inForm

Hear the voice of tech talent

How tech companies can find and retain the best talent in a new era of work

NearForm
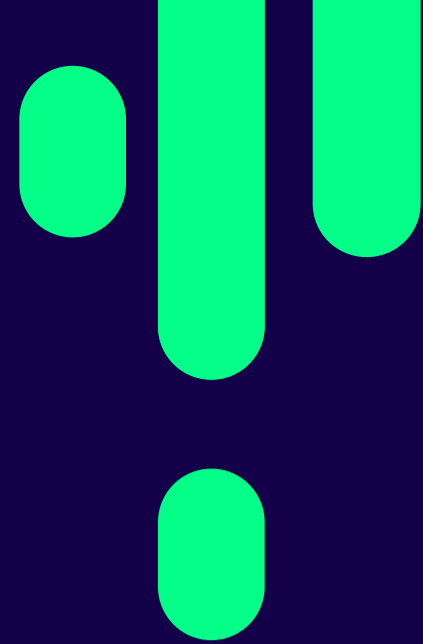
The way we work is changing forever. Roles are being redefined. Working patterns and behaviours are evolving. Personal priorities are shifting...

Nowhere is this more clear than in the tech industry.

And as a tech company undergoing rapid growth, we're in a unique position to see a lot of this change from the inside.

But it's crucial we don't just sit by and hope we get dragged along for the ride.

For every employer in tech, this has to be about informed and intentional change.

We have a collective responsibility as a sector to get this right for today's talent - and to make working in tech work for everyone.

That all starts with truly understanding the voice of tech talent today. So - we went out and spoke to more than 400 tech professionals across six continents to do just that.

What do people really want from their job in tech? And - crucially - how can tech companies respond to find and keep the best talent?

In this report, we reveal the answers - to help us build the best business we can for our people; to help us do great work and create digital advantage for our clients; and to help anyone else who is passionate about finding a better way of doing things in this new era of work.
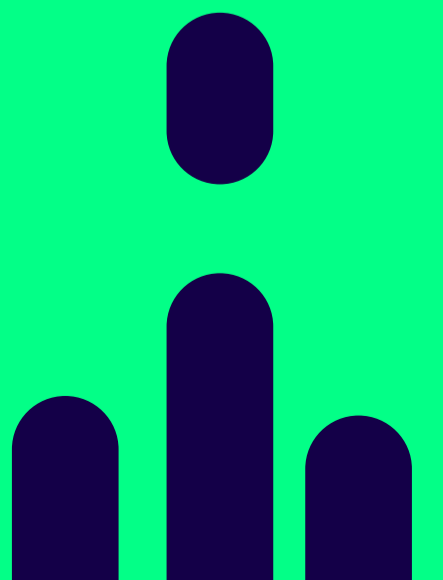
Photo by Andre Hunter on Unsplash

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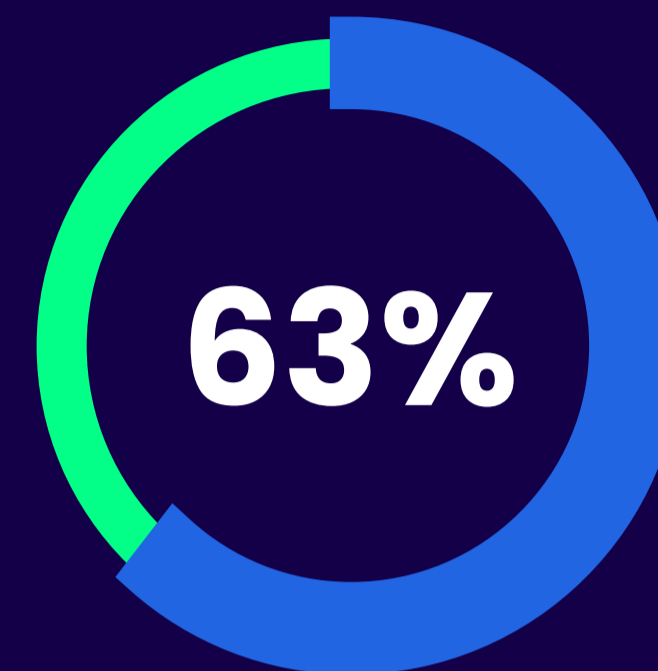## Welcome to inForm: the voice of tech talent

1

The talent landscape:

assessing the state of play
for tech talent in 2022

63%

63% of people feel their
company will struggle to
retain and find talent.

There's a talent crisis going on.

It's no secret that the pressure is on
for tech companies when it comes to
talent.

Adapting to life after COVID, the
escalating pace of digitalisation and
the 'great resignation' are just a few
of the concerns keeping leaders
awake at night.

Our research confirmed a challenging
outlook for 2022.

Nearly two thirds (63%) of the people
we spoke to think their company will
struggle to find and retain talent over
the next 12 months.

Whichever way you look at it, the
business world is facing a tech
talent crisis.

large companies

small companies

80

40

0
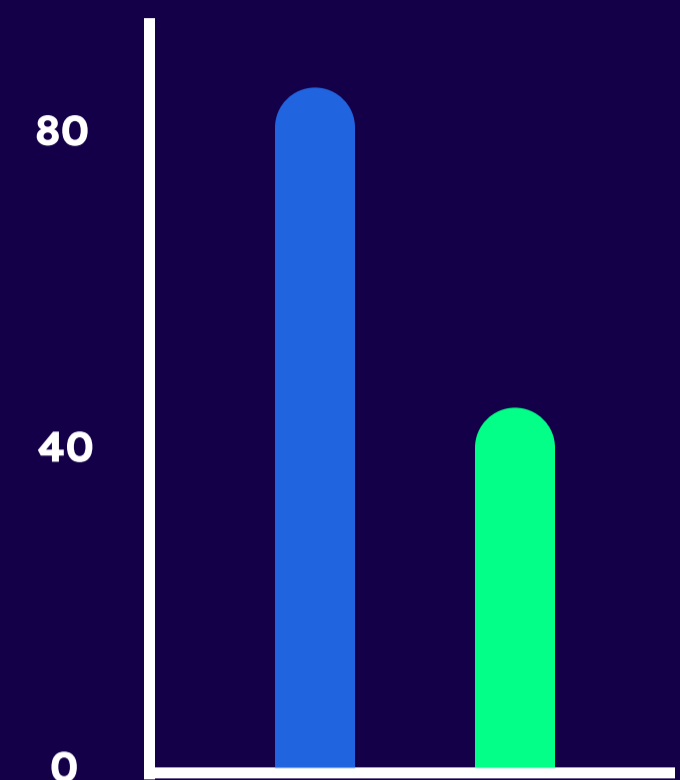
Will struggle to find talent

The big companies are going to get hit hardest.

As the saying goes: the bigger you are, the harder you fall.

In our research, **81% of those working for enterprise companies (500+ employees) think they'll have a problem finding and keeping talent compared to just 43% of people in smaller companies.**

That's a pretty big jump. And it means that bigger companies are going to have to work even harder and faster to get on top of the problem.

The pace of change on the inside in terms of benefits, processes and ways of working is going to have to match the pace of change in the outside world if companies are to avoid hitting a wall in their hiring.

63% of the people we spoke to think their company will struggle to find and retain tech talent over the next 12 months.

Photo by Axville on Unsplash

inForm perspective

Hiring and employer brand must become a boardroom priority.

It's crucial that finding and retaining great talent moves up the agenda in tech boardrooms to future-proof companies and set them up for growth. That's going to mean doing things differently: from reassessing the hiring process and candidate experience from start to finish; to redirecting budget and resources to find a cutting edge for employer brand; to uncovering new ways to engage and develop existing talent.

Don't just take our word for it...

67% of tech leaders report that they have reached an all-time high for skills shortages.

Digital Leadership Report 2021, Harvey Nash Group and KPMG

88% of tech leaders are concerned about valued employees on their team leaving for new opportunities.

2022 Demand for Skilled Talent Report, Robert Half

"Companies are realising that recruiting is a sales and marketing function and that hiring success - the ability to hire amazing talent at scale - is business success."

Jerome Ternynck, CEO of SmartRecruiters

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Shifting priorities:

exploring what matters most for today's top talent

Photo by Alexander Popov on Unsplash

We've witnessed a fundamental change in how people work.

Over the last two years, we've seen a transformation in how tech professionals live and do their jobs.

Yes, a lot of that was forced by COVID.

But many people have gotten used to their 'new normal', now preferring it to the previous status quo.

In our research, we found that less than half (44%) of the people we spoke to now see office location as a priority, and a remarkable two thirds (67%) would consider leaving a company if they couldn't work remotely.
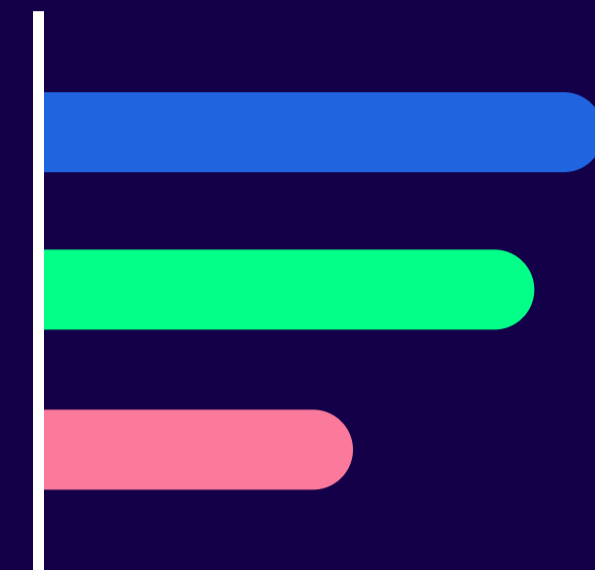
With 57% of younger people (under 34) also wanting a better work-life balance, the picture is clear: the future has to be flexible.

89%

78%

49%

Salary

Culture

Technology

What are people's priorities?

What people want from a job is changing, too.

89% of respondents from our research said salary was a top priority when choosing a new employer.

78% told us that factors which contributed towards their working experience - learning, culture, remote working and flexible hours - were a priority.

49% now prioritise the tangible things that come with a job - like benefits, office location, technology and clients.

Expectation of a competitive salary is now a given in tech - with companies even getting into bidding wars over the best talent. To stand out, employers need to find differentiation in other areas.

These findings go hand-in-hand with the changing patterns brought about by the pandemic - and represent a clear call-to-action for employers wanting to find and retain the best people.

67% of the people we spoke to would consider leaving a company if they couldn't work remotely.
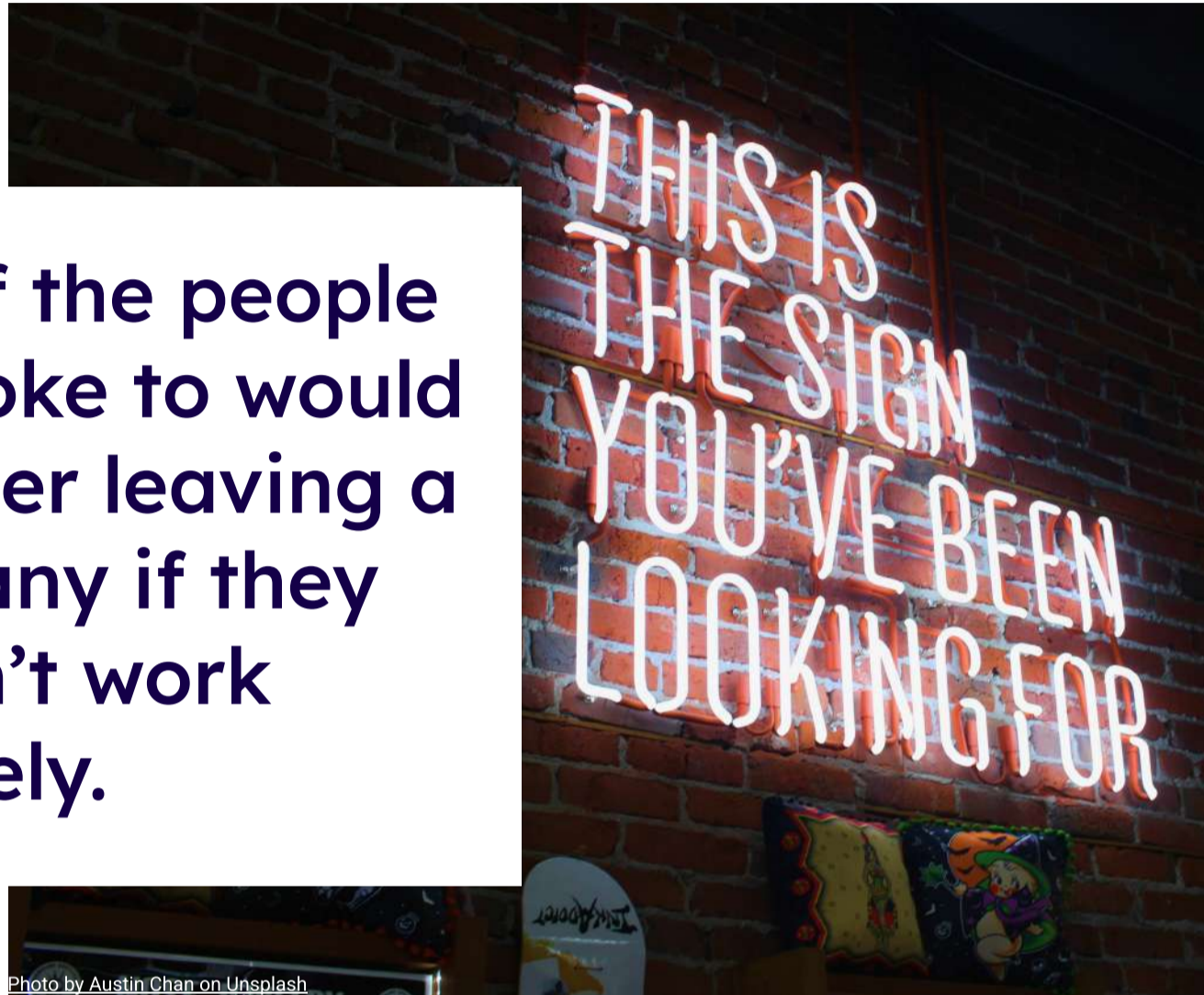
Photo by Austin Chan on Unsplash

inForm perspective

Tech leaders must redefine what great employment looks like.

The most successful tech companies can no longer discuss how to 'transition back' in the coming months. They must frame the pandemic as a pivotal moment to reevaluate what it means to be a great employer, applying wholesale and permanent change in their businesses. This shift in mindset will be critical for keeping and attracting star talent in the coming months.

Don't just take our word for it...

I think this is an opportunity to really ensure that your talent brand is working for you now, and that it's going to work for you in the future."

Teuila Hanson, Chief People Officer, LinkedIn

"82% of digital professionals believe that remote work is the future of work."

Attitudes on remote working 2021, Statista

"It's never been 'the great resignation'. Workers aren't choosing not to work: they are choosing not to work for companies that won't let them have a higher quality of life. It's not a future of work evolution. It's a quality of life revolution."

Chris Herd, CEO, Firstbase

Gone are the gimmicks and one-off perks.

③

Think experience first

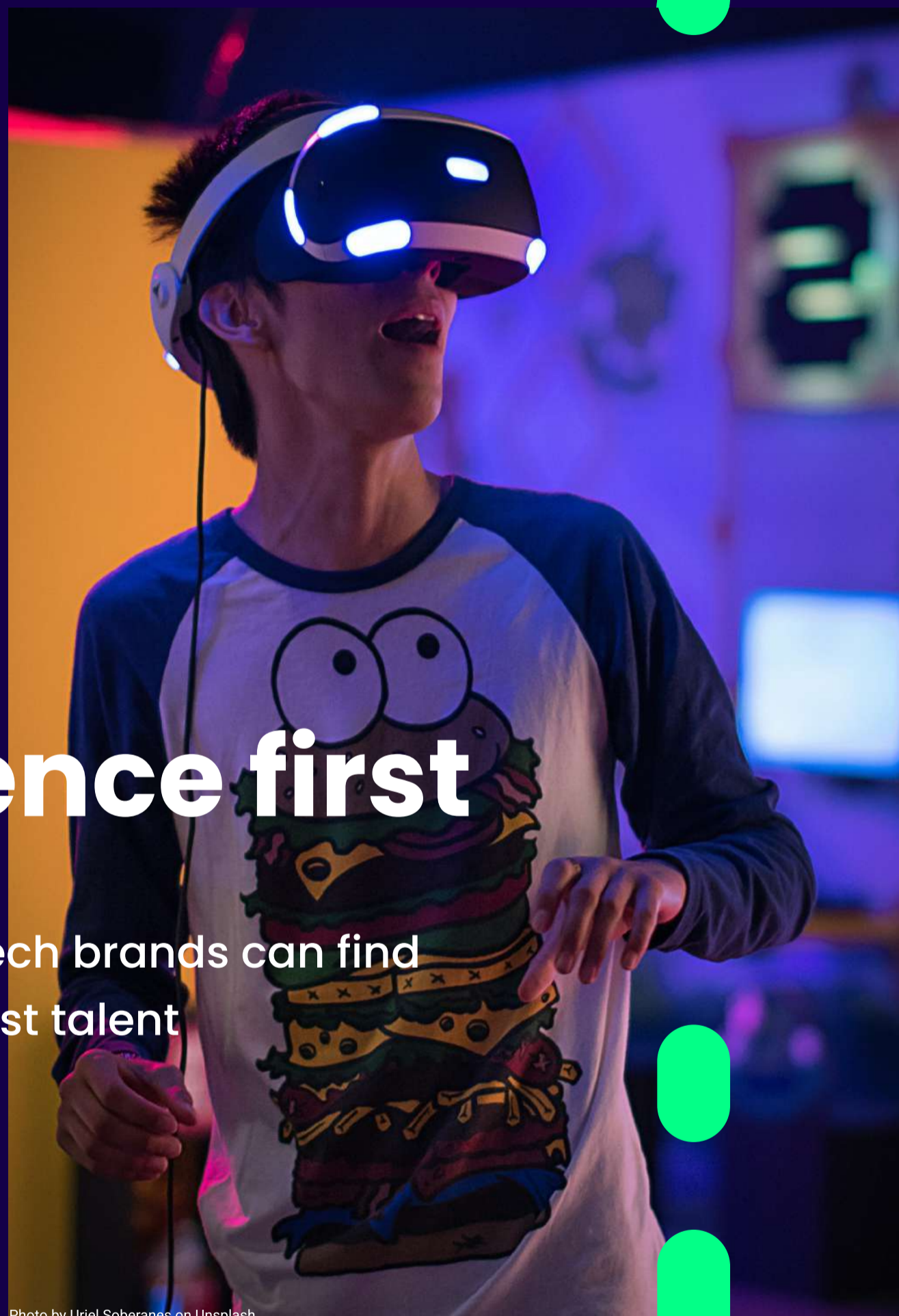uncovering how tech brands can find and attract the best talent

Photo by Uriel Soberanes on Unsplash

We've witnessed a fundamental change in how people work.

As the landscape shifts for today's tech talent, we've learned that experience and lifestyle are moving up their list of priorities.

But what does that mean for tech leaders looking to find and keep the best talent?

What does great experience look like?

And how can they create it?
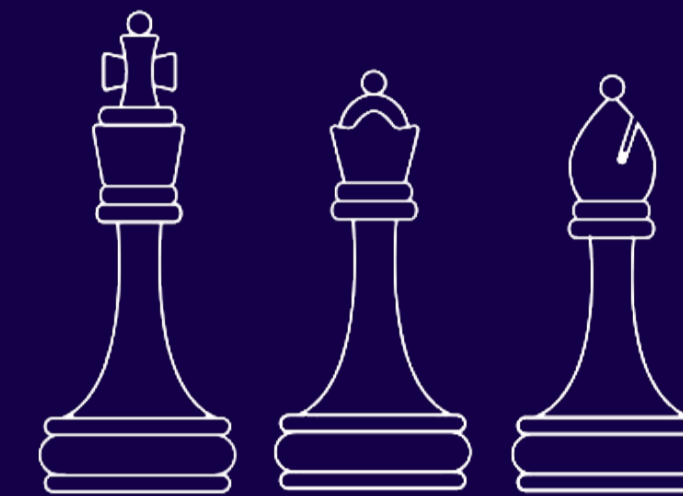
Put simply, talent leaders must focus on building an experience-first approach to employment.

Gone are the gimmicks and one-off perks.

This is all about creating meaningful, long-term change that will have a significant impact on people's lives.

Photo by Tim Mossholder on Unsplash

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Making Flexibility Work

"We've been pioneering remote and flexible working for the past 10 years. But when thinking experience-first for our team, flexibility doesn't need to stop at giving them the choice to work when and where they like.

It means a flexible approach to how we deliver projects. It means flexibility around career progression. It means flexibility around how we deliver the best professional and emotional support for each individual employee. We want to build a culture of flexibility that informs every decision we make - each one an opportunity to do more for our people and create differentiation as an employer."

James Madeley, People Director, NearForm

Our research process

We spoke to over 400 tech professionals across six continents to understand attitudes and opinions around life working in the sector today.

Our respondents covered a mix of roles and experience, and were spread across tech start-ups, SMEs and large enterprises.

The research took place online from October to December 2021.

Our research uncovered four areas of focus for talent leaders to get started with an experience-first approach to employment.

1. Prioritise learning

As demand for new and evolving tech skills intensifies, building an environment for continuous learning will be crucial.

84% of the people we spoke to said learning opportunities are very important.

"Employers have to step in and provide pathways for people to grow the kinds of skills that are relevant today, even if when they entered the workforce those skills weren't necessarily as in demand as they are now."

Joe Atkinson, Chief Products and Technology Officer, PwC

2. Cultivate your culture

Culture is the lifeblood of your business. It must be the product of careful consideration and intentional, repeated action.

80% of interviewees said company culture is a priority when taking a new role.

"The best tech talent is highly likely to be mission-led and purpose-driven. If the internal culture of their company reflects the values that the company promotes externally, they will feel a strong connection and will go to great lengths to make it successful."

James Duez, Founder, Rainbird Technologies

3. Be flexible on hours

Work-life balance begins and ends with a sense of autonomy. Give your people control of their work and life.

75% of tech pros said flexible hours are important when considering a job.

"We have decades of studies showing that people are happier, healthier, and more productive when they feel autonomous. Autonomy is a basic psychological need so that the more autonomous we feel, the more likely we are to be engaged."

Ron Friedman, Author, 'The Best Place to Work'

4. Be flexible on location

A remote-first mindset is here to stay. It's set to continue to revolutionise how tech talent lives and works. Don't get left behind.

71% of those interviewed said remote work is very important or essential.

"It's hard to overstate the positive shock that remote work works. Remote work isn't perfect, but virtually every CEO I've talked to over the last year marvels at how well it works. And remote work worked under the extreme duress of a pandemic. It will work even better out of COVID."

Marc Andreessen, VC and tech entrepreneur

About NearForm

NearForm is a software development company empowering public and private sector clients to accelerate their digital strategy. We partner with organisations to create digital advantage by building cutting-edge digital products and industry-leading capabilities and teams. Our remote-first team is made-up of some of the best tech talent from all over the world. Learn more about our impact here.

Some of our clients:

TELUS **renalytix**™ **IBM** **NET-A-PORTER**

If you want to discuss how NearForm can help your organisation build standout digital teams and capabilities, get in touch today.

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