

THE RISE OF AI

What will tech jobs look like in 2026?

Here's a roundup of research and predictions for tech workers amid the AI revolution.

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The tech job market in 2026 is being built on contradictions.

Companies are laying off staff, insisting artificial intelligence will “do more with less” — yet they haven’t found ways to deploy AI at scale. Recruiters say entry-level pathways are narrowing, but critical roles remain hard to fill.

Even as headlines scream “automation,” the day-to-day reality is messier: Hybrid work is still a dealbreaker, job titles are splintering into new specialties, and workers are being asked to produce more output with fewer resources.

Rest of World reviewed recent research on tech job trends in 2026



Robots versus humans

Deloitte Tech Trends

Deloitte’s 2025 Emerging Technology Trends study noted that while 30% of surveyed organizations are exploring agentic options and 38% are piloting solutions, only 14% have solutions that are ready to be deployed. A mere 11% are actively using these systems in production. Furthermore, 42% of organizations report they are still developing their agentic strategy road map, with 35% having no formal strategy at all.

While most human workers are generally comfortable with predictable, rule-based robots, physical AI systems that learn and adapt introduce new uncertainties, especially worries about job

displacement. Experts predict, however, that most roles will evolve toward collaboration rather than replacement.

The goal is to create environments where robots handle repetitive or dangerous tasks while humans focus on creative problem-solving and complex decision-making.

Read the full report here.



Office mandate headache

Korn Ferry TA Trends 2026

The best workers want hybrid or remote roles. Yet more companies are demanding full-time in-office attendance. It's not making hiring any easier.

The battle lines have been drawn. Companies are demanding people return to the office full-time while workers dig in their heels, insisting they want remote or hybrid work options.

According to the Korn Ferry report, 52% of talent acquisition leaders say office mandates hinder recruitment, while 72% find remote roles easier to fill.



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Business leaders might think this is fine right now, but in roles with chronic skills shortages, it'll rapidly be clear that it's not fine at all.

If your employer brand isn't strong enough to overcome the office requirement, you'll end up paying premium salaries to attract people who would otherwise work elsewhere. Or worse, you'll just be filling seats — settling for whoever is willing to show up, not the talent who will move your business forward.

Read the full report here.



New AI job titles

Tech recruitment platform Built In

As companies seek specialists, the emergence of new roles with novel job titles and nuanced skill requirements will be a feature of 2026. As the economy picks up steam, companies will narrow their focus and drift away from broad-spectrum roles with catch-all titles like “software engineer” and “data scientist” toward more tailored, task-specific job titles.

Navigating the future of work in tech this year will involve companies focused more at the intersection of AI-workflow integration, governance, and impact.

Read the full report [here](#).

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