

TMJ WEEKLY STAFFING INTELLIGENCE BRIEF

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STAFFING TECH TIPS

The Small Technical Decisions That Can Change Recruiting Performance

Beginning this week, the TMJ Tech Team will share one practical technology tip in each edition of the Weekly Staffing Intelligence Brief. To launch the series, we're starting with eight.

Recruitment marketing increasingly depends on technical details that are easy to overlook. A job posting, careers website or campaign can look perfectly acceptable while problems with search visibility, application friction, tracking or outdated information quietly reduce the number of candidates who reach the recruiter.

These tips are for everyone in a staffing or recruiting organization, not just the technology team. Each ends with a simple action because the objective is not simply to know more about technology. It is to use it more intelligently.

TIP 1: USE JOB TITLES THAT CANDIDATES ACTUALLY SEARCH FOR

A job title is part of the search language used to find a position. A creative title such as "Sales Ninja" or "Happiness Hero" may sound memorable internally, but it may not clearly communicate the opportunity to a candidate or a search engine.

The objective is clarity. Standard titles that identify the occupation, level or relevant shift give candidates a better starting point for determining whether the position is relevant.

What you can do: Before a title goes live, search for it on Google or Indeed. If you cannot find legitimate jobs using substantially the same terminology, ask whether the title is helping candidates find the job or simply helping the company describe it.

TIP 2: HELP CLIENT JOBS BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR GOOGLE'S JOB SEARCH EXPERIENCE

Google says individual job pages can become eligible for its enhanced job search experience when they contain appropriate Job Posting structured data. That markup can provide Google with information including the title, location, compensation and other details.

That makes structured data a relatively simple technical check with potentially important consequences for candidate discovery.

What you can do: Search for one of your client's jobs together with the city. If the job does not appear in Google's job search experience, send the URL to the Tech Team for investigation.

TIP 3: PUT THE SALARY AND KEY BENEFITS IN THE AD

Candidates use compensation to decide whether an opportunity is worth pursuing, and a posting without it loses applicants to one that has it. Pay transparency rules continue to vary by jurisdiction, so the published range still has to match the location.

What you can do: Ask for a salary range when taking the job brief from the client and check the applicable pay transparency requirements before publishing the position.

TIP 4: TEST THE APPLICATION ON YOUR OWN PHONE

Candidates experience an application on the device they are actually using. A form that looks perfectly acceptable on a desktop can become cumbersome on a phone because of small controls, awkward scrolling, difficult uploads, or pages that display poorly.

Candidates who abandon an application rarely leave an explanation.

What you can do: Pick one live job and apply from your phone. Record how long it takes and anything that creates friction, then send those observations to the Tech Team.

TIP 5: KEEP APPLICATION FORMS SHORT

An application should collect the information required to make the next decision, not everything a recruiter might eventually want to know.

Creating a profile, re-entering information already contained in a résumé, or completing an extensive questionnaire can introduce friction before the candidate has even spoken with a recruiter.

The useful question is not "What information could we collect?" It is "What information do we need at this stage?"

What you can do: Speak one client application and identify every question that is unnecessary for the initial decision to review with the candidate. Bring those suggested changes to the account team or Tech Team.

TIP 6: MAKE THE CAREERS PAGE DO THE SELLING

A careers page should give a candidate reasons to believe the employer is worth considering, not simply present a list of vacancies.

Real photographs, employee perspectives, benefits, working conditions, and answers to common questions can provide context that a list of open positions cannot.

The page should answer the candidate's implicit question: "Why would I want to work here?"

What you can do: Look at one client's careers page and ask yourself whether it would convince you to apply. Note what is missing and pass it to the account team or Tech Team.

TIP 7: TRACK WHERE EVERY CLICK COMES FROM

When a job is distributed through LinkedIn, WhatsApp, email, social media, or another channel, the business should be able to determine where the resulting traffic originated.

Google Analytics uses UTM parameters as a way to identify the campaigns, sources and other attributes associated with incoming traffic. Without consistent tagging, traffic can be much harder to interpret later.

What you can do: Before sharing a job link through another channel, ask the Tech Team for a properly tagged version. It takes very little time and makes subsequent reporting more useful.

TIP 8: REFRESH, REPOST, AND REMOVE JOBS ON TIME

A live job should represent a genuine opportunity. Google requires job posting information to remain accurate and provides specific guidance for handling expired postings.

An outdated position can therefore become more than an administrative nuisance. It can create a poor candidate experience and undermine confidence in the information being presented.

What you can do: Make Friday your live job check. Close anything that has been filled, and flag anything that has become stale so it can be reviewed and, where appropriate, refreshed.

Executive Snapshot

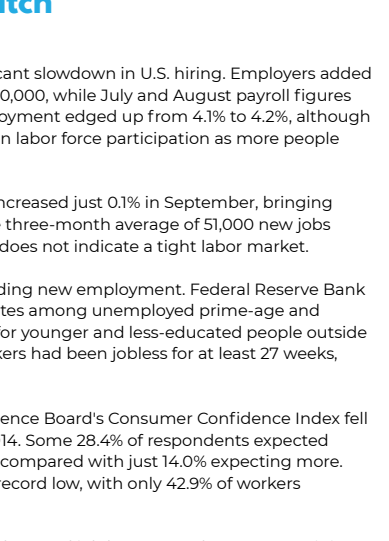
The U.S. labor market delivered a materially weaker employment number than expected in September. Payroll employment increased by just 29,000, unemployment rose to 4.2%, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics revised July and August employment downward by a combined 60,000 jobs.

The weakness does not yet resemble a labor market experiencing widespread layoffs. Weekly unemployment claims remain exceptionally low, creating an unusual combination of slow hiring and limited job losses.

For staffing leaders, that distinction matters. Employers can remain cautious about adding workers without substantially reducing their existing workforces.

Opportunity therefore depends increasingly on identifying the sectors, occupations and individual employers where demand remains active.

Staffing demand has held up better than the headline payroll number suggests. The ASA Staffing Index stood at 93 for the week of September 7 to 13, up 3.3% on the same week in 2025, which is a reminder to read staffing demand separately from the broader employment picture.



Europe is similarly complicated. Euro-area unemployment remained at 6.4% in August, unchanged from July but slightly above its year-earlier level. EU unemployment held at 6.1%.

At the same time, euro-area inflation accelerated from 3.2% in August to 3.8% in September, with energy prices contributing heavily to the increase.

The common signal is not simply weakness or strength.

It is **selectivity**.

Broad economic indicators increasingly provide context. They do not tell staffing companies where the opportunity is.

Labor Economist's Market Watch

United States

The September employment report confirmed a significant slowdown in U.S. hiring. Employers added just 29,000 jobs against expectations of approximately 90,000, while July and August payroll figures were revised downward by a combined 60,000. Unemployment edged up from 4.1% to 4.2%, although the increase partly reflected a 0.2 percentage point rise in labor force participation as more people resumed looking for work.

Wage growth also weakened. Average hourly earnings increased just 0.1% in September, bringing annual growth down to 3.0%. ABN AMRO noted that the three-month average of 51,000 new jobs remains reasonable given constrained labor supply, but does not indicate a tight labor market.

The underlying concern is the difficulty workers face finding new employment. Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco research found declining job-finding rates among unemployed prime-age and college-educated workers, alongside weaker prospects for younger and less-educated people outside the labor force. In September, 27.1% of unemployed workers had been jobless for at least 27 weeks, compared with 23.6% a year earlier.

Worker confidence reflects those conditions. The Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index fell to 81.9 in September, its lowest level since September 2014. Some 28.4% of respondents expected fewer jobs to be available over the following six months, compared with just 14.0% expecting more. Glassdoor's Employee Confidence Index also reached a record low, with only 42.9% of workers expressing a positive six-month business outlook.

The picture remains one of limited hiring rather than widespread job losses. Employers are retaining much of their existing workforce, but opportunities for job seekers are becoming harder to secure. UBS economist Paul Donovan has also highlighted the disconnect between relatively stable employment conditions, weak real wage growth and a declining share of economic output going to workers.

For the Federal Reserve, weaker employment and wage growth reduce the immediate pressure to raise interest rates. ABN AMRO expects the Fed to hold rates in October but still anticipates a December increase if persistent energy driven inflation threatens to spread into broader prices and wages.

United Kingdom

The UK economy is proving more resilient than its hiring market. The Office for National Statistics revised second quarter GDP growth upward from 0.4% to 0.5%, while business investment increased 5.2% year over year. Yet stronger output has not translated into renewed recruitment.

The Institute of Directors' September survey showed employment expectations improving from -6 to -2, still well below the long-term average of +10. Approximately one quarter of business leaders expect to reduce headcount over the coming year, compared with 22% planning to increase it. Investment intentions remained negative at -8, while cost expectations stood at +7.9.

The contrast between business confidence and economic confidence is particularly revealing. Directors reported a positive outlook for their own organizations (+10), but remained deeply pessimistic about the wider economy (-54). Companies appear to be managing difficult conditions rather than preparing for expansion.

The outlook for the final quarter remains challenging. Capital Economics expects growth to weaken as inflation erodes household purchasing power, while RSM economist Thomas Pugh has warned that higher interest rates, inflation and the prospect of another tax raising Budget could further constrain activity. Markets are anticipating additional Bank of England tightening, increasing pressure on businesses already reluctant to hire.

Artificial intelligence introduces a longer term uncertainty. UK AI minister Kanishka Narayan has said there is no evidence yet of an overall decline in employment attributable to AI, while acknowledging the need to prepare for potential disruption. Research from the Institute for Public Policy Research also identifies substantial occupational exposure to AI, particularly in service based roles.

For staffing firms, the immediate challenge is a market where economic growth is not generating equivalent employment demand. The longer term question is how AI will change the composition of that demand, even if its overall employment impact remains uncertain.

Europe

Inflation and weaker business confidence are complicating Europe's employment outlook. France's harmonized annual inflation rate rose from 2.6% in August to 3.4% in September, while euro-area inflation reached 3.8%, driven largely by higher energy prices. The renewed price pressure has increased expectations of further European Central Bank interest rate increases, raising concerns about borrowing costs and hiring in rate sensitive industries.

The European Commission's September surveys showed economic sentiment slipping to 97.9 from 98.4 in August, while euro-area consumer confidence fell to -16.5. Haver Analytics found that construction and industrial sentiment remained relatively resilient against historical levels, while services were weaker. This divergence matters because services account for a substantial share of euro-area employment.

Rising fuel costs are adding pressure on transport, logistics and agricultural businesses. For fuel intensive employers, higher operating expenses can reduce margins and constrain investment or hiring. Germany responded by temporarily reducing energy taxes on gasoline and diesel from October 1 through December 31, seeking to ease costs for households and businesses, particularly those in logistics and related sectors.

The immediate concern for staffing companies is the combination of uneven sector demand, elevated operating costs and the prospect of tighter monetary policy. Businesses facing rising expenses may become more selective about recruitment even where underlying activity remains relatively stable.

Global

Confidence in the global economic outlook has improved, but expectations for employment remain more cautious. The World Economic Forum's September Chief Economists' Outlook found that 56% of respondents expect economic conditions to stabilize or improve over the coming year, a marked improvement from May, when 89% anticipated deterioration.

Artificial intelligence is a major source of that optimism, although investment and employment expectations are diverging. While 78% of surveyed economists expect data center investment to contribute significantly to global growth, 61% do not expect it to generate a comparable share of job creation. Another 79% anticipate substantial local opposition to data center expansion, potentially complicating investment plans.

Government support may also provide less protection against future economic shocks. Although 69% of respondents identified fiscal support as a major source of resilience since 2020, only 28% expect it to play a similar role over the next year. Meanwhile, continued cost of living pressures are expected to constrain household purchasing power across much of the global economy.

The longer term employment implications of AI remain uncertain. Nearly all respondents expect adoption to increase, and 69% anticipate meaningful productivity gains. However, greater productivity does not necessarily translate into proportional workforce expansion.

For staffing leaders, the distinction is important: stronger economic growth and investment may not produce equivalent increases in recruitment demand. Understanding which industries are expanding their workforces, rather than simply increasing output or capital spending, will become increasingly important.

U.S. Hiring Demand Tracker

The next weekly update to the Indeed U.S. Job Postings Index had not been published at the time of this report, leaving September 18 as the latest available observation. Rather than repeat last week's figures, this week's tracker looks beneath the national headline at where hiring demand remains concentrated as the market enters the fourth quarter.

Where Hiring Demand is Holding Up

The most recent occupational posting data show a sharply divided market.

Technical and operational categories remain well above their February 2020 posting baselines. Electrical engineering is nearly 47% above baseline, construction approximately 25%, production and manufacturing 23%, logistics support 22%, and industrial engineering 20%.

Several commercial and consumer-facing categories remain below baseline. Human resources is approximately 4% below, sales 7%, retail 11%, customer service 12%, and marketing approximately 24%.

These figures measure posting activity relative to each category's own February 2020 baseline. They should not be interpreted as measures of the absolute size of hiring demand across occupations.

The important signal is the divergence.

Staffing firms serving engineering, industrial, construction and logistics employers are operating against a different demand backdrop from firms concentrated in several professional, commercial and consumer-facing categories.

The New Requisition Question

The more significant signal entering the fourth quarter may be the difference between overall posting activity and the creation of new opportunities.

In the latest available reading, overall U.S. job postings stood 3.45% above their February 2020 baseline, while new job postings were approximately 6% below baseline.

Overall posting activity remains above its pre-pandemic benchmark even as the flow of newly posted opportunities is below it. For staffing leaders, that distinction matters. Headline posting levels can remain relatively healthy even while fresh employer demand is weaker.

Where the Opportunity Is

The strongest opportunity remains concentrated in several technical and operational categories, particularly engineering, construction, manufacturing and logistics.

That creates a more selective business-development environment.

The relevant question for a staffing company is increasingly not: **Is hiring strong?**

It is: **Where is hiring strong for the clients and occupations we serve?**

What Staffing Leaders Should Watch Next

The next Indeed release will provide another indication of whether weakness in new postings is persisting.

Three signals deserve particular attention: whether new postings begin to recover, whether technical and operational categories maintain their lead, and whether regional hiring demand broadens when additional state-level observations become available.

Until then, the available evidence points to an active but uneven market.

The advantage lies in identifying where new demand is being created, not simply where postings already exist.

Staffing Industry Implications

1. TECHNOLOGY IS BECOMING PART OF RECRUITMENT EXECUTION

The distinction between recruiting, marketing, and technology is becoming less useful.

A job has to be described clearly, discovered, displayed properly, tracked, and ultimately converted into an application. Technical execution therefore affects candidate acquisition long before a recruiter speaks with anyone.

Technology is not simply supporting recruiting.

It is increasingly part of recruiting.

2. THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE IS A REVENUE ISSUE

A staffing firm can spend money attracting candidates and lose them before they become applicants.

The problem may be the title, the page, the application process, missing compensation information or a technical issue nobody noticed because nobody experienced the process as a candidate would.

That is why small technical decisions matter.

Every unnecessary point of friction stands between candidate interest and recruiter opportunity.

3. MEASUREMENT SHOULD FOLLOW THE CANDIDATE

A click is not a candidate.

An applicant is not necessarily a qualified candidate.

And a qualified candidate is not a placement.

The commercially useful measurement chain is longer:

Source • Visit • Job View • Application • Qualified Candidate • Interview • Start • Revenue

The further a staffing company can follow that journey, the better it can determine which recruiting and marketing activities actually create value.

4. AI IS NOW OPERATING ON BOTH SIDES OF RECRUITMENT

AI is no longer simply a tool recruiters use.

Morgan McKinley's 2026 research found that 67% of surveyed Hong Kong employers use AI for CV screening or analysis, while 79% of candidates use AI to write or refine CVs and cover letters.

The recruiter may be using AI.

The employer may be using AI.

The candidate may be using AI.

That creates new questions about authenticity, evaluation, oversight, and how recruiting decisions are made.

5. THE TECHNOLOGY STACK SHOULD OPERATE AS A SYSTEM

A staffing company may have an ATS, CRM, website analytics, job-board data, campaign attribution, social platforms, AI tools and revenue reporting.

Having those systems is not the same as understanding what they collectively reveal.

The opportunity is to connect information across the candidate and client journey so management can see where activity becomes opportunity, where opportunity becomes revenue and where value disappears along the way.

That is when technology becomes intelligence.

What We're Seeing In The Market

THE MARKET IS BECOMING MORE SELECTIVE, AND TECHNOLOGY IS MAKING THAT SELECTIVITY MORE VISIBLE

September's U.S. employment report reinforces why staffing executives cannot rely on broad market labels. Payroll growth slowed to 29,000, yet unemployment remained relatively low and layoffs subdued.

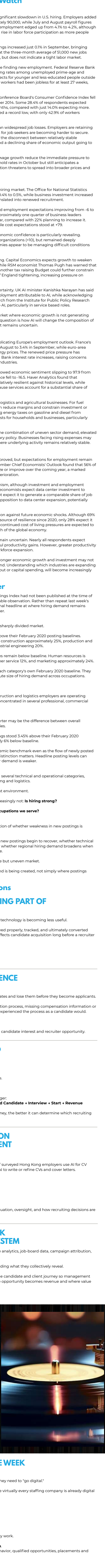
At the same time, Indeed posting data show substantial differences among occupations.

Technology gives staffing companies the ability to see those differences with increasing precision, but only when the information is connected and interpreted.

The competitive advantage is therefore shifting from simply having more data to knowing what the data means.

- Where are candidates disappearing?
- Which jobs attract attention but not applications?
- Which sources produce candidates who actually qualify?
- Which clients generate activity but not placements?
- Which markets continue to create new demand?

Those questions turn technology from infrastructure into commercial intelligence.



MESSAGING TREND OF THE WEEK

FROM "DIGITAL" TO "MEASURABLE"

For years, staffing companies have been told that they need to "go digital."

That phrase has lost much of its usefulness because virtually every staffing company is already digital in some form.

A job post is digital.

A website is digital.

A LinkedIn campaign is digital.

None of those facts tells management whether they work.

The more useful standard is **measurable execution**.

Can the company connect activity to candidate behavior, qualified opportunities, placements and ultimately revenue?

Digital tells you how something was delivered.

Measurement tells you whether it mattered.

EXECUTIVE INSIGHT

Technology does not replace judgment.

It gives judgment better evidence to work with.

An executive who knows that a job received 4,000 impressions has information.

An executive who knows those impressions produced 280 job views, 41 application starts, 19 completed applications and six qualified candidates has operational intelligence.

The difference is visibility.

And increasingly, visibility determines where management knows to act.

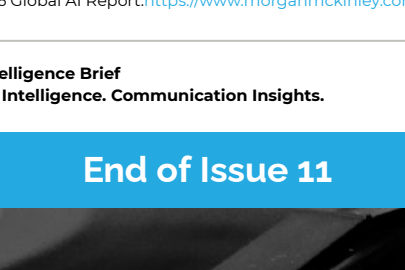
Diagnostic Question Of The Week

Choose one live job from one of your largest clients.

Can you show exactly where candidates discovered it, how many viewed it, how many began the application, how many completed it, which sources produced qualified candidates and what happened to those candidates afterward?

If you cannot, there is a useful question for the Tech Team:

Where does the visibility stop?



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