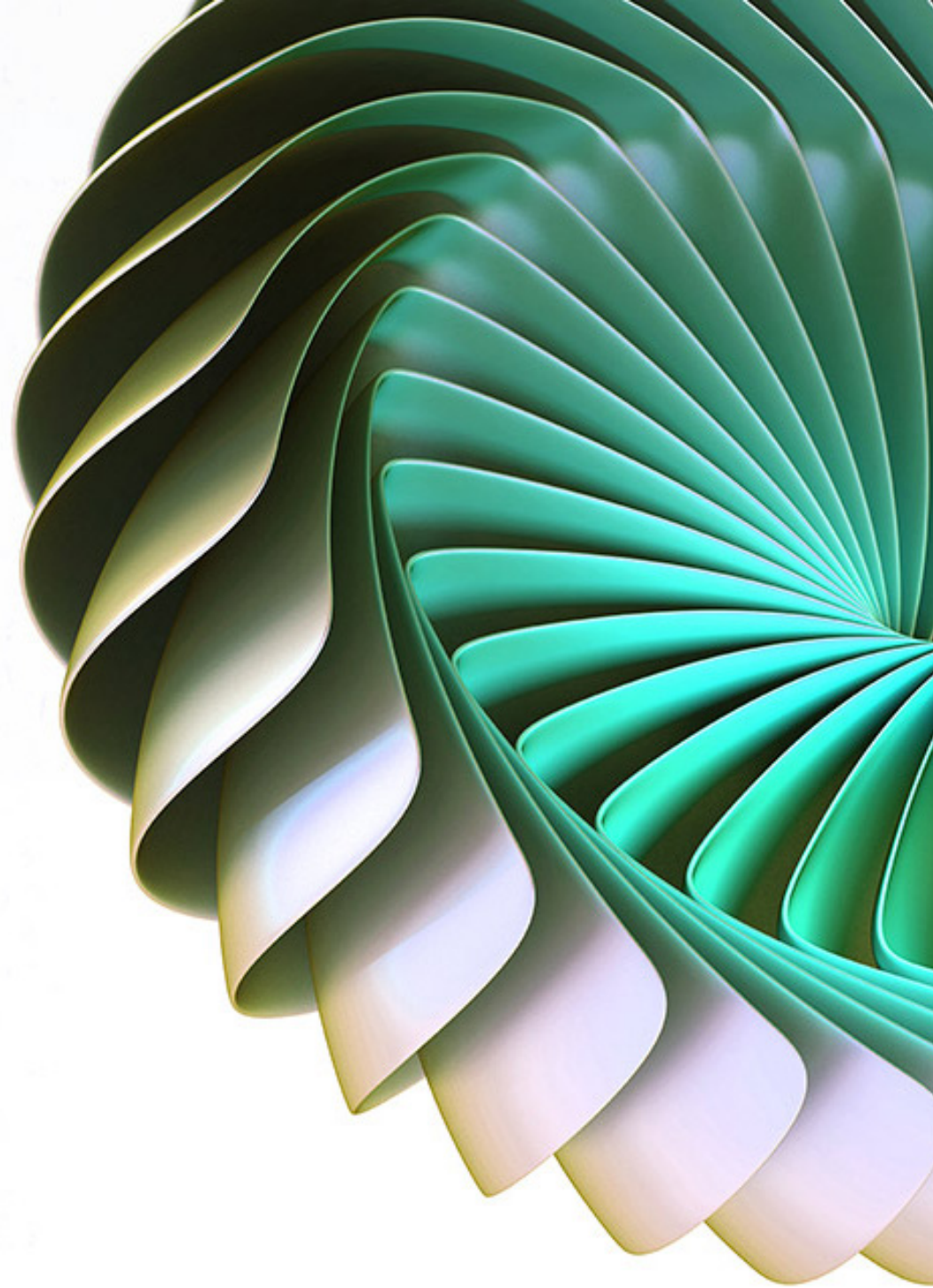


**HackerRank** ■

# 2018 Tech Recruiting Report

[research.hackerrank.com](https://research.hackerrank.com)



# Skills

Today's developer toolkit is brimming with evolving technologies, frameworks, and languages. As technology is constantly shape-shifting, so are the skills required to build it.

We surveyed nearly 1,000 technical recruiters and hiring managers to understand the biggest priorities, pain points, and opportunities when it comes to hiring software developers. We discover exactly where there's harmony, and where there's an opportunity to strengthen a united front, and also actionable ways you can improve the tech hiring partnership.

Aligning on hiring strategy, success metrics, skills needed for the jobs, and where to find the best talent, are critical steps in winning tech talent in a hot market.

We'd love to hear from you. Email us at [research@hackerrank.com](mailto:research@hackerrank.com).



**Gaurav Verma**

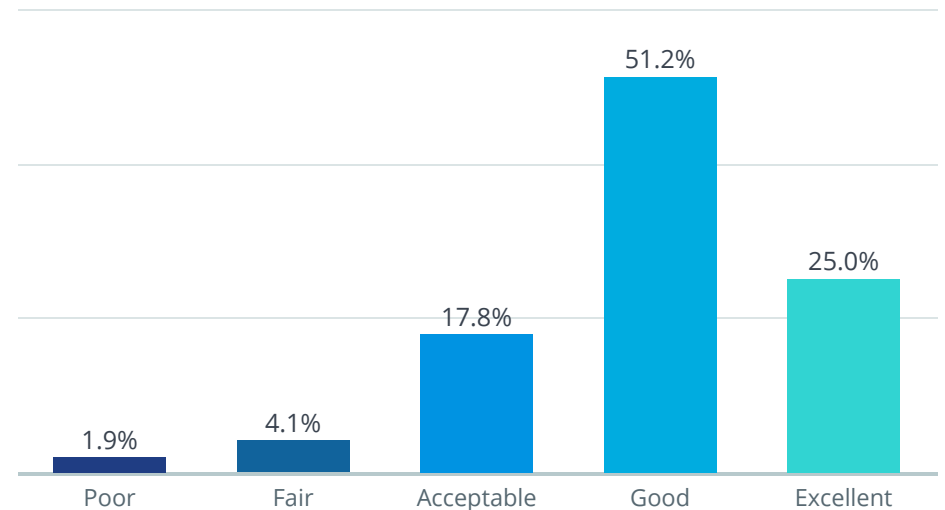
Global VP of Customer Success  
HackerRank



## At the surface, tech recruiters & hiring managers feel ‘good’ about their relationship

Today 76.2% of recruiters and hiring managers generally feel like their relationship is at least good or excellent. Building a strong partnership between technical recruiters and hiring managers is both an art and science. It comes from developing deep trust, effective communication, and direct accountability.

How would you rate your hiring manager and recruiter relationship?

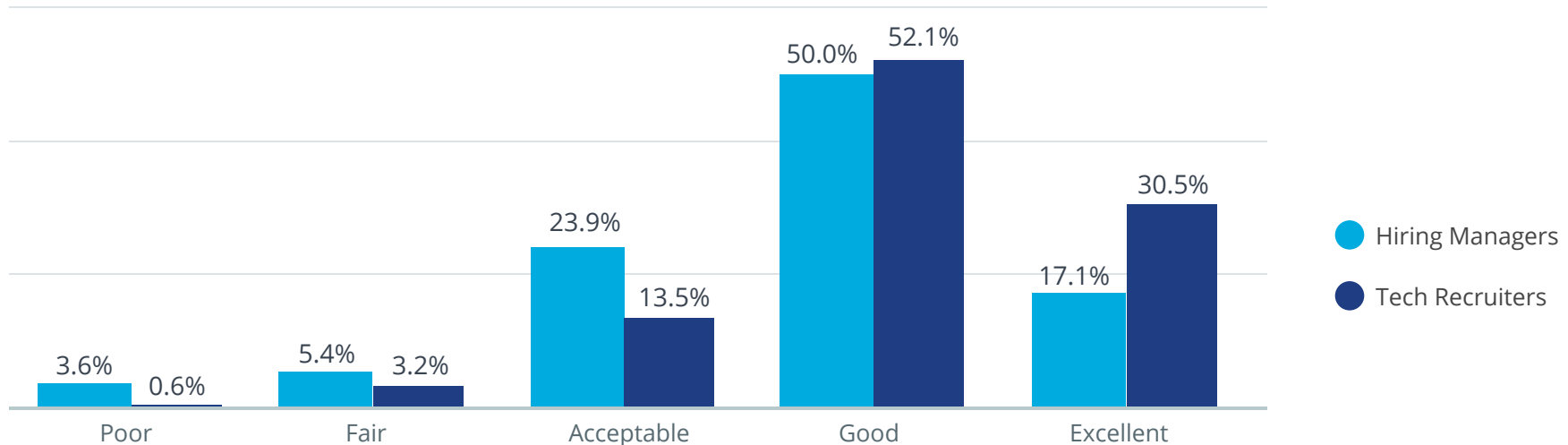


# Looking closer, hiring managers are roughly 1/2 as likely to say their relationship is ‘excellent’

When comparing the two roles, there’s a 13-point percentage point gap between hiring managers and recruiters who say their relationship is excellent. Recruiters, overall, feel slightly more aligned with hiring managers than vice versa.

There’s an opportunity here for recruiters to manage this perception by proactively seeking out hiring managers’ expectations, communicating any discrepancies, and agreeing on a plan forward to achieve the shared goal of hiring the right developers.

How would you rate your hiring manager and recruiter relationship?

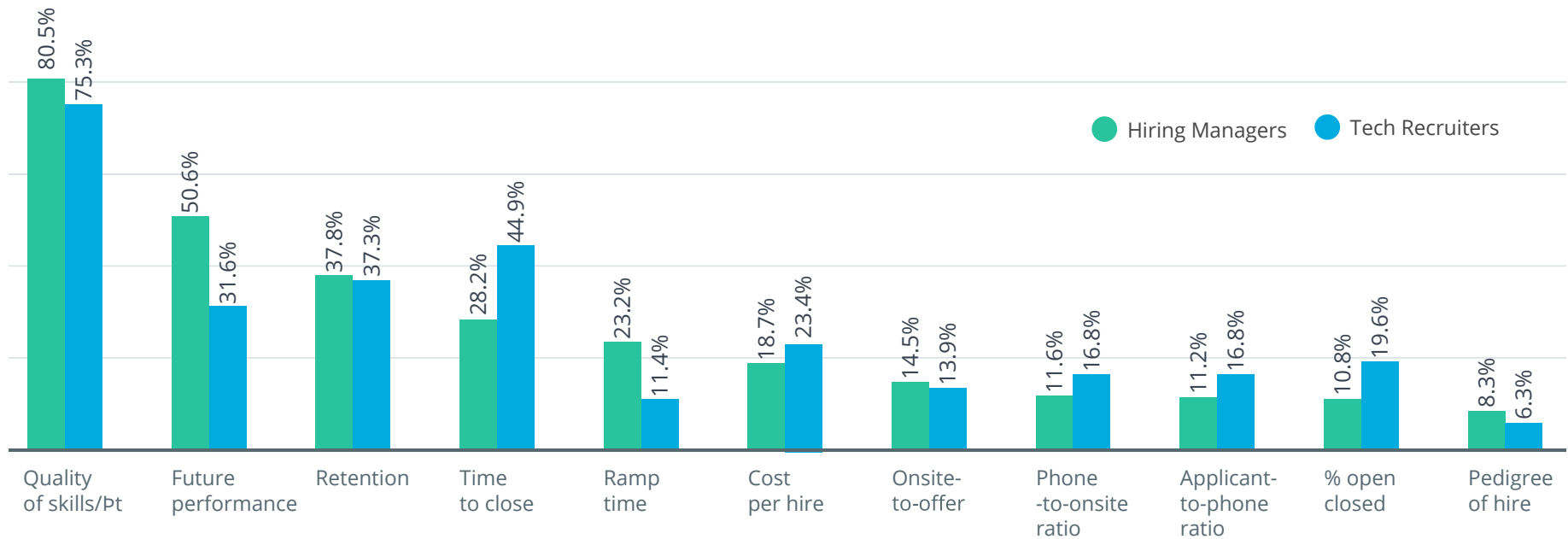


# And there's a mismatch in how to measure success

Recruiters have a unique challenge: Hire great people, but also hire fast. Meanwhile, it's common for hiring managers to rather not hire at all than hire the wrong person. Hiring managers' top three priorities are all focused on quality: the right skills & culture fit, future performance, and retention.

Because recruiters and hiring managers see success differently, they could be inadvertently creating friction that holds them back from achieving their ultimate goals.

What are your top 3 most important success metrics in tech recruiting?



# To elevate your relationship, align on skills & expectations

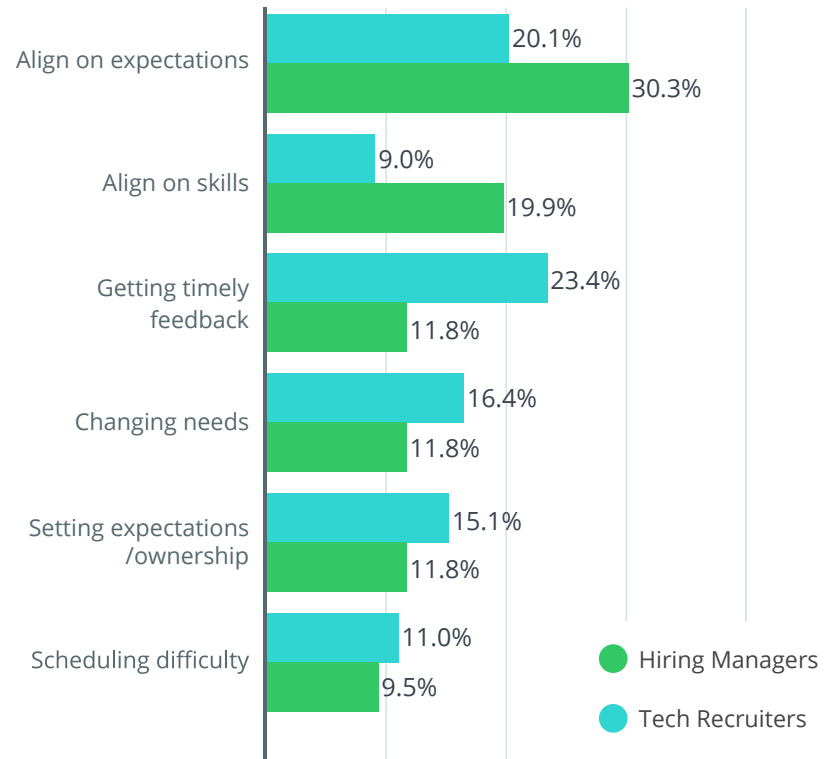
Two of the top hurdles hiring managers face is aligning with recruiters on skills and on expectations. Unlike most other industries, recruiters of technology roles are screening for **skills that are growing in complexity at a rapid rate**.

Recruiters should regularly check in to understand the nuances of the technical skills for in each role. What are the crucial “must haves” for a fullstack developer versus a back-end developer, for instance? Is your fullstack developer expected to be more focused on the front-end? In this case, you’d have a narrower search when sourcing. As a byproduct, candidates will appreciate relevancy of the roles you bring them.

The mismatch in measuring success also explains why getting timely feedback is recruiters’ number one hurdle. For hiring managers, recruiting is often an additional priority to building and shipping products and managing their existing teams. But on the flip side, if they’re not giving timely feedback on candidates to recruiters, they run the risk of creating a poor candidate experience and losing out on great hires in today’s competitive market.

Awareness of each other’s metrics of success is an important component of constructive conversations and, ultimately, better alignment.

What’s the biggest hurdle in building a strong partnership between recruiters and hiring managers?



# The biggest pain for everyone, however, is finding the right candidate

Regardless of company size or role, both hiring managers and recruiters say that finding qualified candidates is the hardest, most time-consuming part of tech hiring. It all comes down to finding the right person for the job, and ensuring the candidate finds the role that fits them.

What is the most difficult or time-consuming part of your recruiting process?



It's worth noting that aligning with your partner was not among the top three pain points for tech recruiters or hiring managers. A focused effort to boost alignment on skill expectations with hiring managers could help alleviate the top pain point — finding the right candidates. If recruiters know the exact skills hiring managers need for the role and what a quality candidate looks like, then recruiters will send hiring managers stronger candidates and close open reqs more efficiently.

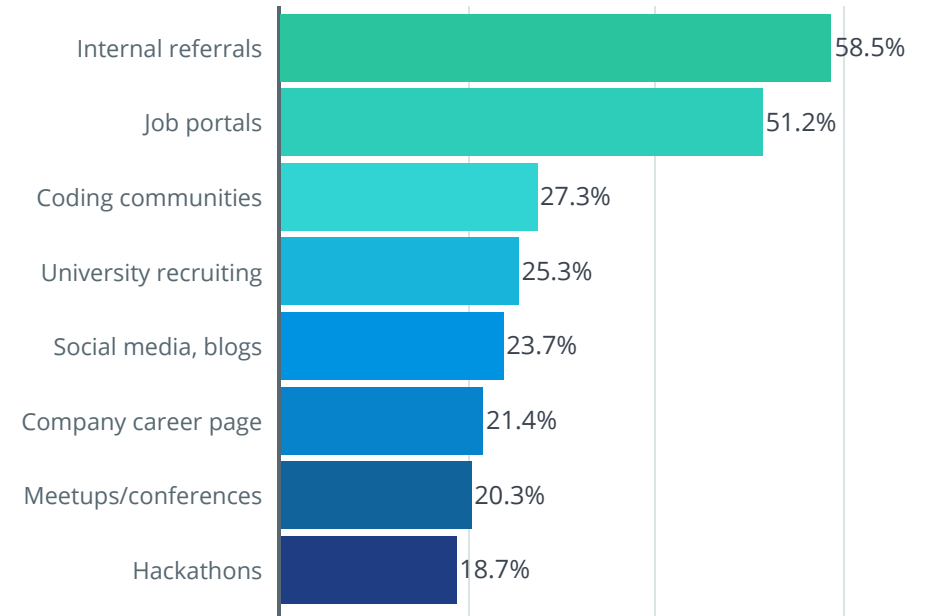


## Most people find candidates in the same way

Finding the right opportunity is often still about who you know, rather than the skills you have, unfortunately. Referrals are the #1 way that recruiters and hiring managers find tech talent. While referrals can be a good source for talent, they can also lead to homogeneous teams and companies, ultimately affecting overall diversity and leading to bidding wars for the same limited pool of pedigreed talent.

Companies should use a more standardized approach to find and evaluate hires based on skill. In other words, every referral candidate should go through the same rigorous evaluation and interview process as other candidates. The interview panel should also not be influenced by the referee. By focusing on the candidate's skills, rather than who brought them in, there are fewer biases, which expands the talent pool.

What candidate sourcing methods do you find most effective?





# Hiring managers should rethink tech talent brand to help find qualified developers

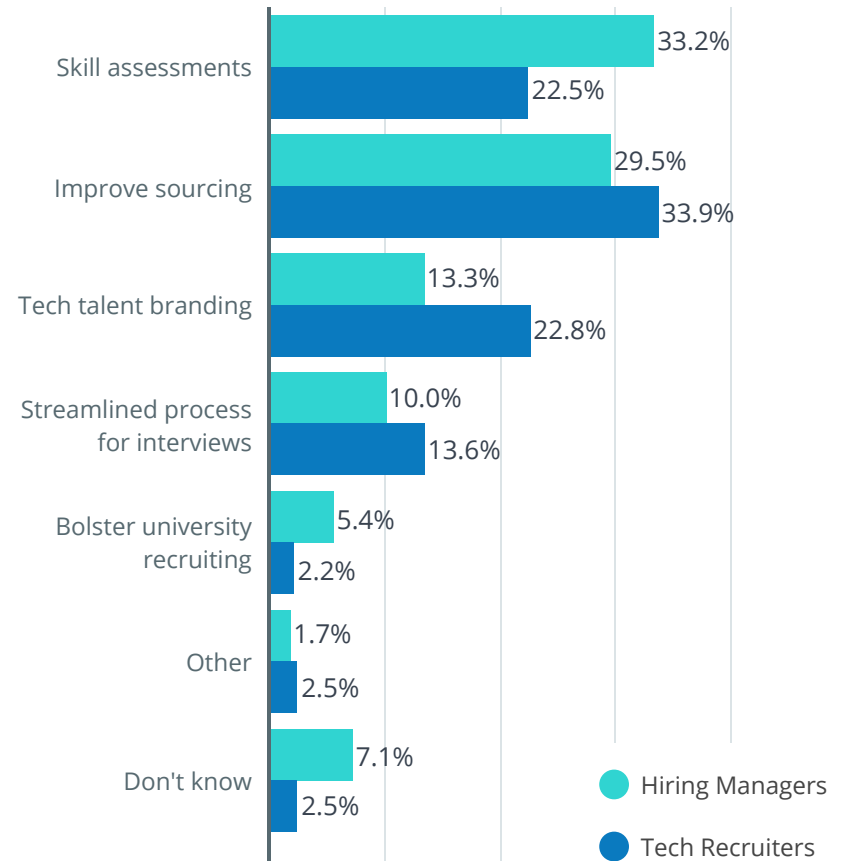
Even though sourcing is the biggest challenge, and recruiters want to invest more in fixing this, recruiters are more enthusiastic about tech talent branding than hiring managers.

In the hyper competitive developer market, **building a strong tech talent brand** is an underrated strategy to garner more self-selected candidates into your talent funnel. This entails building public-facing assets, like engineering blogs, securing conference speaking opportunities, and creating a local community around the product you're building. Some of the best tech companies, like Stripe, Slack, and Twilio have brands that developers love.

Strong tech talent branding is a long-term investment. The stronger the brand, the more organic applicants you get, and the easier it is to attract talent in the future.

The success of a strong tech talent brand is more dependent on engineering than recruiting; and yet, recruiters are almost twice as likely to invest in tech talent branding than hiring managers. There's an opportunity to educate hiring managers on the merits of tech talent branding.

What would you invest in most to strengthen your technical recruiting process?

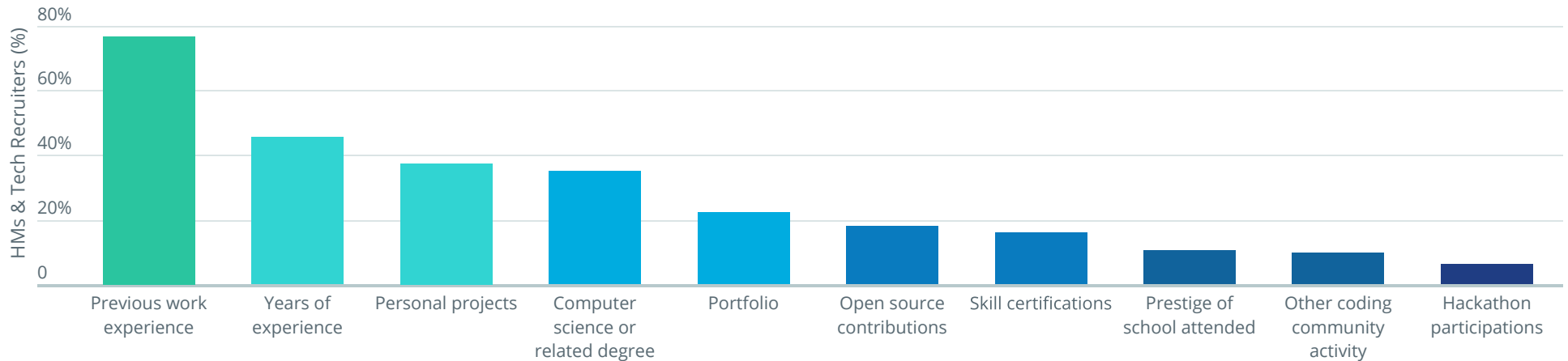


# Tech recruiters and hiring managers are outgrowing resume-based hiring

When assessing candidates, the most important qualification for recruiters and hiring managers is strong work experience, above all else. This is in line with what we found in our [2018 Developer Skills Report](#).

Tech hiring managers and recruiters are finding that resume-bolstering factors, like degree, prestige, and skill keywords aren't good measurements of whether someone will be successful on the job. So, they're looking to indicators that demonstrate ability, such as previous work experience, years of experience, and personal projects. While these qualifications aren't perfect, they're actually closer to the heart of what makes a good programmer: skill.

What are the 3 most important qualifications you look for in technical candidates before the onsite?



# In fact, 3 out of 4 tech recruiters & hiring managers have hired great candidates who didn't look good on paper

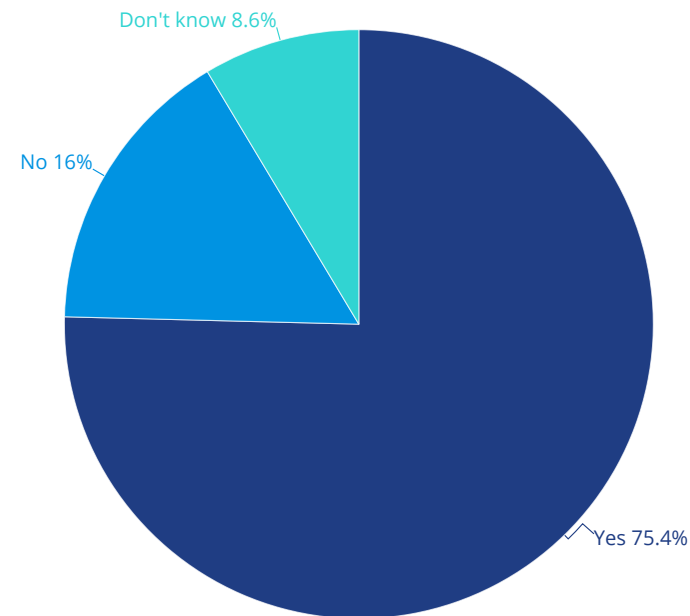
At some point or another, anyone who is involved in tech hiring finds a gem of a candidate who wouldn't pass the resume screening.

This was the case for Randstad's head of data science who found a gem by the name of [Adriana Rivera, a software developer who made her return to programming after a 14-year hiatus as a stay at home mom](#). Luckily, her programming skills spoke louder than the gap on her resume.

Programming is not conducive to traditional resumes. Consider that over 70% of developers are at least partially self-taught, according to the [2018 Developer Skills Report](#). If you're vetting candidates by CS degree, you're missing out on millions of skilled candidates.

You don't need to have CS degree from a top school to be a good developer. And our research shows that recruiters and hiring managers are starting to understand that — in fact, 75.4% say they've hired a great candidate from a non-traditional background.

Have you hired a great candidate who was highly qualified but didn't have a strong resume (e.g., traditional education)?



## A few first-hand stories of finding hidden gems:

“Self-taught, started freelance work in high school. Really knowledgeable and never saw the need for a degree in order to earn his living. He just let his raw skill speak for itself. He’s one of our stalions. Although it’s obvious he’s a rare case, he’s the reason why we started looking at self-taught candidates more closely, and it’s worked great for us.”

— Hiring Manager at a 1-99 Employee Company

“Hired a UI/UX Engineer that had limited work experience and no formal education outside of a coding boot camp but coding challenges allowed his skills and knowledge to shine through when his resume was not enough... We hired him!”

— Hiring Manager at a 5,000+ Employee Company

“Some people have an innate technical ability that might not show through on a resume. One of our best engineers is a former financial analyst for a bank who started teaching himself Java in high school, took a couple classes in college, and then went to a full-stack bootcamp to put some credentials on his resume. Would not have picked his resume out of a stack, but he’s awesome. Made us rethink our approach and made us more open minded to “non-traditional” candidates.”

— Recruiting Manager at a 5,000+ Employee Company



# In the future, tech hiring will be centered on predicting quality of candidates

When thinking about what's next in tech hiring, it's clear that Artificial Intelligence (AI) will shake things up. It's already changed other industries, like entertainment (Netflix) and auto (self-driving cars).

The question we'd love to pose now is:

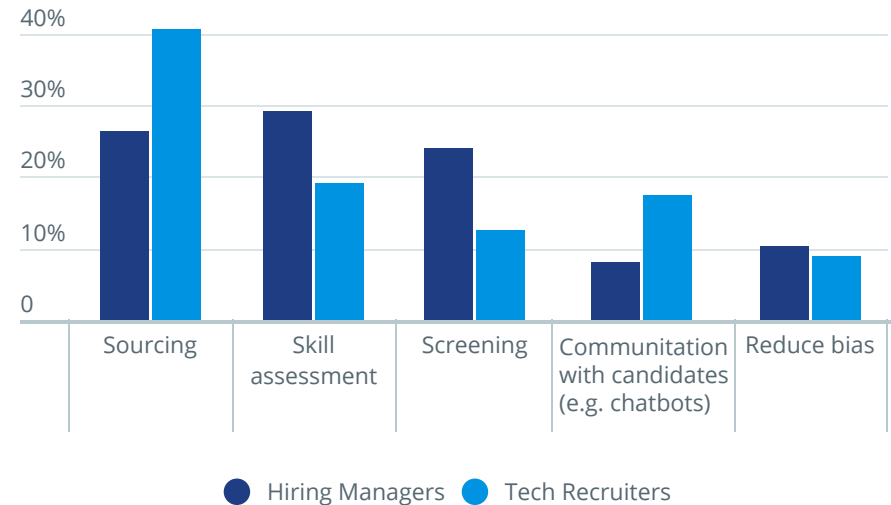
## How will AI help us in hiring developers?

This report thus far proves that it's really hard to share an understanding on technical skills needed, find qualified candidates, and evaluate them efficiently — especially using resumes and referrals.

In order to truly transform technical hiring, hiring teams need to be able to use a body of relevant data to predict fit based on proven skills. Looking at our data above, hiring managers and recruiters define success based on the quality of candidates' technical skills. And this technical skill match needs to happen early in the hiring process so that recruiters can spend more time ensuring that the match is a good fit in other aspects, including soft skills, values fit, and growth potential.

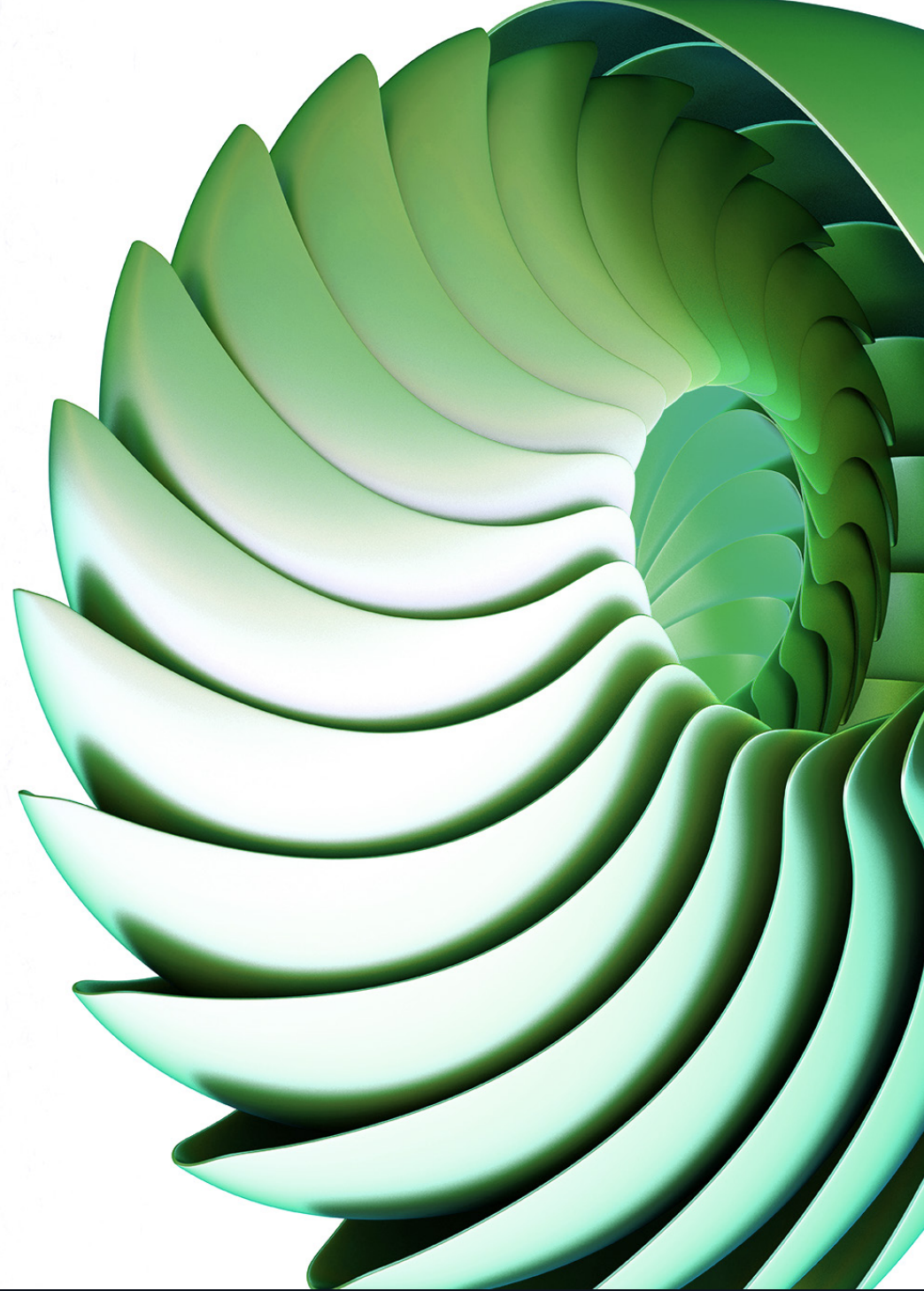
**The future of technical hiring is based on skills, first.**

In what way do you most want AI to help you in the hiring process?



## Join the Discussion ■

We'd love to hear from you. Do you have a strong relationship with your hiring manager? Is there a mismatch in measuring success? What will be the future of AI and tech hiring? E-mail us at [research@hackerrank.com](mailto:research@hackerrank.com)



[research@hackerrank.com](mailto:research@hackerrank.com)  
[www.hackerrank.com](http://www.hackerrank.com)

USA:  
+1-415-900-4023

India:  
+91-888-081-1222

UK:  
+44-208-004-0258

## More Research



## Methodology

A total of 973 respondents consisting of hiring managers (316), recruiters (249 in-house, 67 agency) and reviewers (416) completed the 8-minute online survey from March 19 to April 16, 2018. The survey was programmed in SurveyMonkey and HackerRank recruited respondents via email (community members, customers and prospects) and through social media sites. Respondents came from 50 countries. Results were analyzed using IBM-SPSS.

Tests of significant differences were conducted at the .05 level (95% probability that the difference is real, not by chance). Percentages may not always add to 100% due to rounding.





**research.hackerrank.com** ■

Match Every Developer to the Right Job

USA:

+1-415-900-4023

India:

+91-888-081-1222

UK:

+44-208-004-0258

[research@hackerrank.com](mailto:research@hackerrank.com)

[www.hackerrank.com](http://www.hackerrank.com)