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2022
TALENT PLAYBOOK

Objective insights on the top skills, hiring, and compensation trends you need in a changing market

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Table of contents

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Labor shortages, the Great Resignation, the rise of remote work, the growth of automation...

We're experiencing some of the most significant economic shifts of recent memory—and previous years' plans and strategies aren't going to cut it.

How can you stay ahead of the curve? What skills, roles, and practices should you emphasize to secure a successful year?

This report assesses the entire labor market to deliver high-level insights into the trends that will shape 2022. By the end, you'll have a data-driven and comprehensive picture of where we are and where we're headed.

Don't just weather the storm of change—**harness it.**
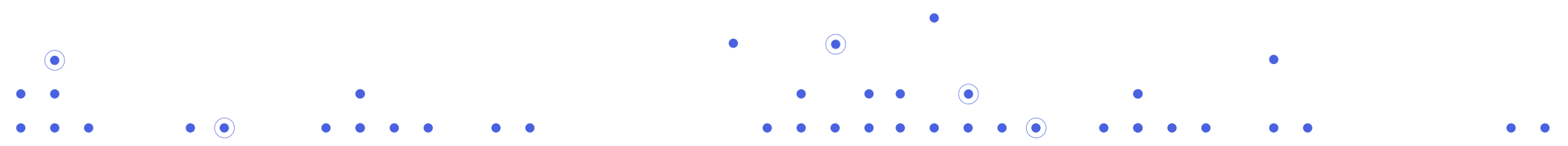
HIGHLIGHTS

01

Technological innovations are radically changing **who** companies are hiring.

02

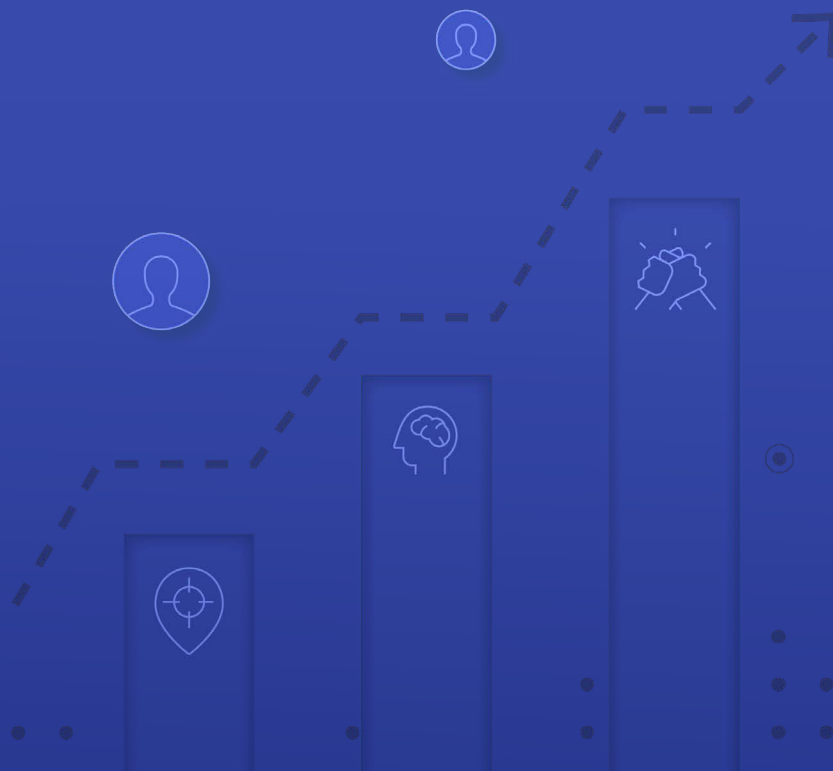Remote work is radically changing **where** companies are hiring.

03

Labor shortages are radically changing **how** companies are hiring.

SECTION

01

Top Skills and Occupations

Current hiring practices are both reactive and proactive.

They're **reactive** in that many of the current trends are direct responses to ongoing labor shortages. Companies are having trouble getting and keeping talent, and they're directing large portions of their hiring efforts toward talent acquisition and retention.

They're **proactive** in that companies are increasingly focused on the skills of the future. Technology is changing at a breakneck pace, and companies are hiring with an eye toward keeping up.

HIGHLIGHTS

01

Skills in leadership and tech are seeing significant growth.

02

Occupations focused on the future of work and talent acquisition/workforce development are seeing significant growth.

03

There's been an increased focus on what we're calling "social impact roles," i.e. jobs in the diversity, equity, and inclusion space, environmental/social/governance jobs, sustainable finance jobs, and green jobs.
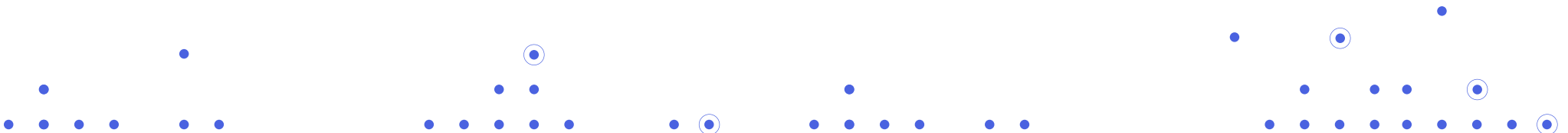
Top Skills

These are the skills with the highest rate of growth since 2016. Human skills apply across multiple industries, indicating the *general personas* that companies are looking for. Technical skills are unique to specific jobs, indicating the *particular abilities* that companies are looking for.

HUMAN SKILLS

1	**Companionship** 33%
2	**Critical Thinking** 18%
3	**Goal Setting** 15%
4	**Self-Starter** 15%
5	**Self-Motivation** 15%
6	**Organizational Skills** 14%
7	**Independent Thinking** 13%
8	**Oral Communication** 13%
9	**Strategic Thinking** 13%
10	**Creativity** 13%

TECHNICAL SKILLS

1	**DevSecOps** 221%
2	**Vue.js** 166%
3	**Kubernetes** 109%
4	**Looker Data Platform** 102%
5	**TensorFlow** 99%
6	**Hiring Practices** 89%
7	**Microsoft Power BI** 78%
8	**DataDog** 77%
9	**Blockchain** 76%
10	**Data Lakes / Reservoirs** 73%

TIP

Given the demand for these skills, building them within your current workforce is often a better bet than trying to hunt them down in the wild. If you do need to hire outside your organization, consider related skills with less demand that can be developed into the skills you need.

Along the way, keep tabs on whether your company's talent is moving with or against the grain of current talent trends. Benchmark your competition and continually monitor which skills are emerging.

Big winners: caregiving (companionship), self-management (e.g. self-starter), people-management (e.g. organizational skills). Companies are looking for leaders, people who are good at people.

Big winners: software development (e.g. DevSecOps), data (e.g. Looker Data Platform), and talent acquisition (e.g. hiring practices). Companies are focusing on building a workforce that's prepared for the future.

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Top Occupations

These occupations had next to no job postings five years ago—since then, they've exploded. We've divided these emerging occupations into two groups: non-degree occupations (occupations that don't require a bachelor's degree), and degree occupations (occupations that do).

NON-DEGREE OCCUPATIONS

1	**Influencer** 124%
2	**Fintech Sales Rep** 89%
3	**Landfill Gas Technician** 55%
4	**Additive Manufacturing Technician** 46%
5	**Solar Installer** 35%
6	**Order Processor/Order Entry Clerk** 30%
7	**Solar Sales Rep** 29%
8	**Cargo Coordinator/Freight Forwarder** 28%
9	**Automation Technician** 20%
10	**Robotics Tech** 13%

DEGREE OCCUPATIONS

1	**AI Consultant** 89%
2	**Blockchain/Web3 Developer** 56%
3	**People Analytics Professional** 52%
4	**Augmented Reality Engineer** 37%
5	**ML Ops** 36%
6	**Alternative Energy Manager** 35%
7	**Diversity Chief Officer** 34%
8	**E-Commerce Specialist** 32%
9	**Content Marketing Specialist** 29%
10	**Distributed Energy Engineer** 27%

TIP

As demand increases for these occupations, supply shrinks. Start hiring now, and make sure your wage rates can compete. Consider widening your talent pools by removing college degree requirements. And look at building these occupations internally, upskilling employees with related job descriptions.

Big winners: social media (e.g. influencer), green jobs (e.g. solar installer), automation/robotics (e.g. automation technician).

Big winners: AI (e.g. artificial intelligence consultant), blockchain (e.g. blockchain/Web3 developer), workforce development (e.g. people analytics professional).
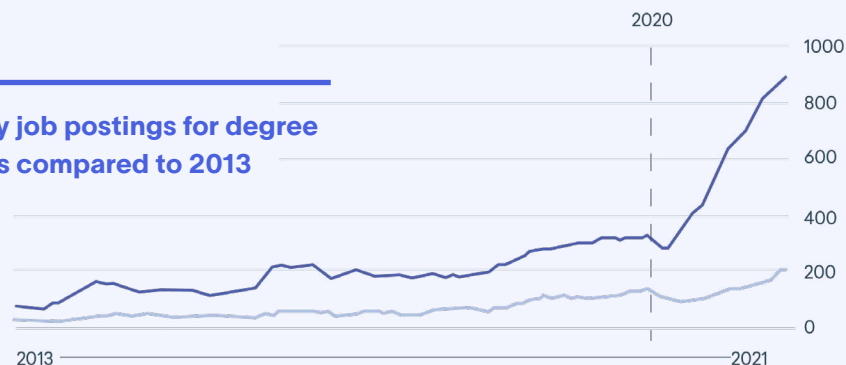
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Social Impact Roles

In addition to the skills and occupations already mentioned, there have been notable trends in hiring for...

(1) Diversity/equity/inclusion (DEI) jobs

(2) Environmental/social/governance (ESG) and sustainable finance jobs
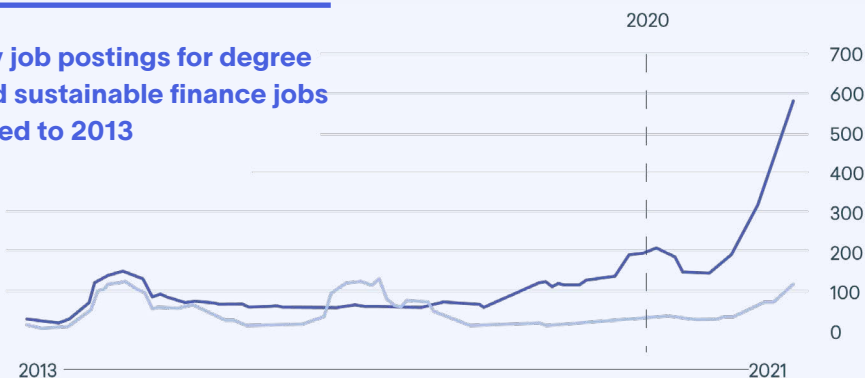
(3) Green jobs

NON-DEGREE DEGREE

6x
as many job postings for degree DEI jobs compared to 2013

6x
as many job postings for degree ESG and sustainable finance jobs compared to 2013

3x
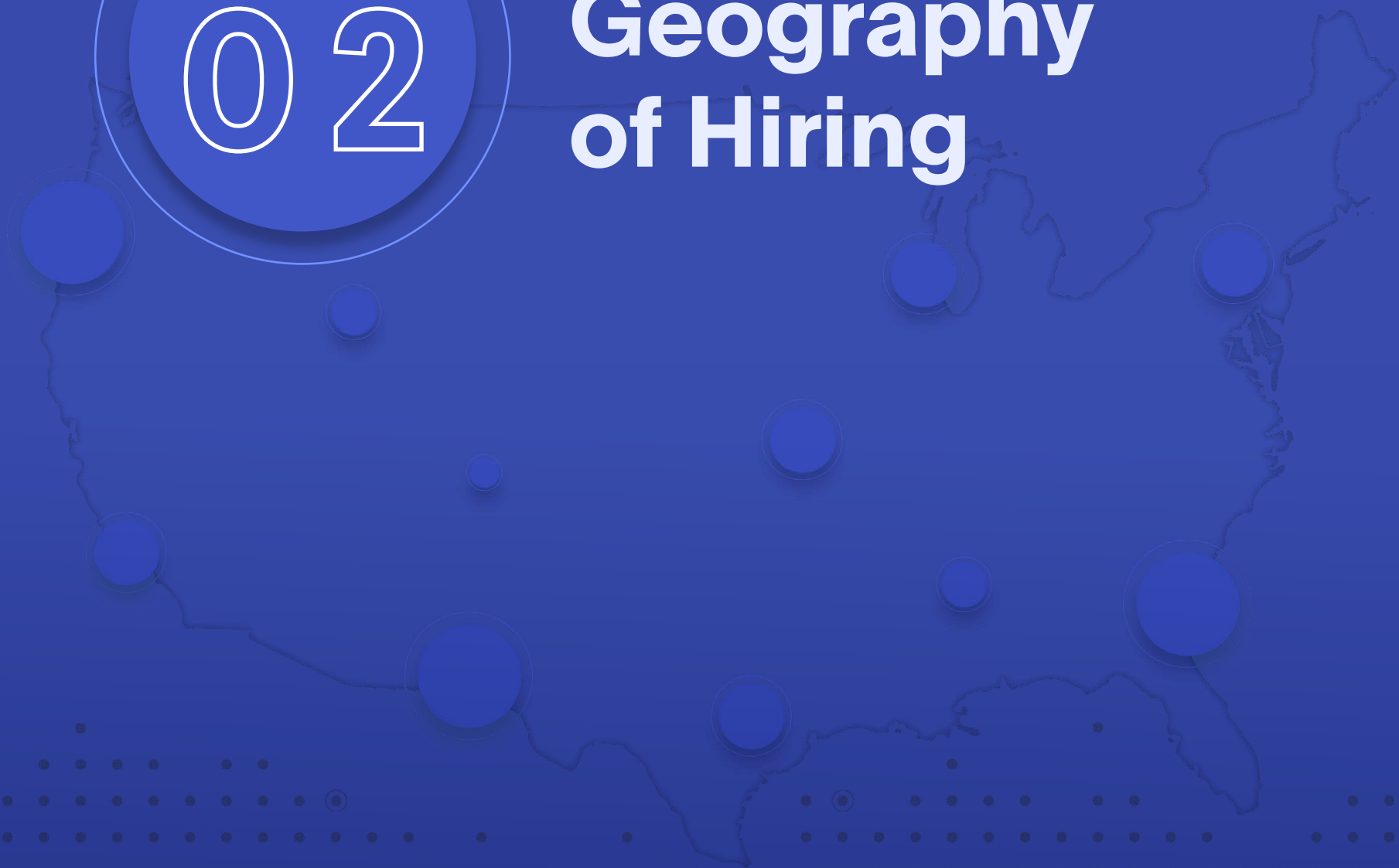as many job postings for non-degree green jobs compared to 2013

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02

Geography of Hiring

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When it comes to the geography of hiring, there's an elephant in the room: remote work.

The percentage of remote positions has more than tripled since the beginning of 2020—**and this massive surge shows no signs of slowing down.**

No one can afford to ignore the rise of remote work. As it alters the relationship between employer and employee, city and suburb, and work life and home life, expect remote work to change where and how you hire in 2022.

HIGHLIGHTS

01

The percentage of remote positions has more than tripled since the beginning of 2020.
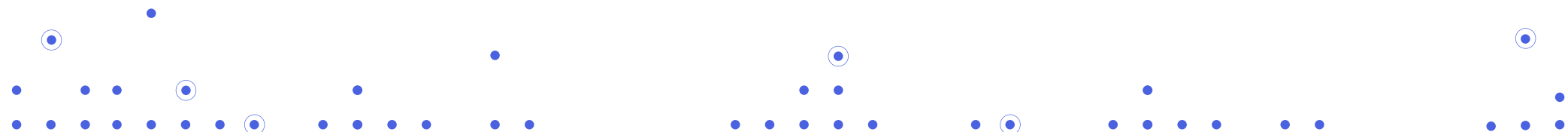
02

With the rise of remote work, companies are increasingly hiring outside of their immediate location. This means...

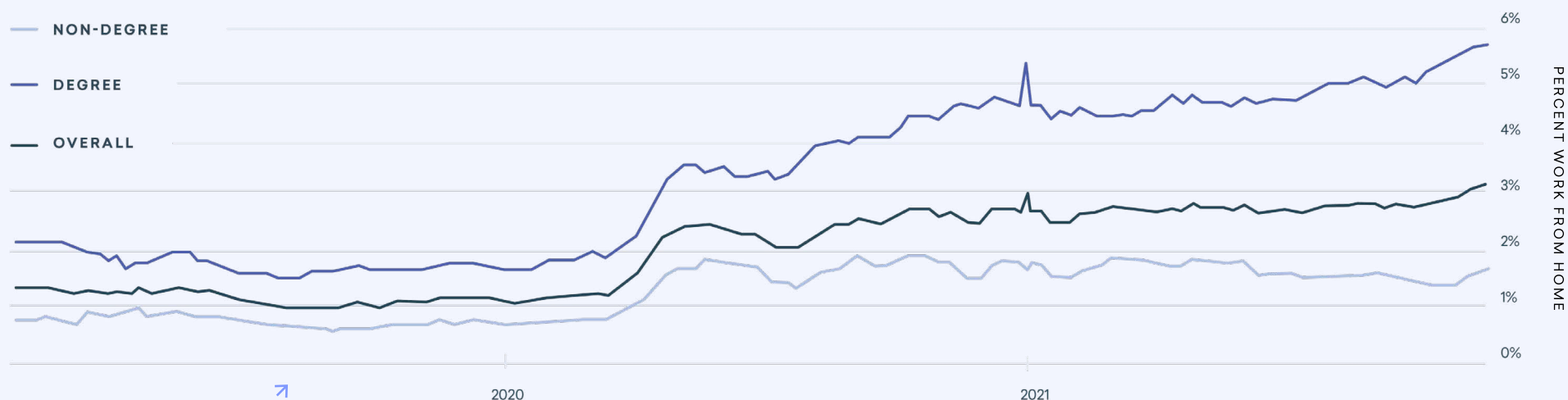**More competition**—your competitors are no longer limited by geography.

More opportunities—your talent pools are no longer limited by geography.

03

Tech, finance, sales, and customer service occupations have seen particular growth in remote positions.

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Growth of Remote Work

NON-DEGREE

DEGREE

OVERALL

2020

2021

PERCENT WORK FROM HOME

6%

5%

4%

3%

2%

1%

0%

Percentage of remote positions has tripled compared to pre-COVID, and continues to climb. This astounding growth indicates that remote work is much more than a pandemic-exclusive phenomenon—**remote work is here to stay.**

Expansion in Hiring Geography

Shares of job ads posted by West Coast tech companies for jobs located outside of the West Coast

SOURCE: THE CONFERENCE BOARD, 2022

45%

40%

35%

30%

25%

2016

2021

The growth of remote work radically expands the reach of a company's hiring efforts. For example, research by The Conference Board shows that over 40% of the jobs posted by West Coast tech companies are now being posted outside of the West Coast.

TIP

Be prepared to get creative with your hiring tactics to combat increased competition from other regions. In addition, expand your hiring efforts yourself to find the regions and candidates that are best-suited to your needs.

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Top Remote Work Roles

NON-DEGREE OCCUPATIONS

* Percent growth of remote positions since 2016

DEGREE OCCUPATIONS

1	**Loan Processor** 818%	1	**Financial Service Rep** 1079%
2	**Collections Specialist** 741%	2	**.Net Developer/Engineer** 1012%
3	**Sales Support Assistant** 650%	3	**Java Developer/Engineer** 888%
4	**Loan Officer** 629%	4	**Data Developer/Engineer** 853%
5	**Technical Customer Service Rep** 616%	5	**Technical Manager/Director** 805%
6	**Insurance Customer Service Rep** 602%	6	**SAP Analyst/Admin** 800%
7	**Accounting Clerk** 547%	7	**Technical Consultant/Analyst** 772%
8	**Sales Support Specialist** 496%	8	**Data Architect** 752%
9	**Inside Sales Rep** 493%	9	**Software QA Engineer/Tester** 739%
10	**Technical Support Engineer/Analyst** 489%	10	**Financial Planning Manager** 730%

Big winners: finance (e.g. loan processor), sales (e.g. sales support assistant), and customer service (e.g. technical customer service representative).

Big winners: finance (e.g. financial services representative), programming (e.g. .NET developer), and data (e.g. data warehouse developer).
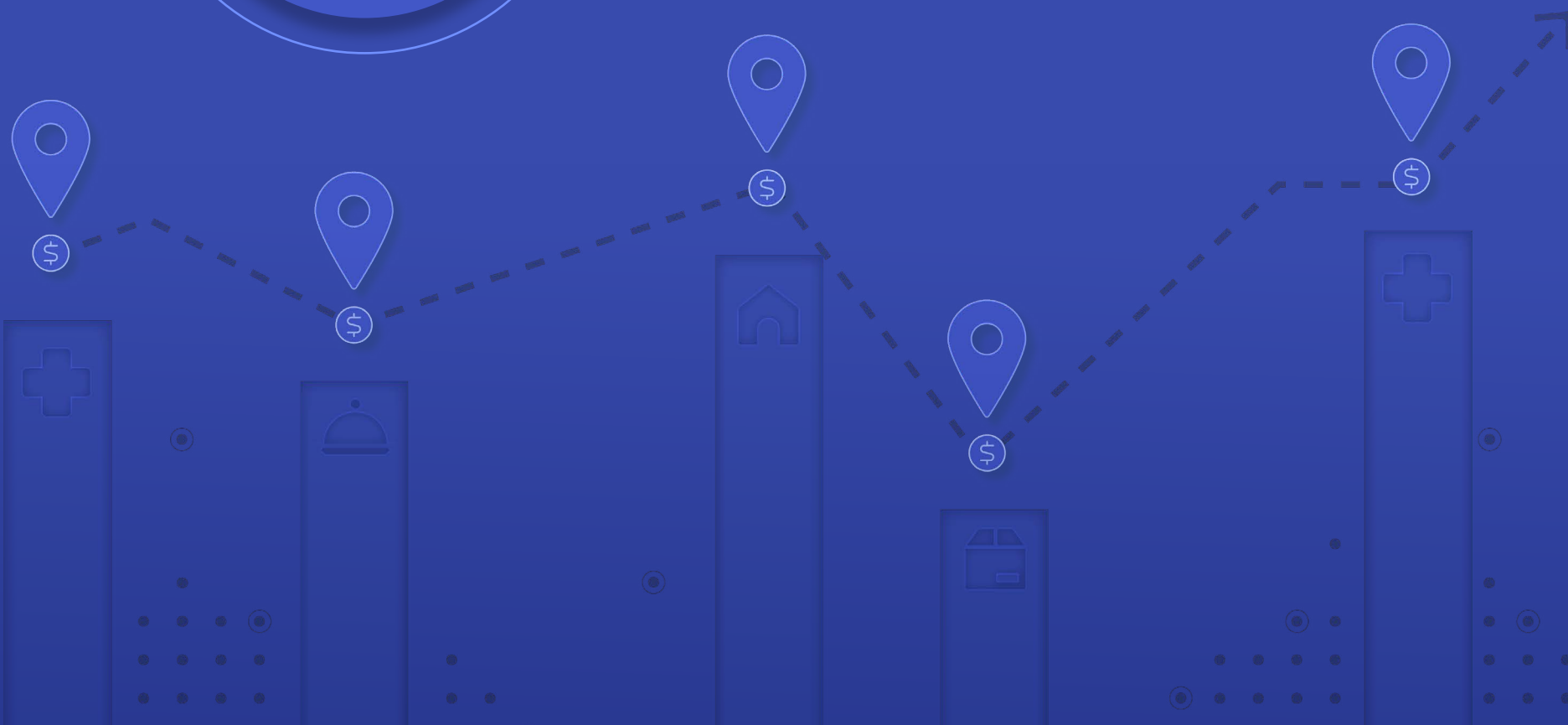
TIP

Efficiency and flexibility are key. Plan to compete nationally for talent by determining if you're able to open up a position to remote work, broadening your horizon of opportunity.

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SECTION

03 Compensation Trends

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As labor shortages continue to make talent a rare commodity, wages are soaring.

Wage rates increased by twice as much in Q3 of 2021 than in both Q2 of 2021 and Q3 of 2019.

Many companies are trying out new tactics like signing bonuses and tuition assistance to attract talent. With every indication that labor shortages will continue well into 2022, expect companies to keep looking for creative ways to reel in new candidates.

HIGHLIGHTS

01

Wages increased by 1.3% in Q3 of 2021, twice as much as Q2 of 2021 and Q3 of 2019.
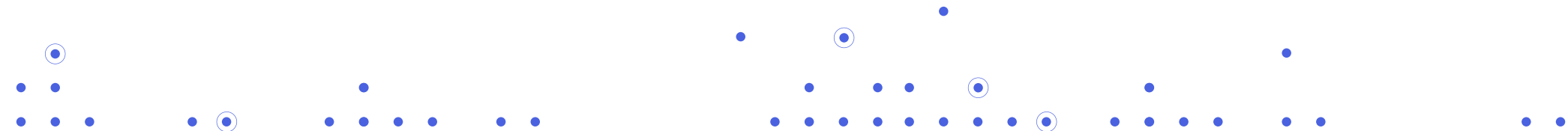
02

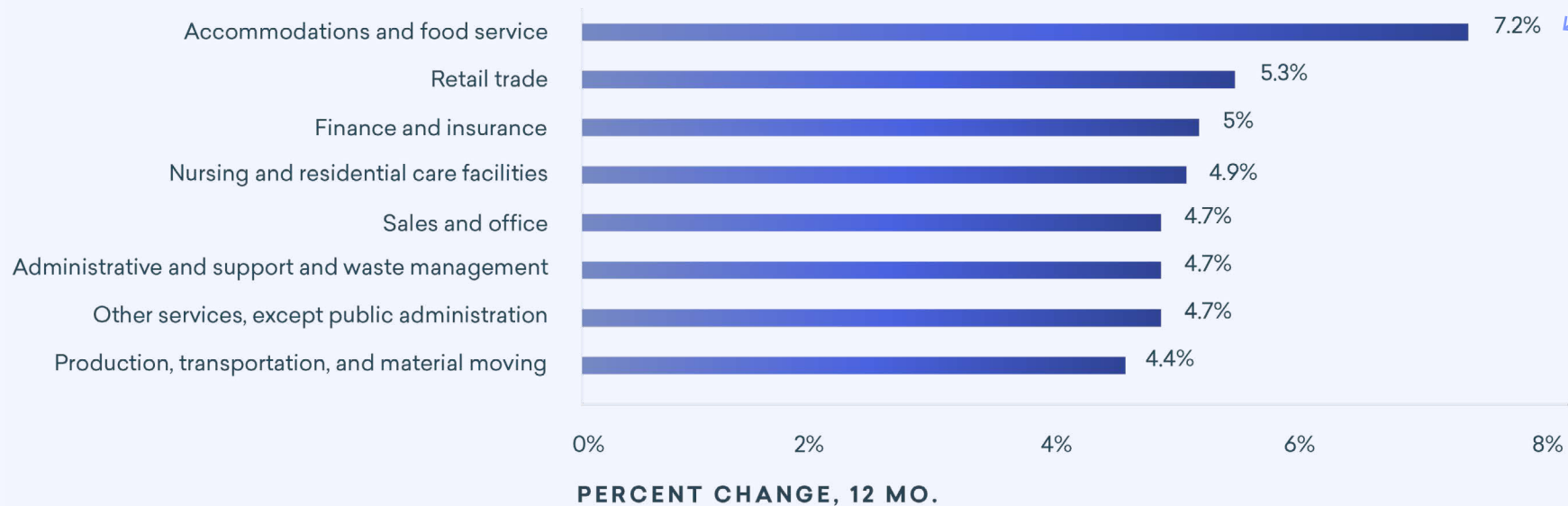Hospitality, supply chain, and healthcare have seen particularly severe wage increases.

03

Compensation trends are increasingly being determined by industry giants.

04

Companies are utilizing a variety of new and improved perks to attract talent.

Compensation Changes by Industry

PERCENT CHANGE, 12 MO.

Accommodations and food service — 7.2%
Retail trade — 5.3%
Finance and insurance — 5%
Nursing and residential care facilities — 4.9%
Sales and office — 4.7%
Administrative and support and waste management — 4.7%
Other services, except public administration — 4.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving — 4.4%

While wage increases have impacted most industries, some sectors have been hit especially hard.

Hospitality: COVID gutted the hospitality industry, resulting in large swaths of business closures and employee layoffs. Now, as the economy reopens, hotels and restaurants are playing an enormous amount of catch-up.

Supply chain: On top of labor shortages, higher pay rates from industry giants like Amazon and Target have forced other employers to pay up or risk unfilled jobs. What's more, an increase in price at one level of the supply chain tends to snowball into others, causing ever-increasing expense.

Healthcare: The need for healthcare workers exploded over COVID and has only increased since then. In the face of this need, the effect of labor shortages on the healthcare industry has been exceptionally acute.

TIP

Make sure you're staying up on how the wage you're offering compares to your market/industry. If you're unable to match or exceed the going wage in your region, consider hiring remotely in other regions—or get creative by utilizing some of the hiring strategies in the next section.
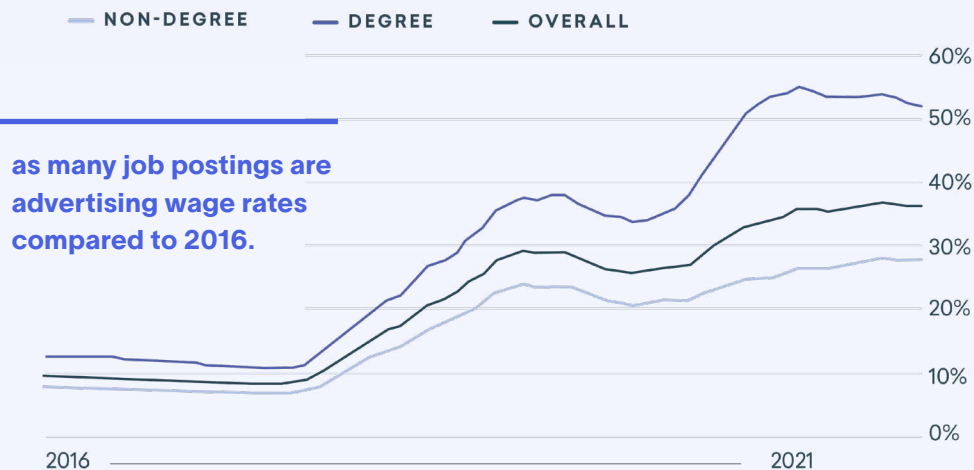
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Hiring Strategies

In addition to rising wages, companies are trying out new tactics to get talent in the door. More and more companies are implementing wage transparency and offering perks such as signing bonuses and retirement benefits.

TIP

Other benefits you could utilize include childcare, generous vacation days, parking/transportation, hours devoted to community service—the list goes on. Benefits have particular appeal to particular audiences (e.g. childcare appeals to working parents), so tailor the benefits you offer to the talent pools you're hoping to tap.

3x

as many job postings are advertising wage rates compared to 2016.

NON-DEGREE DEGREE OVERALL

2016   2021

3x

as many job postings are advertising signing bonuses compared to 2016.

2016   2021

2x

as many job postings are advertising retirement benefits compared to 2016.

2016   2021

Tuition and Training

Another technique companies are using to attract and retain talent is supporting their employees' ongoing education.

TIP

Education-focused benefits are especially important to consider while constructing your talent pipeline. Use tuition programs to access early-career talent, and use onsite training to build intuitive career pathways for your employees.

— NON-DEGREE — DEGREE — OVERALL

Tuition assistance programs help fund employees' schooling.

8%
6%
4%
2%
0%

2016 ———————————— 2021
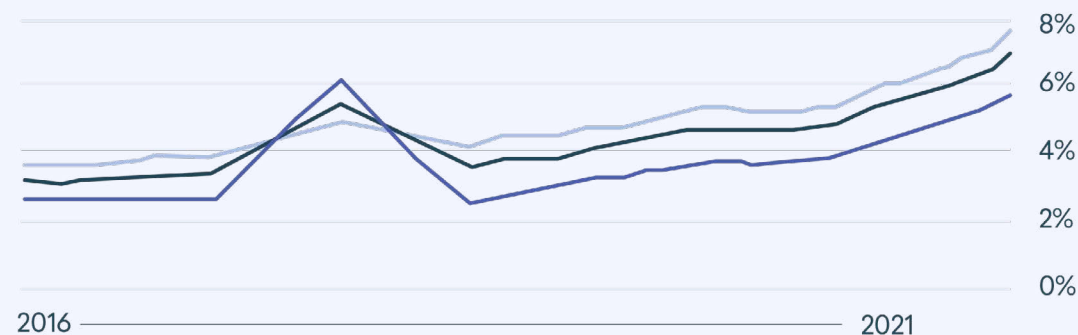
Onsite training upskills employees using formal, on-the-job instruction.

3%

2%

1%

0%

2016 ———————————— 2021

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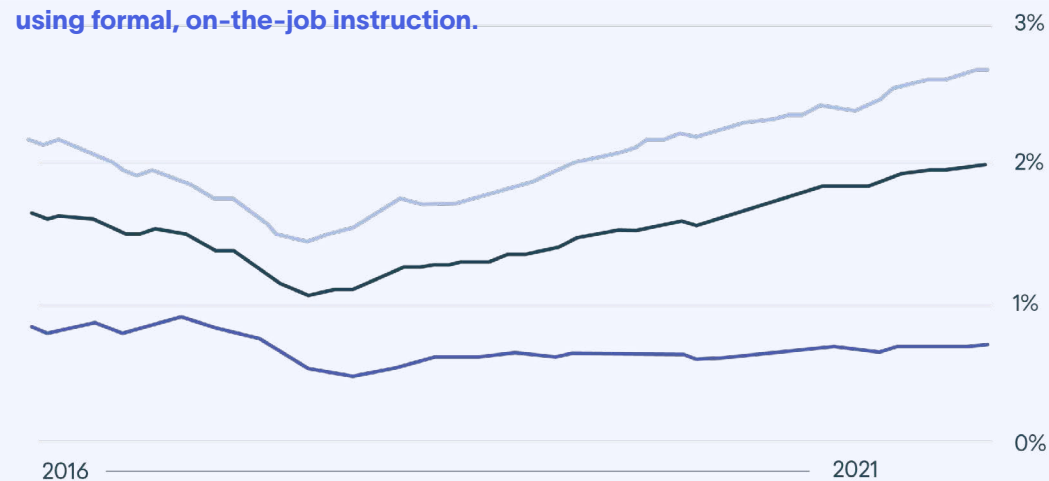
Your 2022 Gameplan

We're in for an extraordinary year, with some extraordinary challenges. Talent has never been so important, and so elusive.

But with those extraordinary challenges come some extraordinary opportunities. Remote work has thrown the doors open to talent pools worldwide. Job postings are reflecting increasingly innovative ways to attract talent. Education-focused benefits are allowing companies to upskill and empower their employees.

By creating a data-driven, future-focused game plan, you can face all the challenges and opportunities of 2022—and come out on top.

REPORT RECAP

01

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02

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03

Labor shortages are radically changing *how* companies are hiring.

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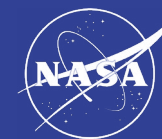Trusted by some of the biggest names on the Fortune 500 List:

Lightcast is the world's leading authority on job skills, workforce talent, and labor market dynamics. We empower businesses, education providers, and governments to find the talent they need, and enable workers to unlock new career opportunities.

With engineers and data specialists continually collecting and analyzing data from thousands of job boards, company websites, online resumes, employee profiles, and traditional government sources, we produce the most comprehensive, up-to-date picture of the labor market available.

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