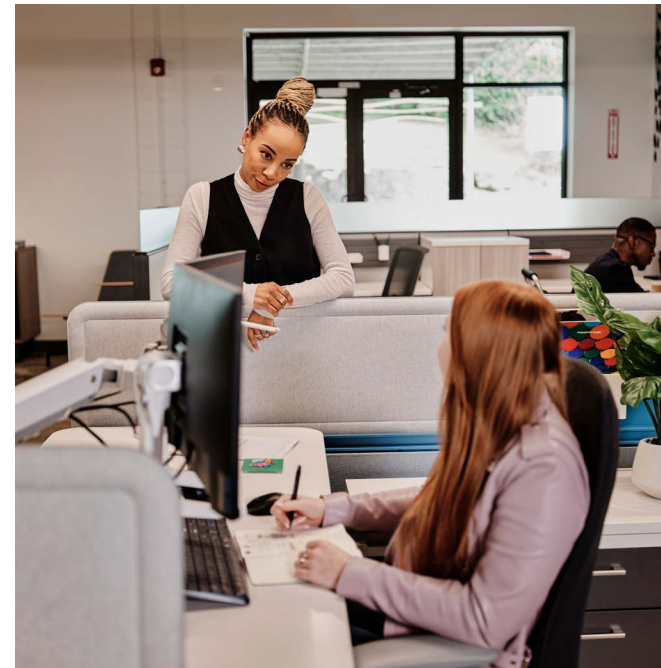
A Note on Remote

With all the return-to-office (RTO) headlines, the issue of full-time remote work continues to be a debate. While only one-third of companies require full-time in-office presence, according to the recently released [Flex Report for Q4 2024](#) by FlexIndex, the number employers holding a set expectation of how much time is spent working from the office is trending upwards.

Over the last six months of 2024, there was a 0.29-day increase in the number of days required per week in the office by the average U.S. employer. While it doesn't sound like much, it can be significant if you consider what the next six months to a year may bring.

Here's the rub. Throughout the Dexian 2025 Work Futures study, remote work opportunities and flexibility remains a key priority for workers when it comes to choosing a future position and/or staying in their current one.

Workers selected "offer more remote work positions" as the second-best strategy to solve hiring challenges for employers and ranked remote/hybrid positions as appealing to them when looking for a job. And remote work flexibility is among the top factors workers say will keep them on the job, alongside competitive pay, professional development/upskilling, and work/life balance.



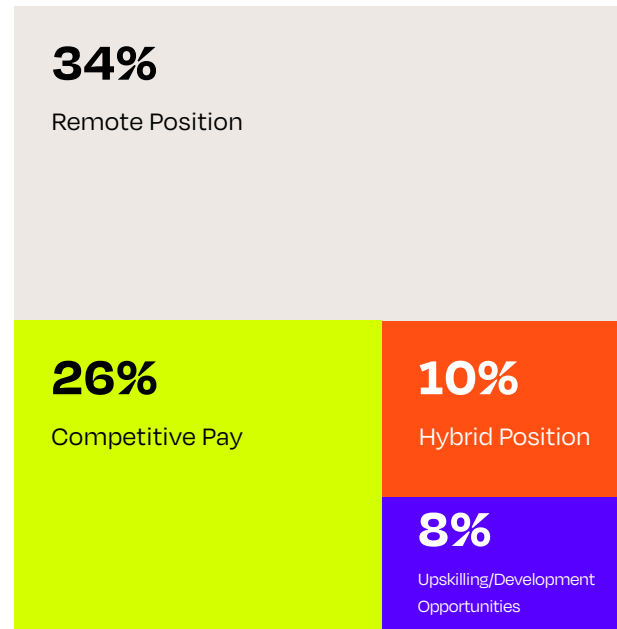
HIRING HEADWINDS

What Appeals Most to Workers When Looking for a Job?

For IT Workers



For All Workers



The Future of DEI?

Due to political climate changes, economic pressures, or a lack of measurable return on investment, one in eight companies plans to eliminate or reduce its DEI program in 2025, [according to a Jan. 21 report](#) by Resume.org.

However, regardless of what side companies fall on the DEI debate, the Dexian 2025 Work Futures Study found that 82% of workers agree that DEI initiatives will play a significant role in hiring and team building in 2025 – 56% of IT workers completely/strongly agree.



GETTING SKILLED AT SKILLS— FIRST HIRING

Assessing and selecting candidates based on their specific skills, abilities, and competencies relevant to the job role rather than solely relying on traditional qualifications such as education and experience is trending.

The Dexian 2025 Work Futures Study found while decision-makers and workers were misaligned on the top strategies to solve hiring challenges, they agree on the #1 strategy – to focus on skills and potential over traditional credentials. And relaxing degree-centric hiring requirements, as well as prioritizing skills over geographic location, were also among the top strategies to solve hiring challenges.

While jobs can require specific technical skills to succeed, which competencies will help professionals thrive in a technology-driven workplace? Most workers (74%) believe digital skills will be extremely/very important for job seekers across all industries in 2027. And according to decision-makers and workers, the top skill sets include:

- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Tech savviness and digital literacy
- Creativity and innovation
- Remote collaboration and virtual communication
- Emotional intelligence and adaptability

In fact, nearly all **employers (92%)** and **workers (94%)** agree their organization will put more emphasis on **“human skills”** alongside technical expertise.

For IT decision-makers, the top skill sets critical for future job candidates in industries influenced by emerging technologies include **data analysis and interpretation (57%), cybersecurity skills (49%),** and **software development and programming (49%).**



GETTING SKILLED AT SKILLS— FIRST HIRING

Speaking of Skills

Given widening skill gaps, upskilling and development remain a high priority for both employers and workers alike. In fact, 66% of workers say it is extremely/very important that potential employers offer opportunities for training and development. That percentage jumps up to 76% for IT workers, not surprisingly given “keeping skills updated” is their biggest concern about working in a job or industry driven by evolving technologies.

Just over half of employers (55%) say it will be extremely/very important for their organization to invest in employee upskilling and reskilling programs in 2025. Over a quarter of employers (26%) say it's only slightly or not important.

That's a problem. Here's why:

- Nearly half of IT workers (48%) believe their skills are intermediate in relation to the latest tech trends in their desired career path – and only 36% believe their skills are very advanced.
- Only 29% of all workers feel they are very prepared to adapt their skills to meet future technological demands in their industry.
- While 69% of IT workers have been offered and participated in training to reskill or upskill their capabilities, only 37% of all workers have been offered the same opportunity.
- All 43% of workers who have not been offered training to reskill or upskill would participate if it was offered to them.

Brace for Automation

Second only to bias in AI-driven hiring processes, job displacement due to automation is workers' biggest concern about the impact technology may have on the job market in 2025. And for IT workers, their second biggest concern about working in a job or industry driven by evolving technologies is “job security and stability.”

Employers, on the other hand, vary widely on the influence automation will have in their workforce requirements in 2025:

- 33%** Little to no impact on workforce size
- 26%** Increase in workforce due to new roles
- 24%** Moderate reduction in workforce
- 18%** Significant reduction in workforce

Meanwhile, nearly one-third (32%) of employers expect to change their approach to talent acquisition and recruitment by increasing their use of AI and automation in screening.



GETTING SKILLED AT SKILLS— FIRST HIRING

The Tech Effect

More than half of workers (58%) anticipate technology will drastically/moderately change the way they search for jobs in 2025. However, this change may not be met with glee but instead met with gloom. Among their biggest concerns about the impact technology may have on the job market this year is:

- Bias in AI-driven hiring processes
- Rapidly changing skill requirements
- Increased job competition
- Privacy and data security issues
- Challenges matching resume with key words

Meanwhile, employers plan to address ethical considerations related to technology use in the following ways:

- 35%** Develop comprehensive ethical guidelines
- 33%** Implement regular ethics training for staff
- 30%** Currently no specific plans
- 28%** Execute robust data privacy policies
- 26%** Collaborate with ethical tech organizations



About the Report



Dexian's latest research study, the 2025 Work Futures Study, was conducted in December 2024 among 1,000 IT and HR decision-makers, as well as 2,000 workers. The study examines a range of trends impacting the world of work in 2025 from emerging tech, hiring challenges, and upskilling to DEI, remote work, and what attracts and retains workers.