

CAREER OUTLOOK REPORT

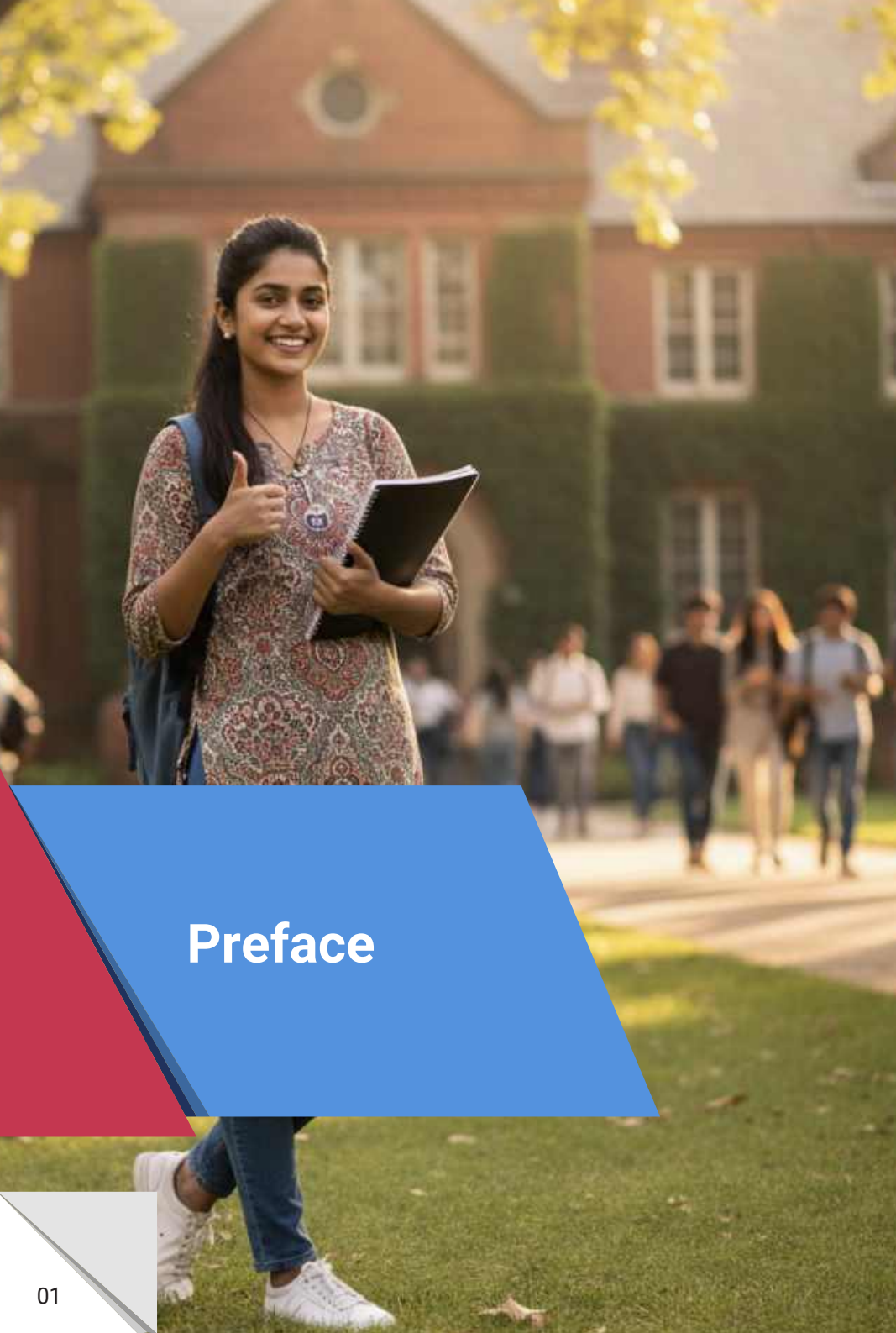
HY1, JANUARY-JUNE

2026



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Preface

India's fresher hiring outlook remains positive, with 73% of employers indicating intent to hire during January–June 2026. Yet, high hiring intent alone does not automatically translate into employability.

Our latest report, Degree Factories to Employability Hubs, has highlighted a structural gap between what higher education institutions produce and what industry actually needs, resulting in qualified graduates, but not always work-ready. This misalignment is becoming more visible as employers shift toward skills-first, proof-of-work–driven hiring models.

This edition of the TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report captures that transition. Hiring is increasingly anchored in apprenticeships, corporate ecosystems, live projects, and early-career programs where capability, participation, and readiness matter more than credentials alone.

For fresher hiring momentum to sustain, HEIs will need to play a more active role by embedding industry exposure, skills, and work-integrated pathways into mainstream education. At TeamLease EdTech, our focus remains on enabling this alignment and building systems that truly Make India Employable.

Shantanu Rooj
Founder & CEO
TeamLease EdTech



Introduction

TeamLease EdTech, with its vision of 'Making India Employable', has come out with a forecast report to track the dynamics of the job market for freshers. Our endeavour is to analyse the job market trends and produce insights that will keep first-time job seekers informed about upcoming changes in the job market. Following the precedent set by the TeamLease Group, we have mined employer sentiment, jobs, and course intelligence data to help job seekers navigate the job market effectively.

As hiring intent for freshers marginally improved to 73% for the current HY [January-June, 2026] - marking a 3% increase over the previous HY [July-December, 2025], the report aims to assist freshers in combating the challenges of new corporate India. This report is intended to guide freshers and provide information on what to expect from a job search perspective during the January-June, 2026 period. It highlights the job roles in demand and the essential skills (core and associated) required for those roles. The report also highlights the top skill-enhancing courses that can act as employability boosters for these roles. The report is intended to be a source of market information that helps freshers acquaint themselves with current market trends. With the knowledge of the right skills, freshers can equip themselves to gain fulfilling employment. This edition also highlights the transition in fresher hiring toward new hotbeds, where skills, participation, and real-world contribution outweigh formal credentials.



Glossary of Terms

Freshers: are first-time jobseekers whose educational qualifications range from 10th/12th standard through Postgraduate Diploma and Doctoral candidates.

Intent to Hire/Hiring Intent: is a measure that represents the percentage of employers likely to hire fresh graduates during the six-month time period that is in consideration.

Core Skills: are the critical set of skills that enable a candidate to carry out a given job role. It comprises the functional and technical skills that the given job role demands.

Associated Skills: are the additional, mostly soft-skills, that complete the entirety of skills a candidate must possess to perform satisfactorily in the given job role.

Domain Skills: are skills that are specific to the technical domain within which a given job role exists. They could be a combination of functional and soft skills relevant to a given domain.

Tech Skills: are technological skills that are relevant for a given domain and/or a given function, and are a subset of a broader, universal set of technological skills.

Employability: is the measure of a candidate to possess the skills and abilities to obtain a job, to perform satisfactorily in a job, and to make consistent progress in one's career.

Hiring Sentiment: is the likelihood of an employer hiring people for their organisation during a specified time period.

Degree Apprenticeship: is a structured educational program that combines work experience with academic study, allowing individuals to earn a degree while gaining practical skills and knowledge in a specific profession.

A photograph of three students (two girls and one boy) looking at a book together outdoors. They are wearing school uniforms. The background shows a brick building and greenery.

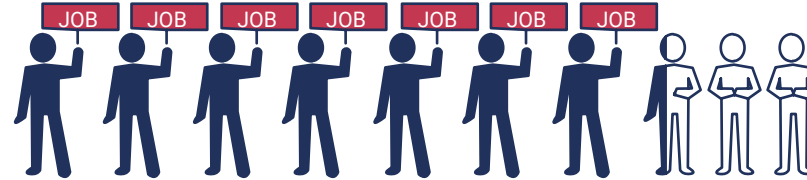
Executive Summary

■ Hiring Intent for Freshers during January-June, 2026

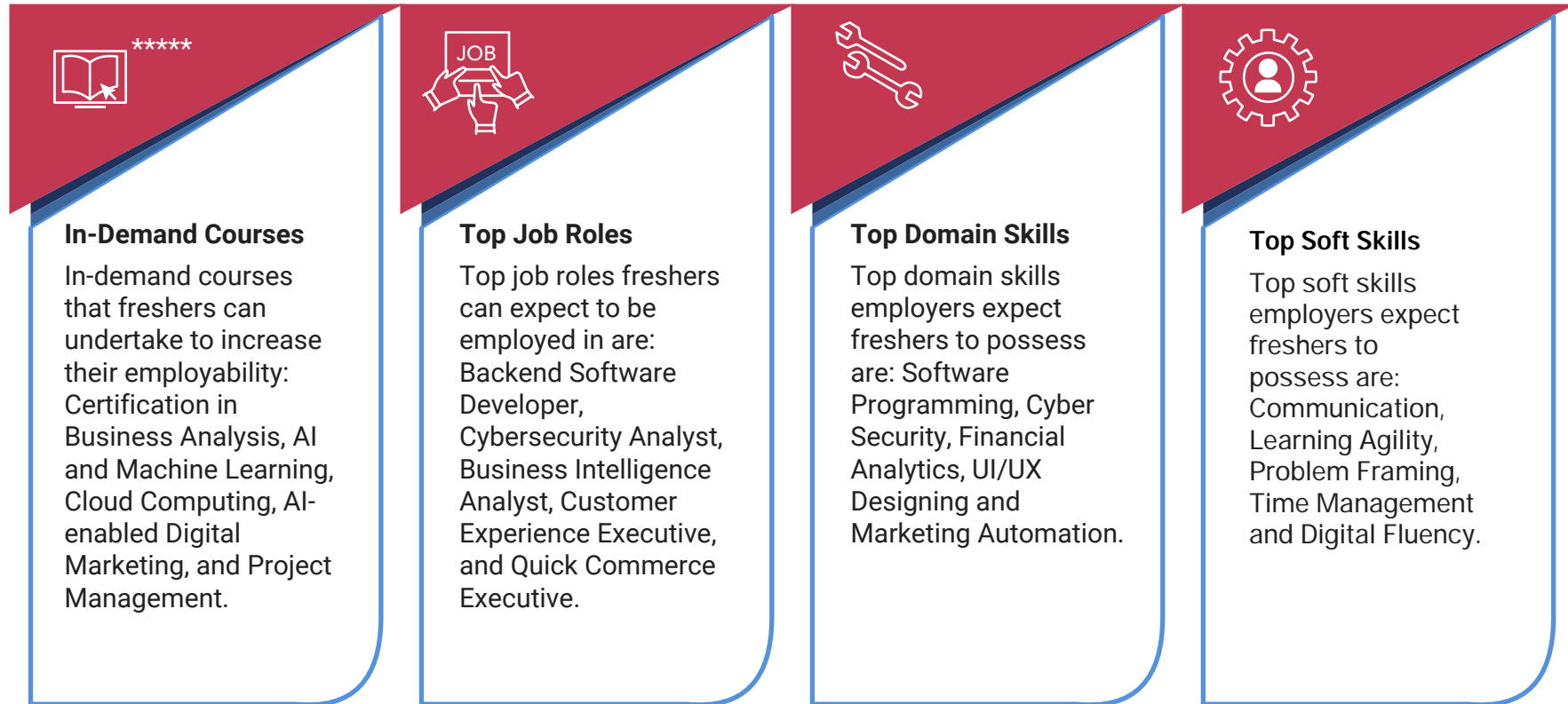
73%

Employers' intent to hire freshers:

of employers surveyed across India intend to hire freshers during January-June, 2026.



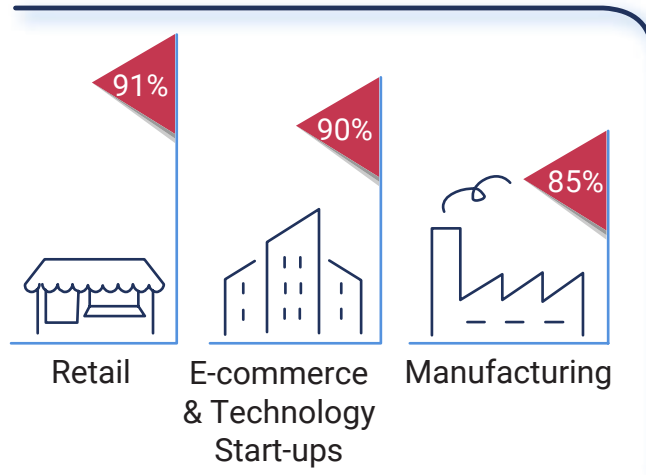
■ Job roles and skills that are in demand for freshers during January-June, 2026



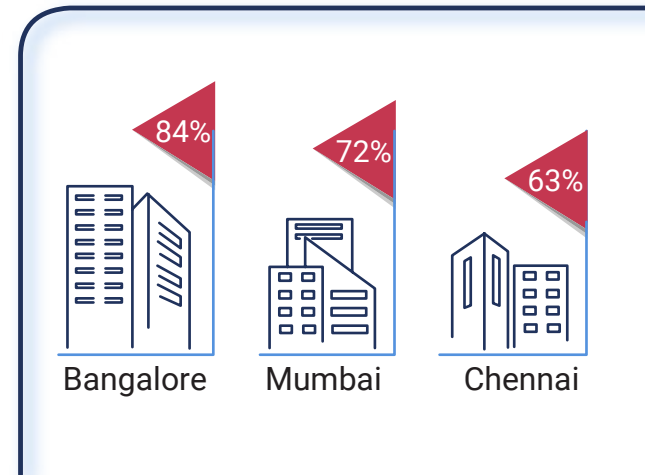
■ Hiring Intent for Freshers during January-June, 2026

Hiring sentiment across industries and cities (percentages represent the proportion of employers within the respective industry/city)

Top 3 industries that intend to hire freshers during January-June, 2026:



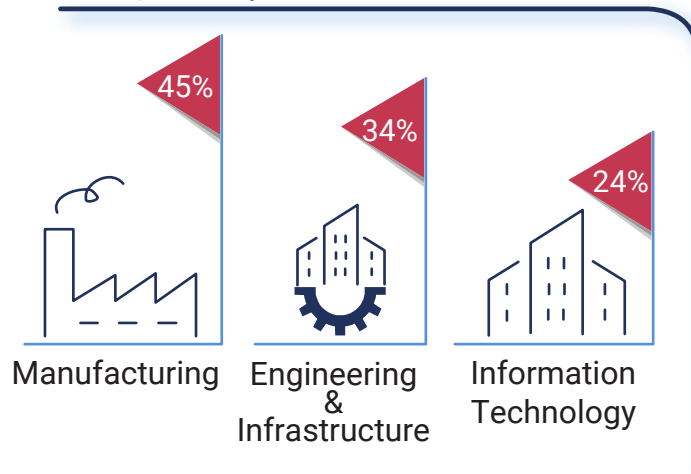
Top 3 cities that intend to hire freshers during January-June, 2026 :



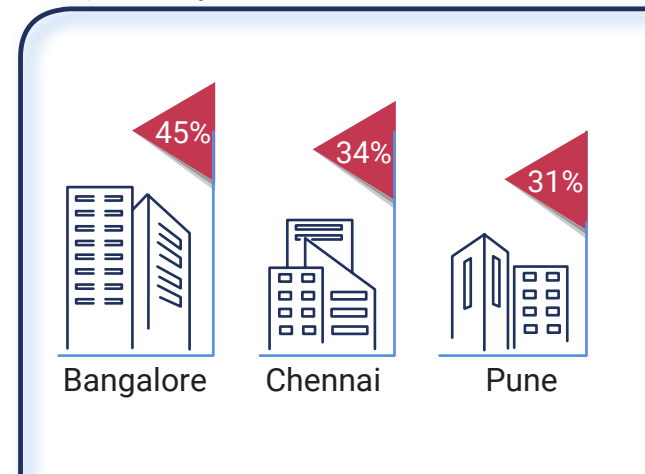
■ Hiring Intent for Degree Apprentices during January-June, 2026

Degree Apprenticeship hiring sentiment across industries and cities (percentages represent the proportion of employers within the respective industry/city)

Top 3 industries that intend to hire degree apprentices during January-June, 2026:



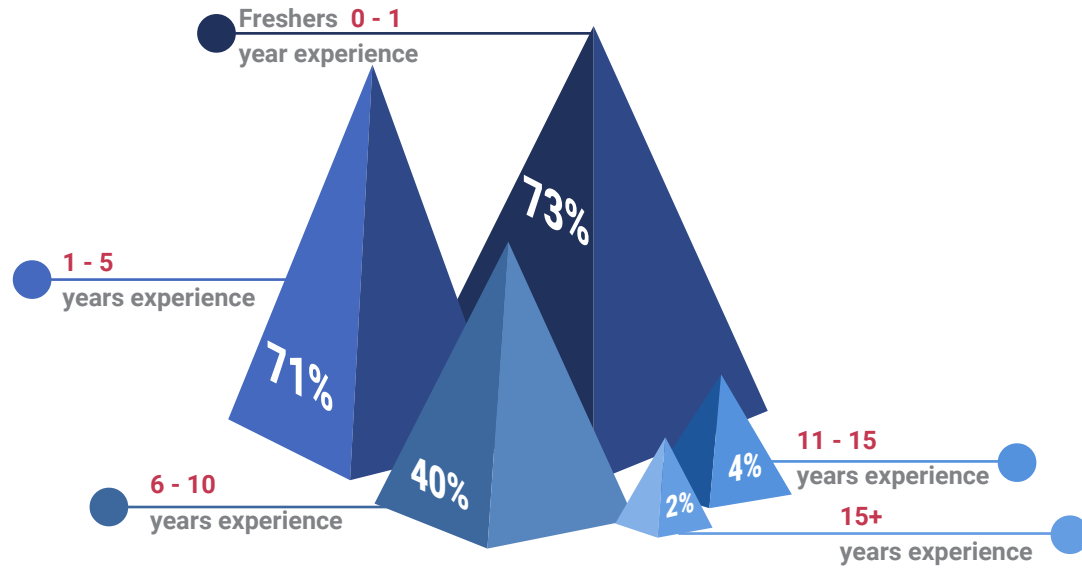
Top 3 cities that intend to hire degree apprentices during January-June, 2026:





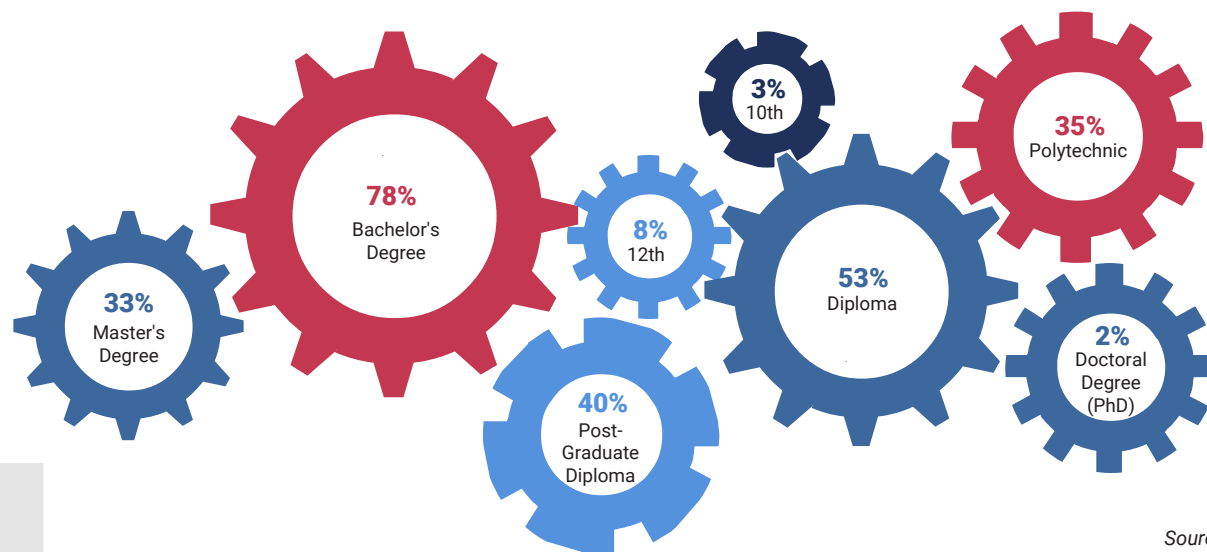
Employers' Intent To Hire Freshers

OVERVIEW OF HIRING INTENT IN INDIA



Overall Intent to Hire: 83%

Hiring sentiment remains robust, with an overall intent of 83% across categories. Fresher hiring intent has increased to 73% in January-June 2026, compared to 70% in the previous half-year.



Percentages represent the proportion of employers who intend to hire from each of the five work experience categories. The percentages exceed 100% as respondents were allowed to select multiple options.

Intent to Hire/Hiring Intent is a measure that represents the percentage of employers likely to hire during the six-month period that is in consideration.

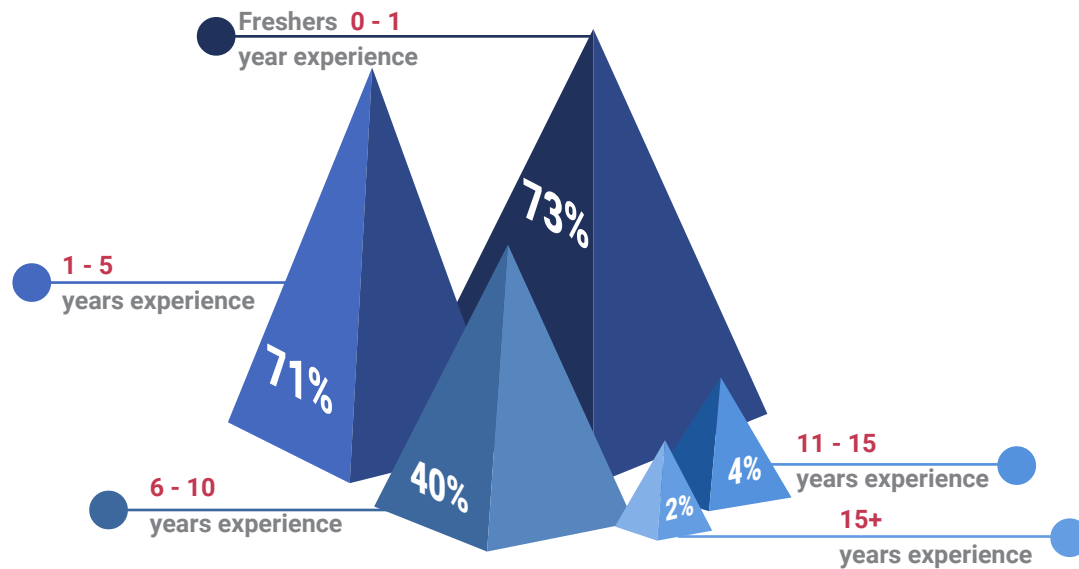
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY1, Jan – Jun, 2026)

OVERVIEW OF HIRING INTENT IN INDIA [HY1, 2026]

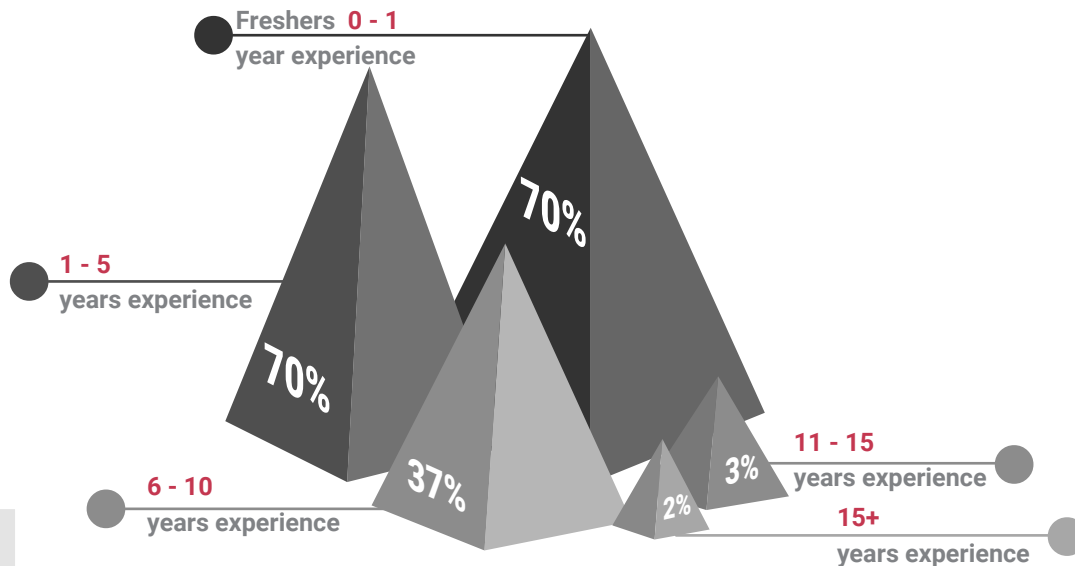
A Comparison with HY2, July-December, 2025 - Across all Categories

Hiring intent during January-June, 2026



Percentages represent the proportion of employers who intend to hire from each of the five work experience categories. The percentages exceed 100% as respondents were allowed to select multiple options.

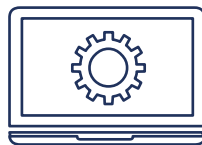
Hiring intent during July-December, 2025



Intent to Hire/Hiring Intent is a measure that represents the percentage of employers likely to hire during the six-month period that is in consideration.

Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY1, Jan – Jun, 2026)



Information Technology

- India's role as a global technology and innovation hub continues to strengthen, with multinational organisations expanding Engineering, Product Development, and Shared Service operations, opening large-scale entry-level opportunities across core and emerging Tech Roles.
- Rapid adoption of Artificial Intelligence, Automation, Cloud platforms, and Data-driven systems is reshaping how businesses operate, creating sustained demand for fresh talent with Modern Digital, Analytical, and Problem-solving skills.



Fast Moving Consumer Goods

- The rapid integration of offline retail with E-commerce, Quick-commerce, and Direct-to-Consumer channels is creating demand for fresh talent across Sales Operations, Supply Chain coordination, Digital Merchandising, and Consumer Engagement Roles.
- FMCG growth is being driven by expanding consumption beyond Metros into Tier-2, Tier-3, and rural markets, increasing the need for entry-level professionals in Distribution, Field Operations, Market Activation, and Localized product execution.



Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals

- Adoption of Digital health platforms, AI-enabled diagnostics, connected medical devices, and data-driven clinical systems is expanding demand for freshers across Health Analytics, Clinical Data Support, Digital Operations, and Biomedical Technology Roles.
- Increasing emphasis on Medical Research, Regulatory Standards, Quality Assurance, and Life Sciences innovation is driving demand for fresh talent with Foundational Scientific knowledge, Process Orientation, and readiness to work in regulated environments.



Engineering & Infrastructure

- Sustained investments in Transportation, Urban development, Energy, and Industrial Infrastructure are creating continuous demand for fresh engineering graduates across Site Execution, Project Support, and Operations Roles.
- Increasing use of Digital tools, Automation, and Data-driven systems in Design, Planning, and Site Management is opening entry-level opportunities for freshers with exposure to Modern Engineering Software and Technology-enabled Workflows.

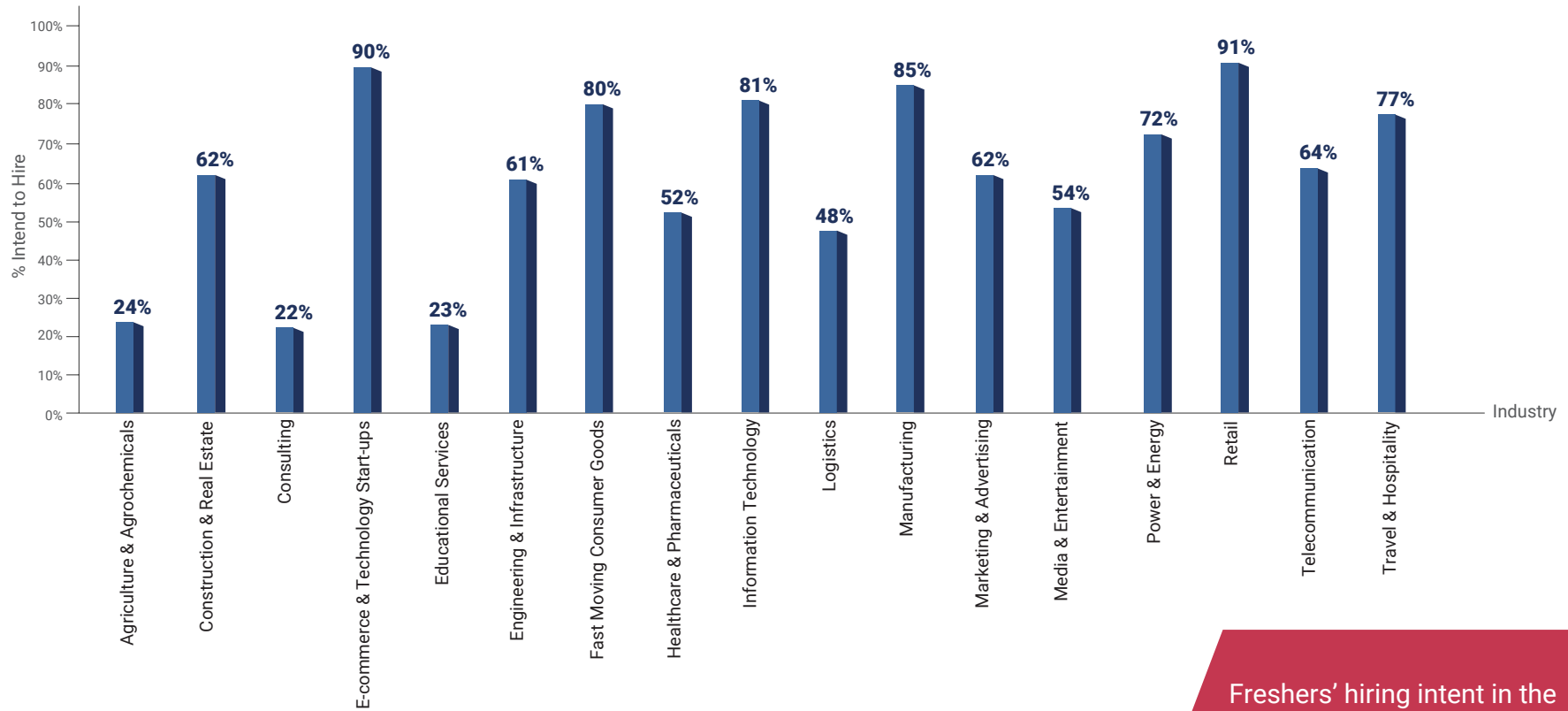


Fresher Hiring Sentiment

BY INDUSTRY AND CITY

FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT

By Industry



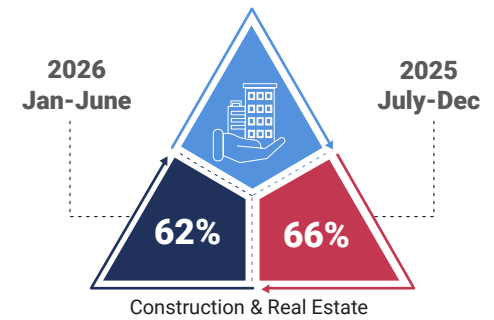
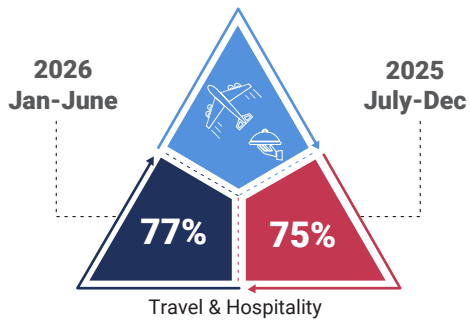
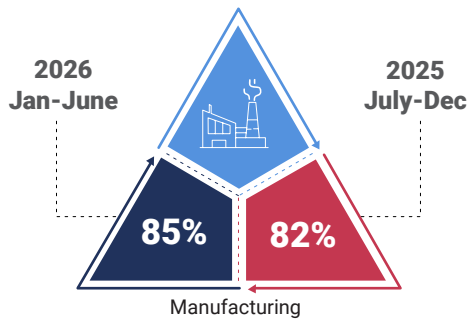
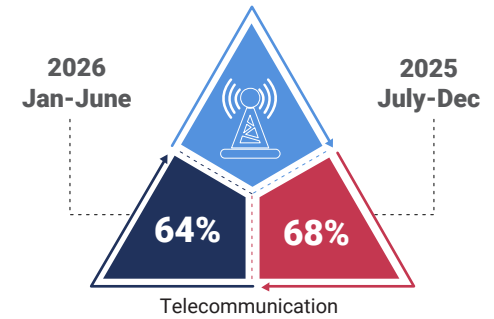
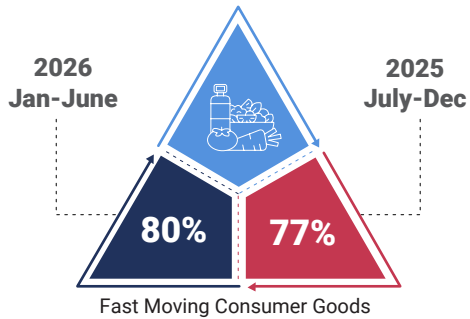
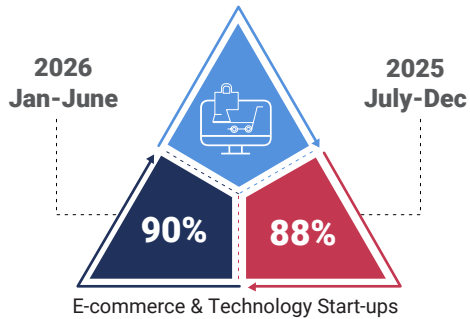
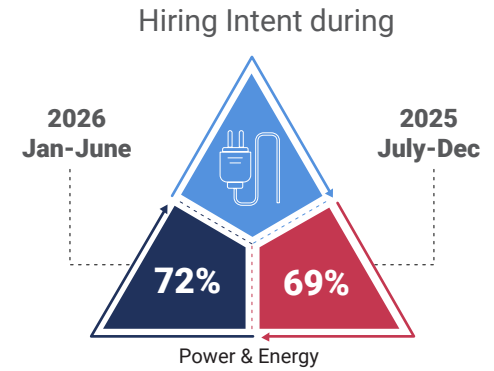
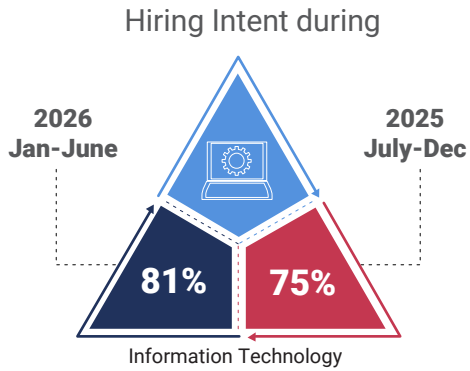
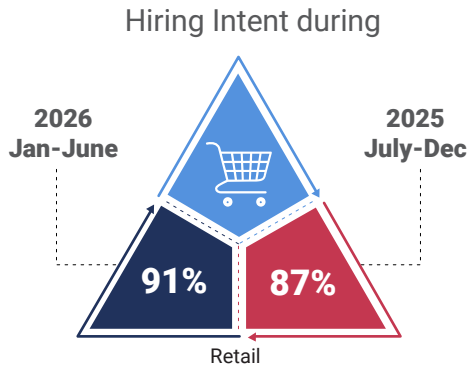
Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to hire.

Freshers' hiring intent in the current HY [January-June, 2026] is led by Retail (91%), E-commerce & Technology Start-ups (90%), and Manufacturing (85%), reflecting entry-level demand across consumer-facing, production-driven, and digital commerce industries.

Note: Hiring period - January-June, 2026 Percentages indicate Intent to Hire
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT [HY1, 2026]

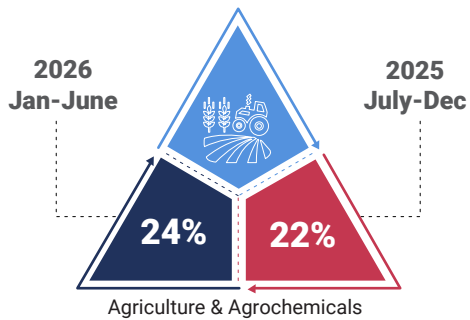
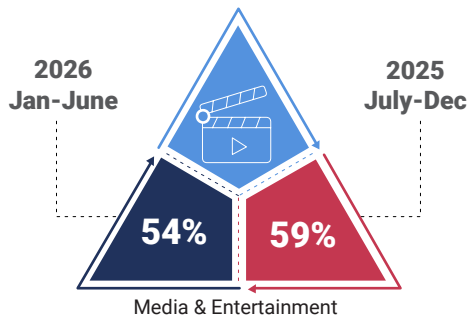
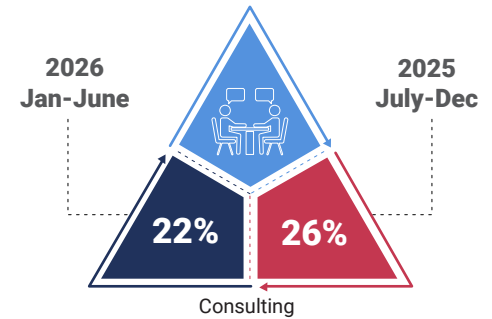
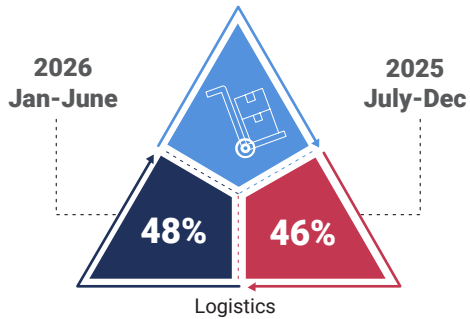
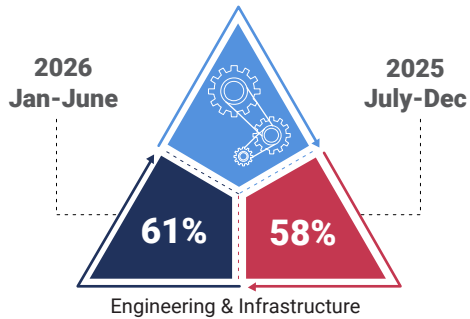
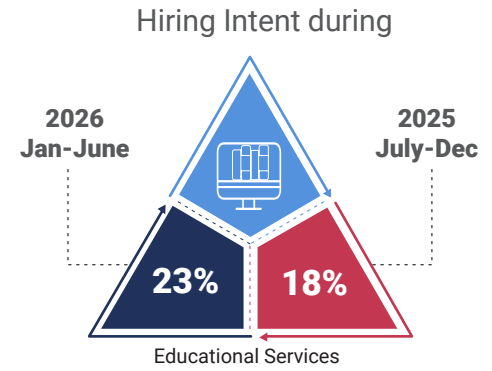
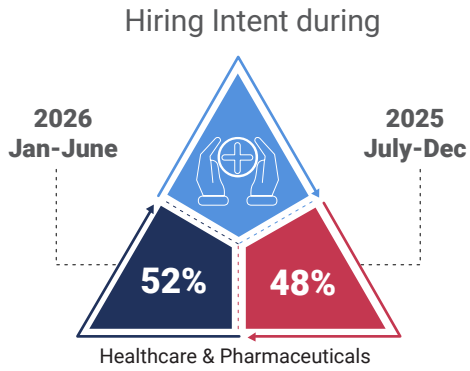
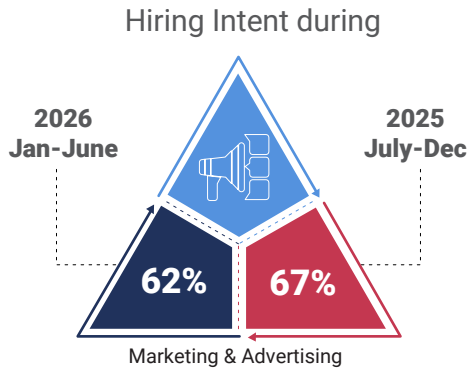
A Comparison with HY2 July-December, 2025 - By Industry



Note: Industries are listed in descending order of intent to hire
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT [HY1, 2026] (continued)

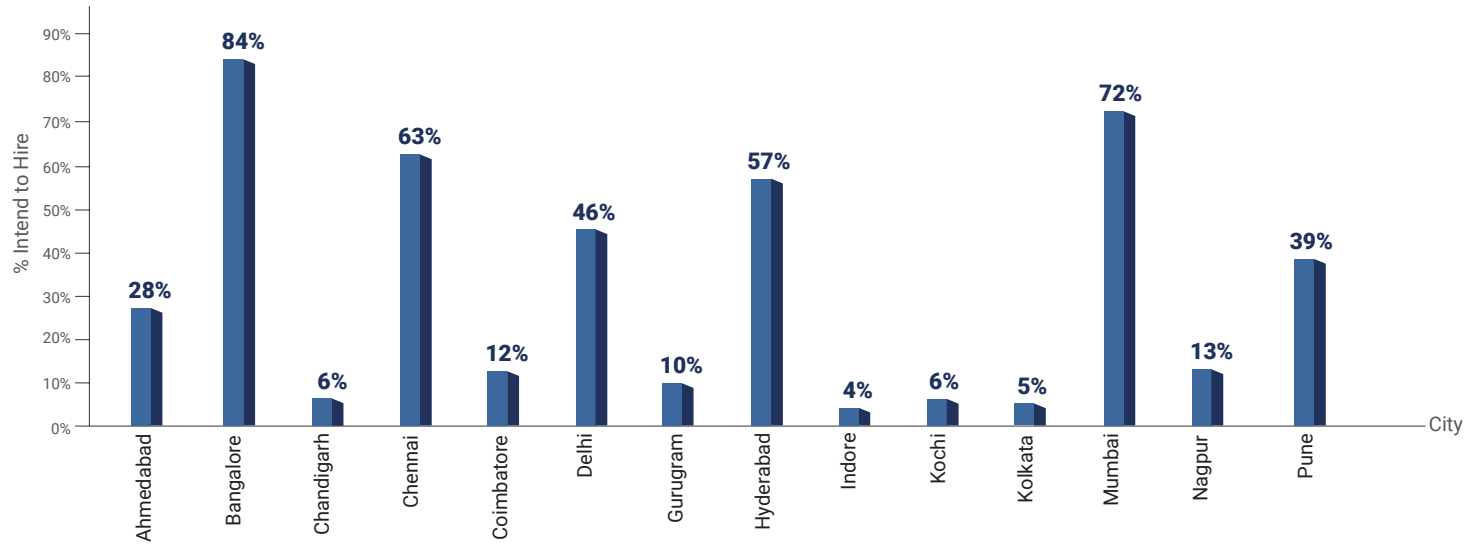
A Comparison with HY2 July-December, 2025 - By Industry



Note: Industries are listed in descending order of intent to hire
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT

By City



Percentages are specific to each city, and represent the proportion of employers within each city who intend to hire. The percentages exceed 100% as respondents were allowed to select multiple options.

Freshers' hiring intent in the current HY [January-June, 2026] is led by Bangalore (84%), followed by Mumbai (72%) and Chennai (63%), highlighting entry-level demand across key urban employment hubs.

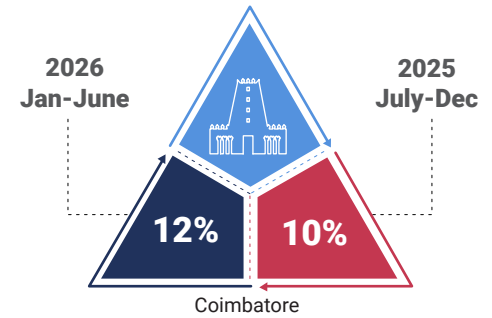
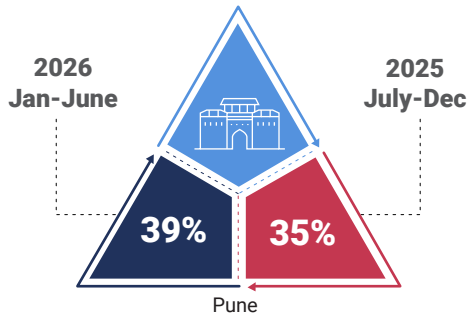
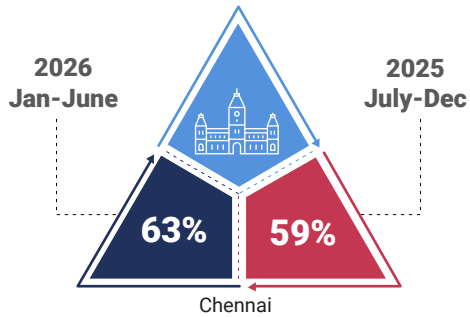
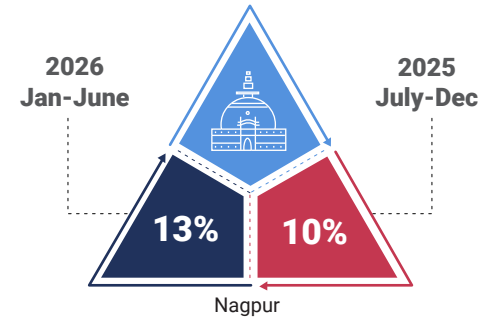
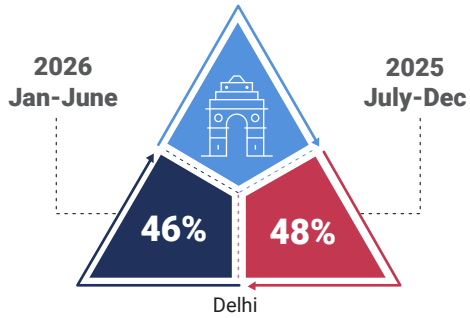
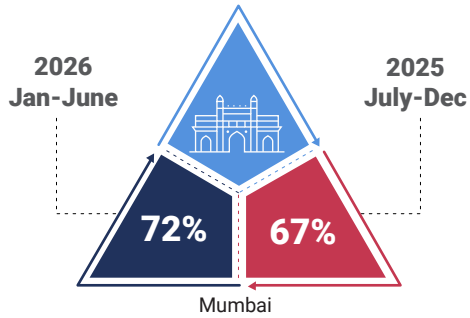
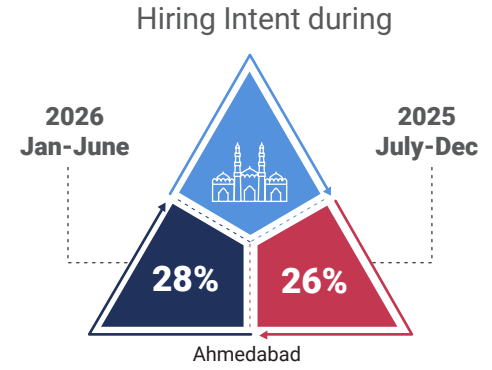
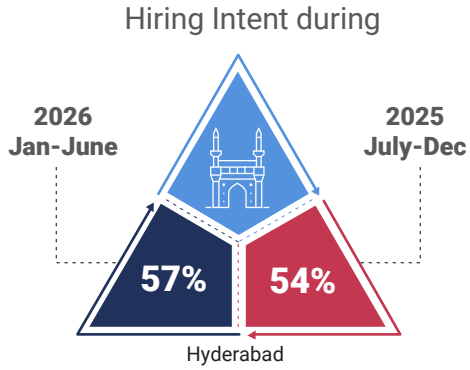
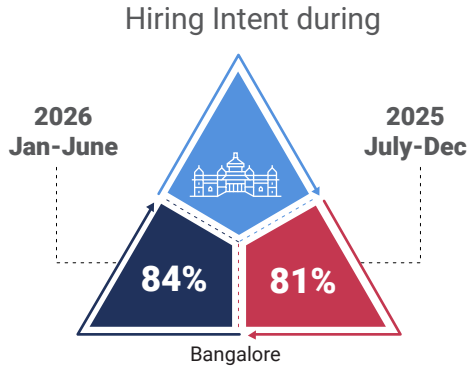
Note: Hiring period - January-June, 2026

Percentages indicate Intent to Hire

Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT [HY1, 2026]

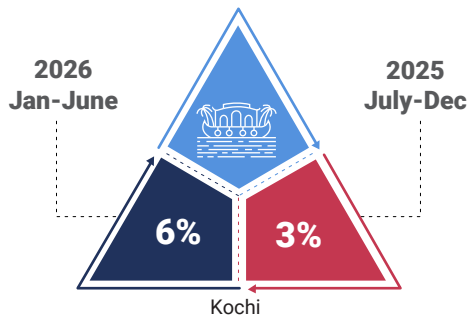
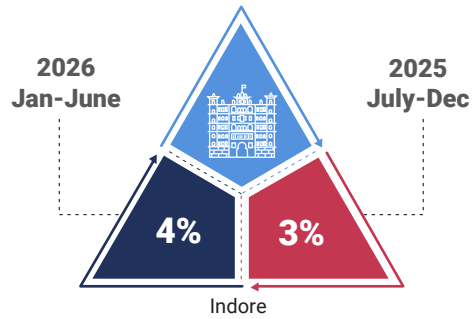
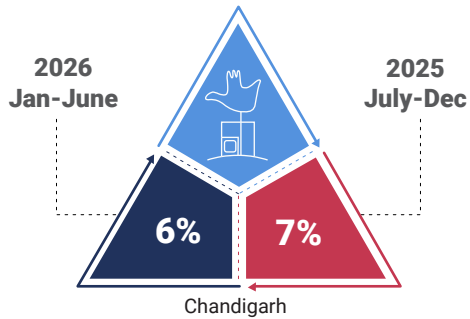
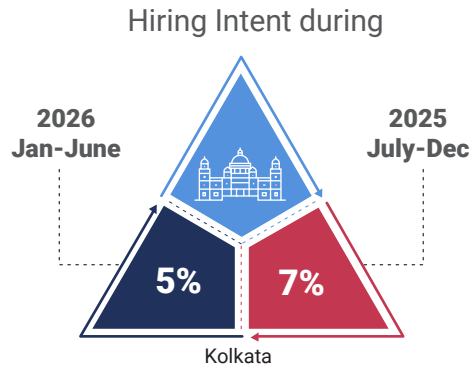
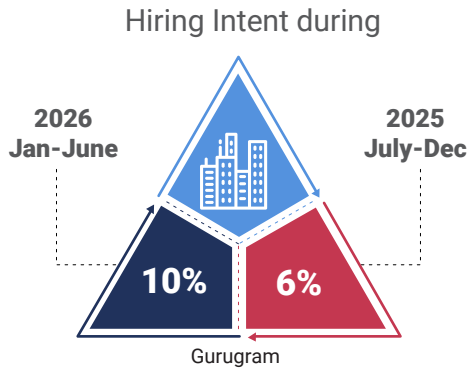
A Comparison with HY2 July-December, 2025 - By City



Note: Cities are listed in descending order of intent to hire
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT [HY1, 2026] (continued)

A Comparison with HY2 July-December, 2025 - By City



Note: Cities are listed in descending order of intent to hire
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

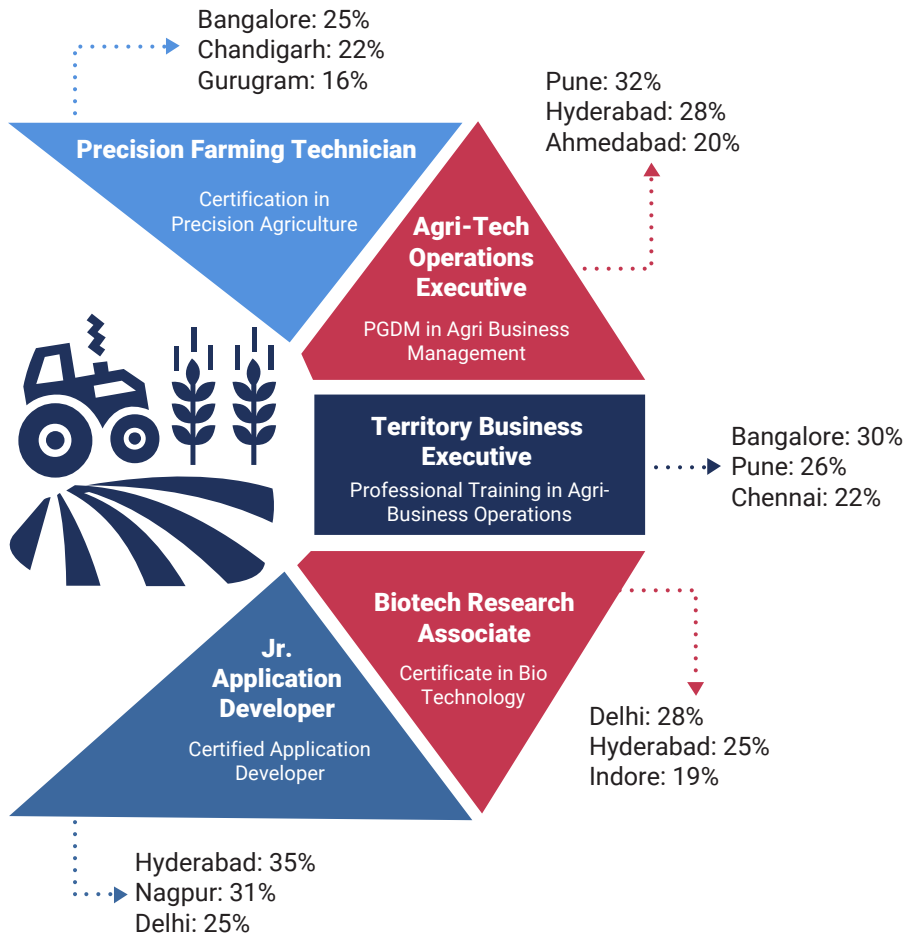


Hiring Trends

BY TOP ROLES AND IN-DEMAND COURSES ACROSS
INDUSTRIES & CITIES

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Agriculture & Agrochemicals

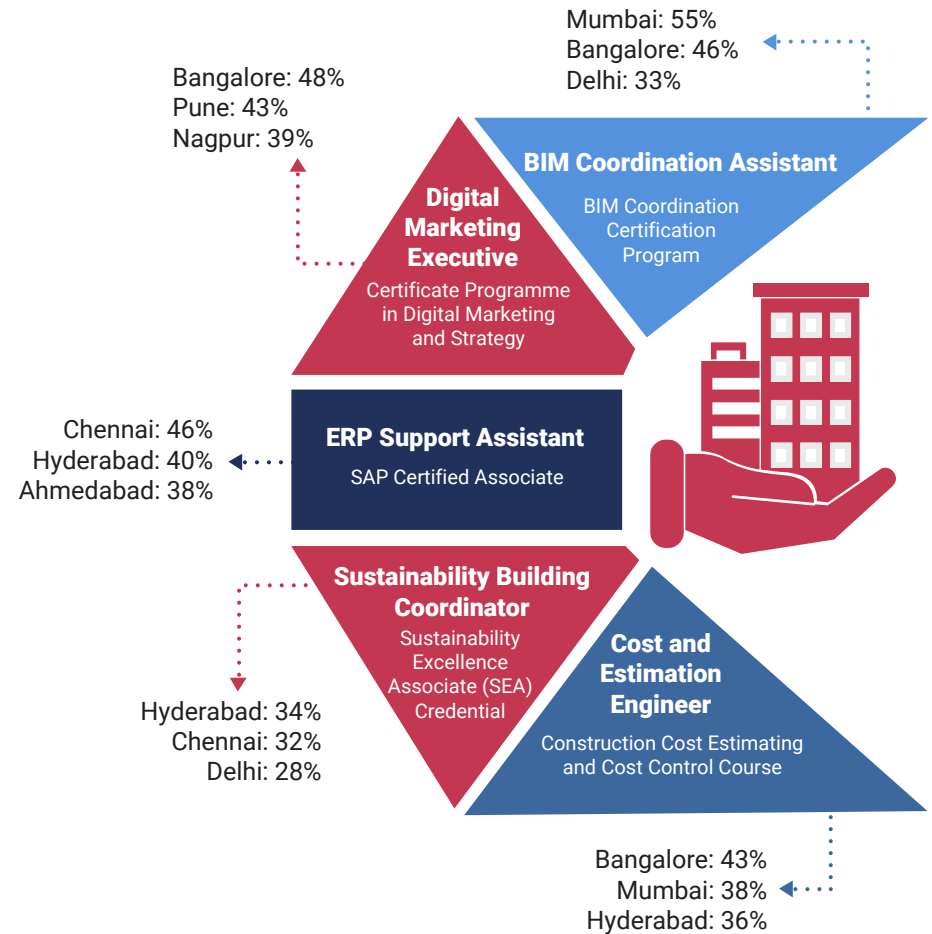


Hiring Intent **24%** (January-June, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 22%

Highest Demand for **Jr. Application Developer in Hyderabad (35%)** and **Agri-Tech Operations Executive in Pune (32%)**

Construction & Real Estate



Hiring Intent **62%** (January-June, 2026)

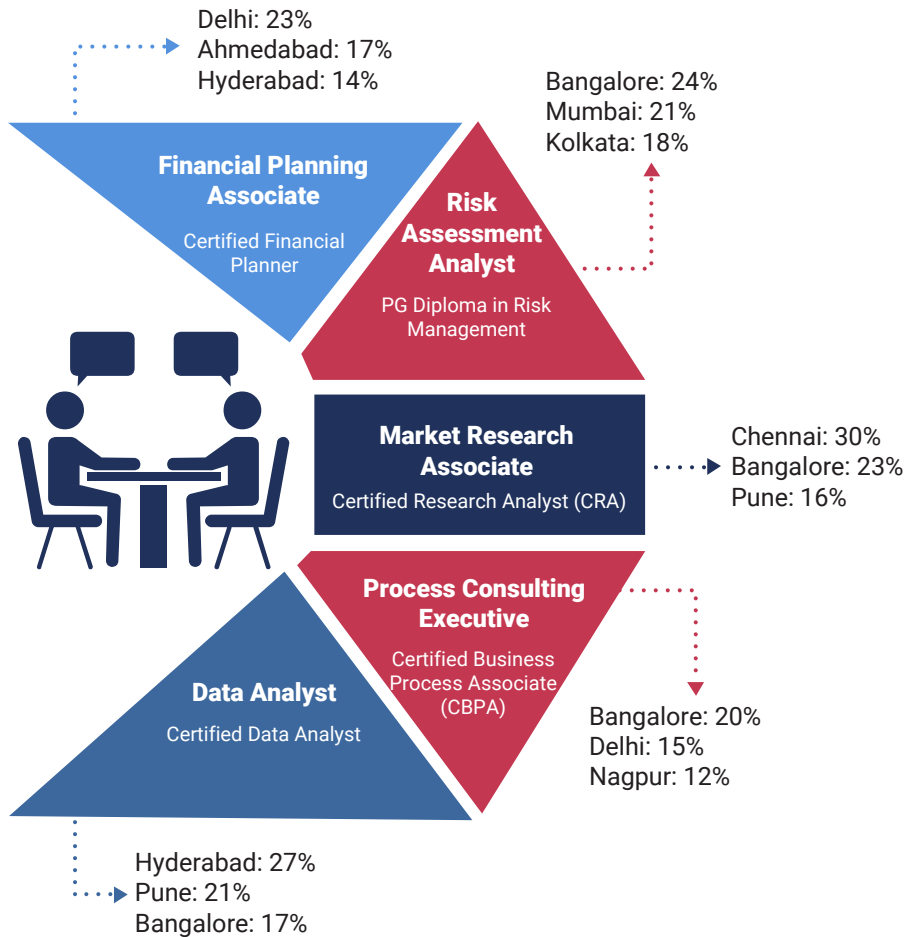
Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 66%

Highest Demand for **BIM Coordination Assistant in Mumbai (55%)** and **Digital Marketing Executive in Bangalore (48%)**

Note: Percentages alongside cities refer to the Intent to Hire
 Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to Hire.
 Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Consulting

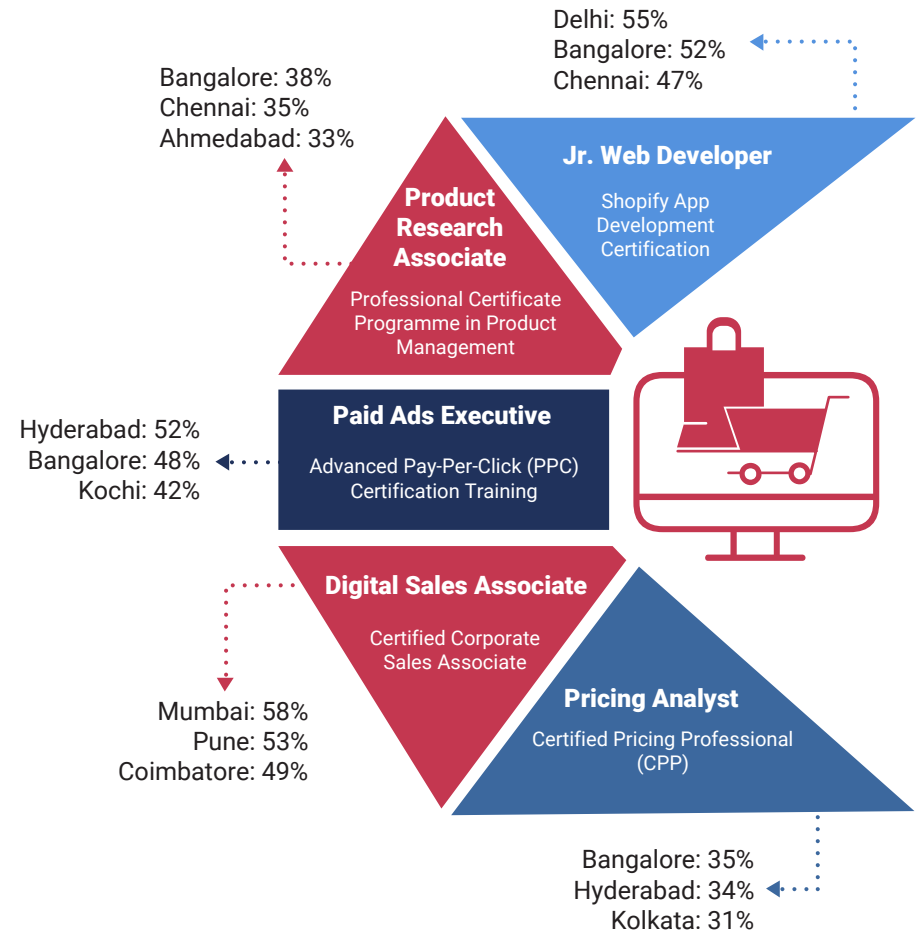


Hiring Intent **22%** (January-June, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 26%

Highest Demand for **Market Research Associate in Chennai (30%)** and **Data Analyst in Hyderabad (27%)**

E-commerce & Technology Start-ups



Hiring Intent **90%** (January-June, 2026)

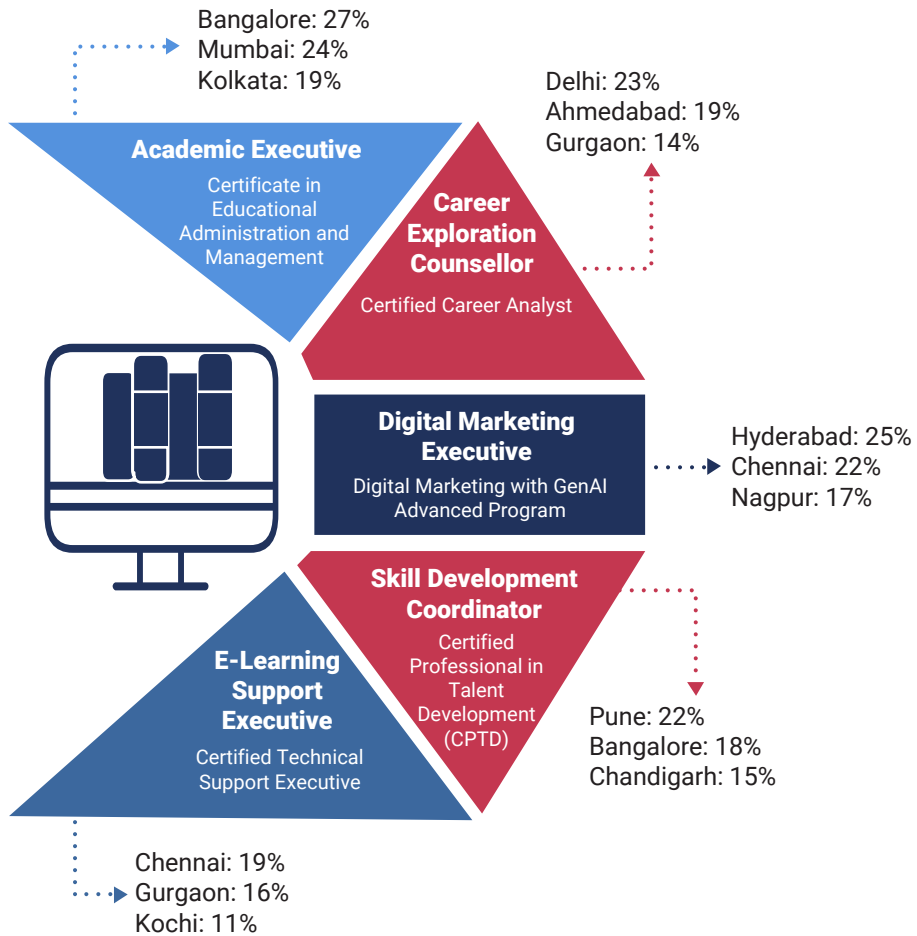
Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 88%

Highest Demand for **Digital Sales Associate in Mumbai (58%)** and **Jr. Web Developer in Delhi (55%)**

Note: Percentages alongside cities refer to the Intent to Hire. Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to Hire. Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Educational Services

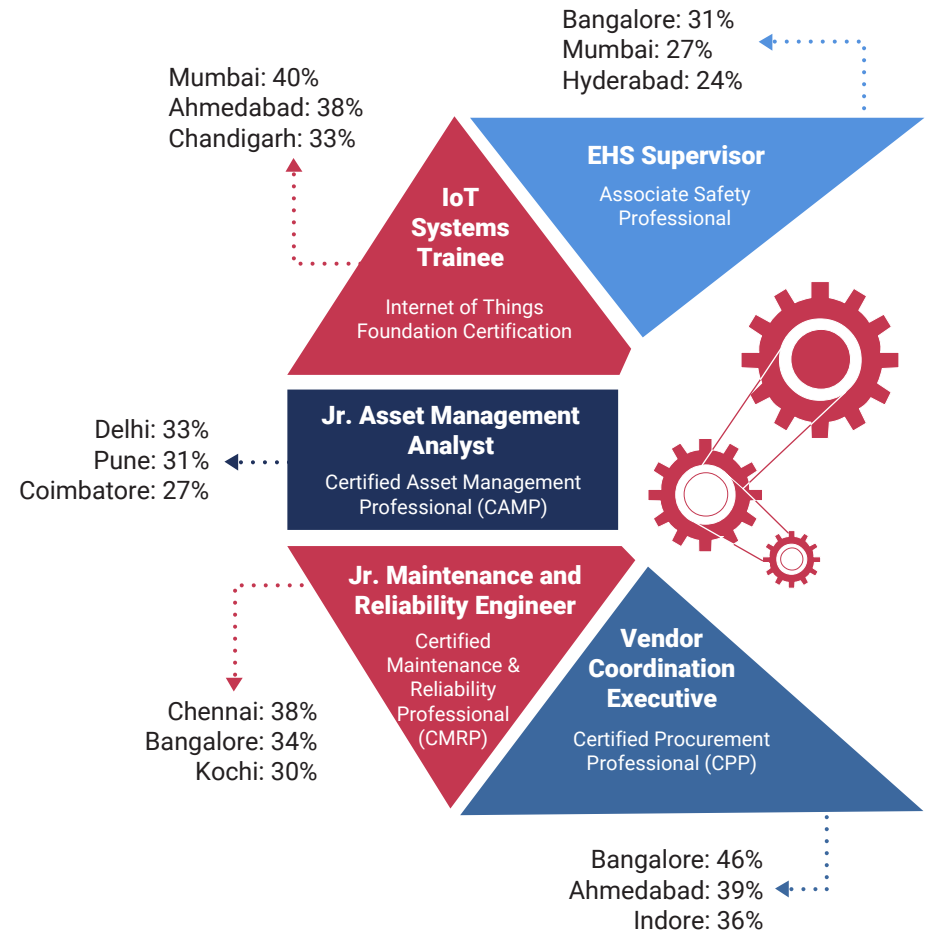


Hiring Intent **23%** (January-June, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 18%

Highest Demand for **Academic Executive in Bangalore (27%)** and **Digital Marketing Executive in Hyderabad (25%)**

Engineering & Infrastructure



Hiring Intent **61%** (January-June, 2026)

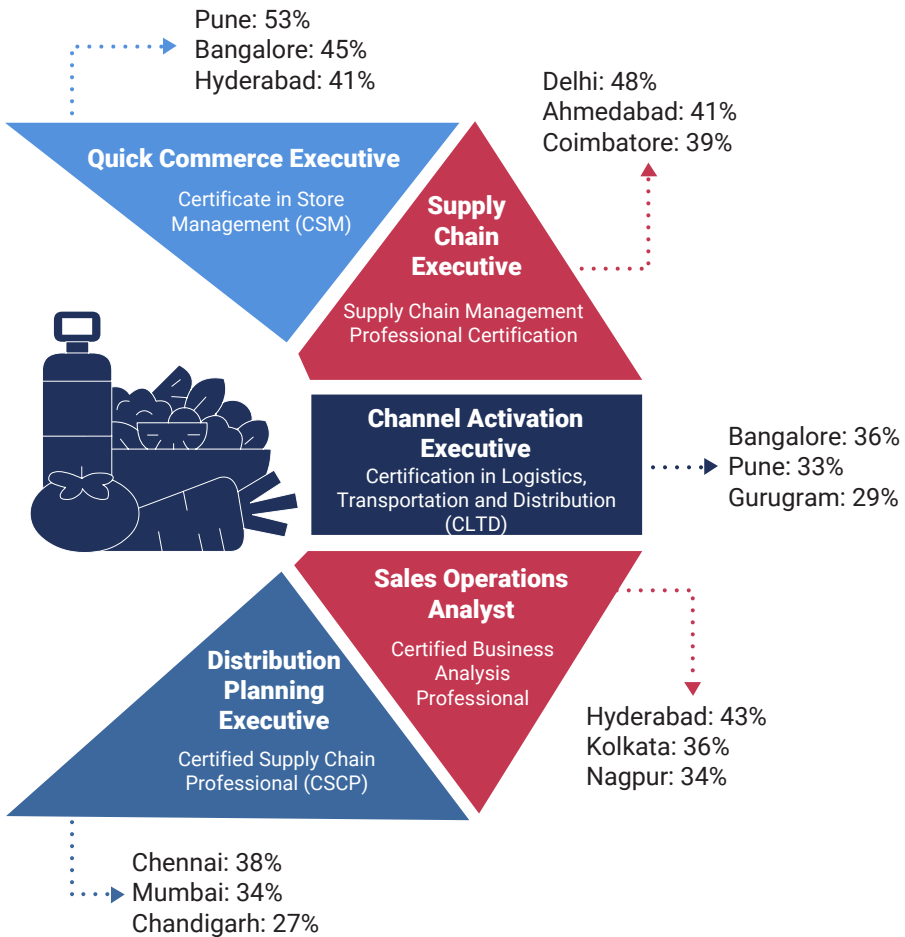
Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 58%

Highest Demand for **Vendor Coordination Executive in Bangalore (46%)** and **IoT Systems Trainee in Mumbai (40%)**

Note: Percentages alongside cities refer to the Intent to Hire
Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to Hire.
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)

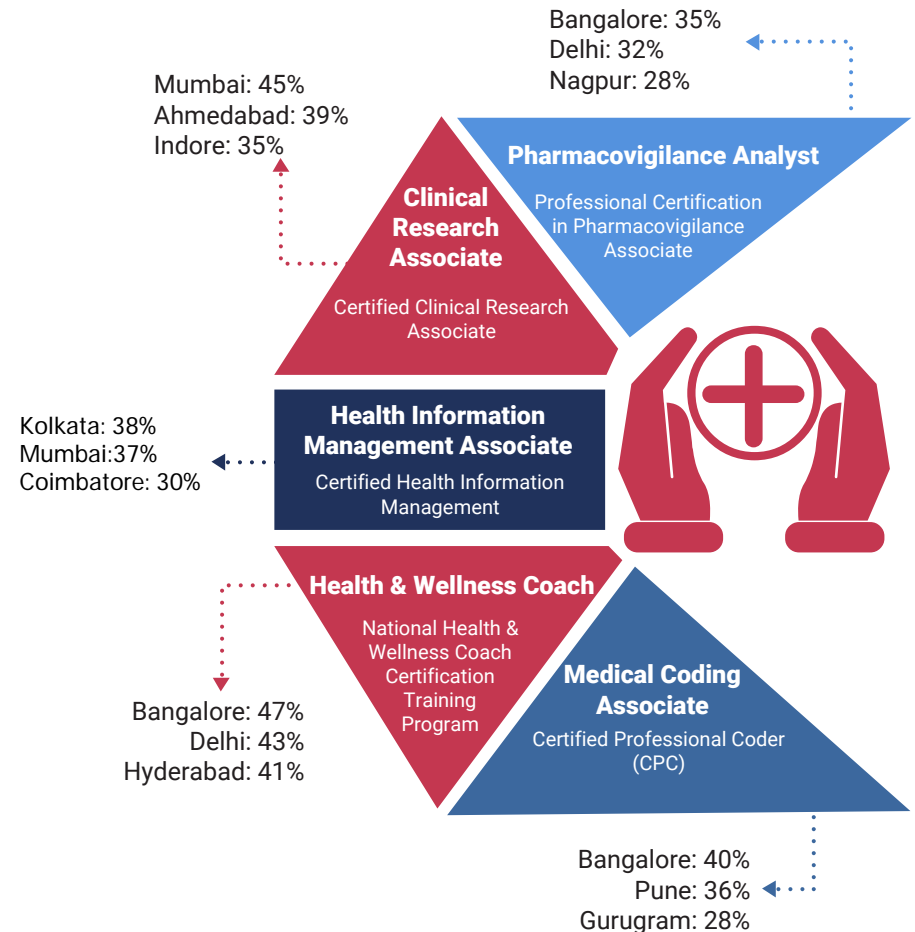


Hiring Intent **80%** (January-June, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 77%

Highest Demand for **Quick Commerce Executive in Pune (53%)** and **Supply Chain Executive in Delhi (48%)**

Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals



Hiring Intent **52%** (January-June, 2026)

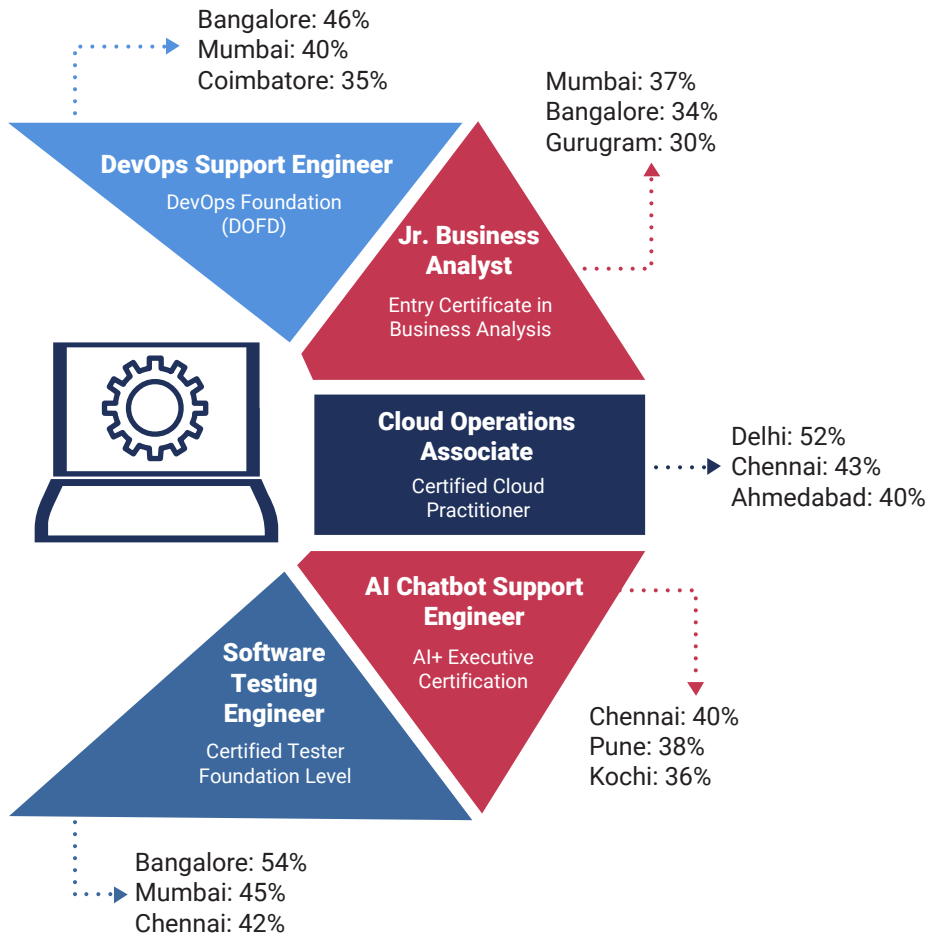
Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 48%

Highest Demand for **Health & Wellness Coach in Bangalore (47%)** and **Clinical Research Associate in Mumbai (45%)**

Note: Percentages alongside cities refer to the Intent to Hire
Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to Hire.
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Information Technology

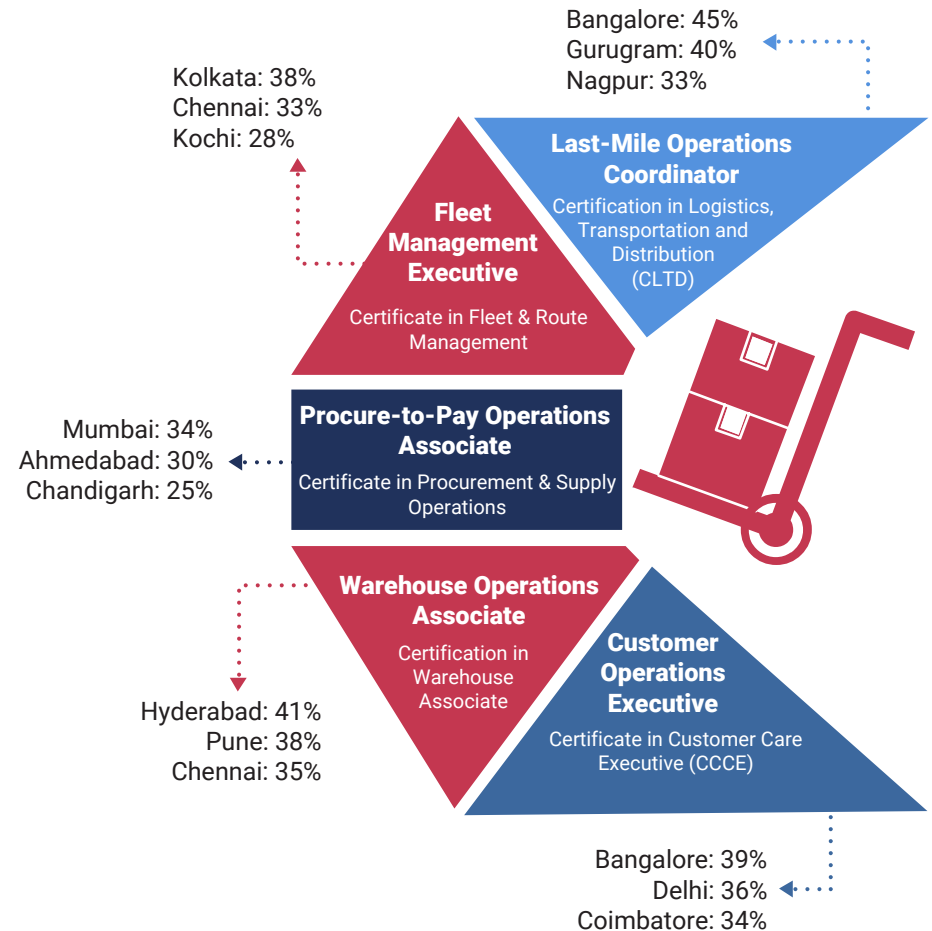


Hiring Intent **81%** (January-June, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 75%

Highest Demand for **Software Testing Engineer in Bangalore (54%)** and **Cloud Operations Associate in Delhi (52%)**

Logistics



Hiring Intent **48%** (January-June, 2026)

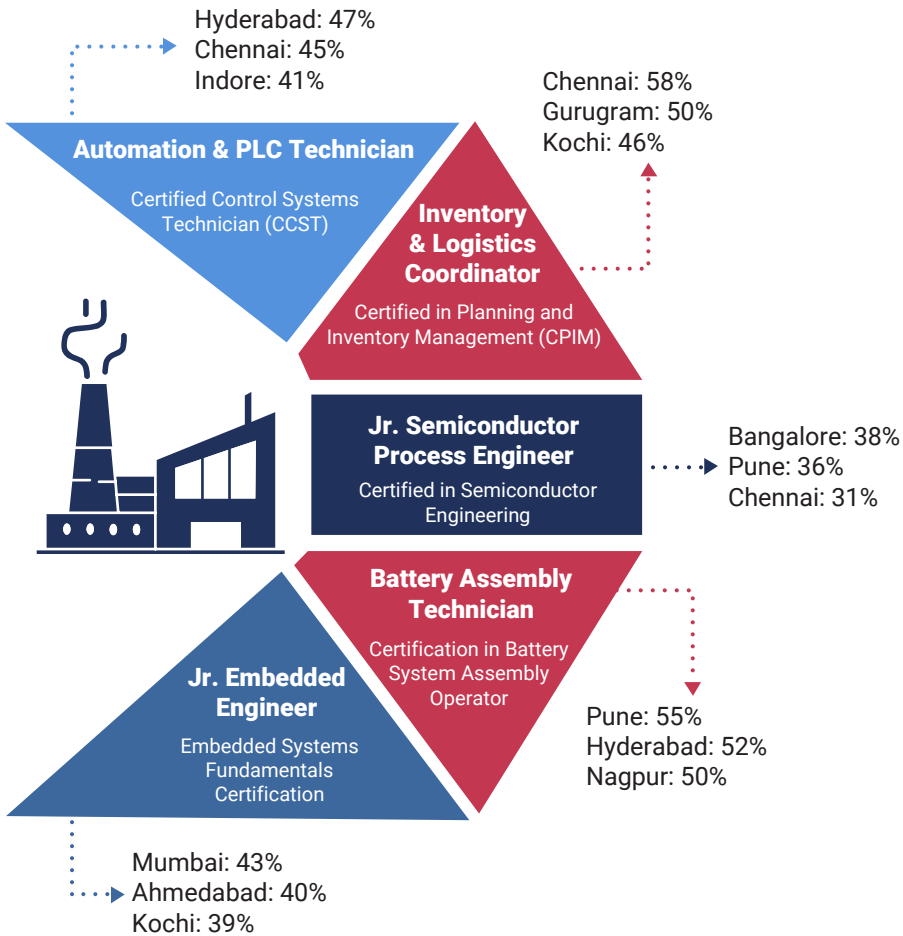
Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 46%

Highest Demand for **Last-Mile Operations Coordinator in Bangalore (45%)** and **Warehouse Operations Associate in Hyderabad (41%)**

Note: Percentages alongside cities refer to the Intent to Hire. Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to Hire. Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Manufacturing

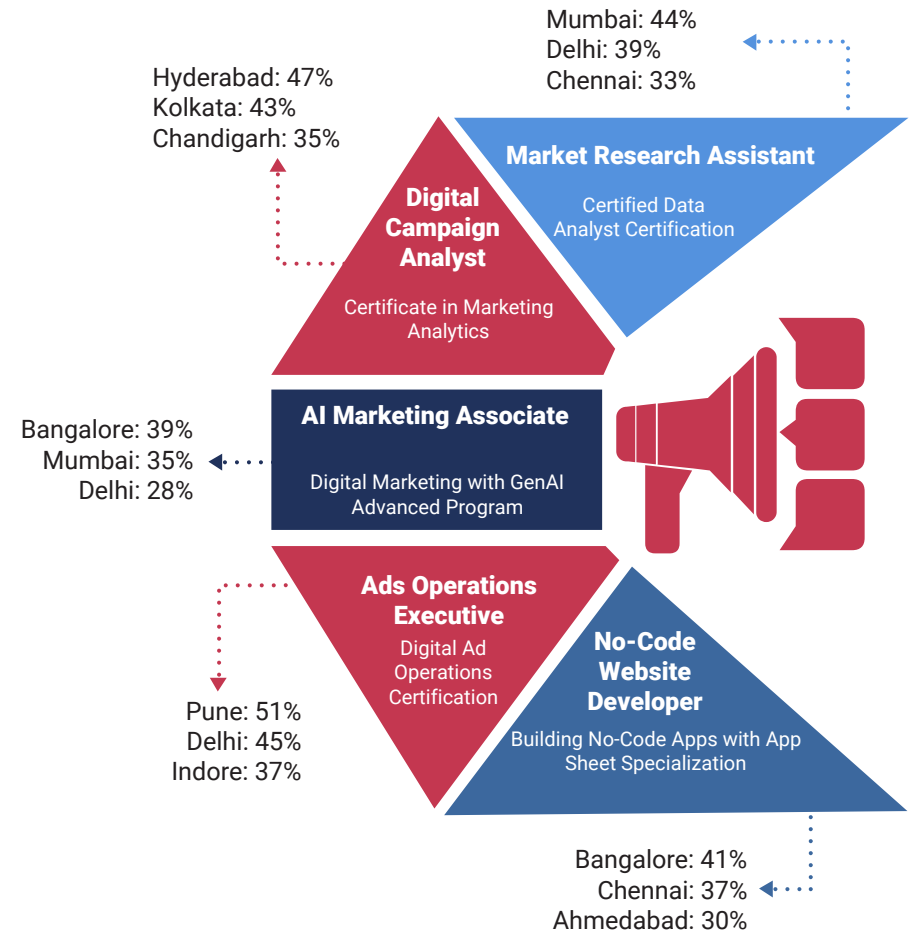


Hiring Intent **85%** (January-June, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 82%

Highest Demand for **Inventory & Logistics Coordinator in Chennai (58%)** and **Battery Assembly Technician in Pune (55%)**

Marketing & Advertising



Hiring Intent **62%** (January-June, 2026)

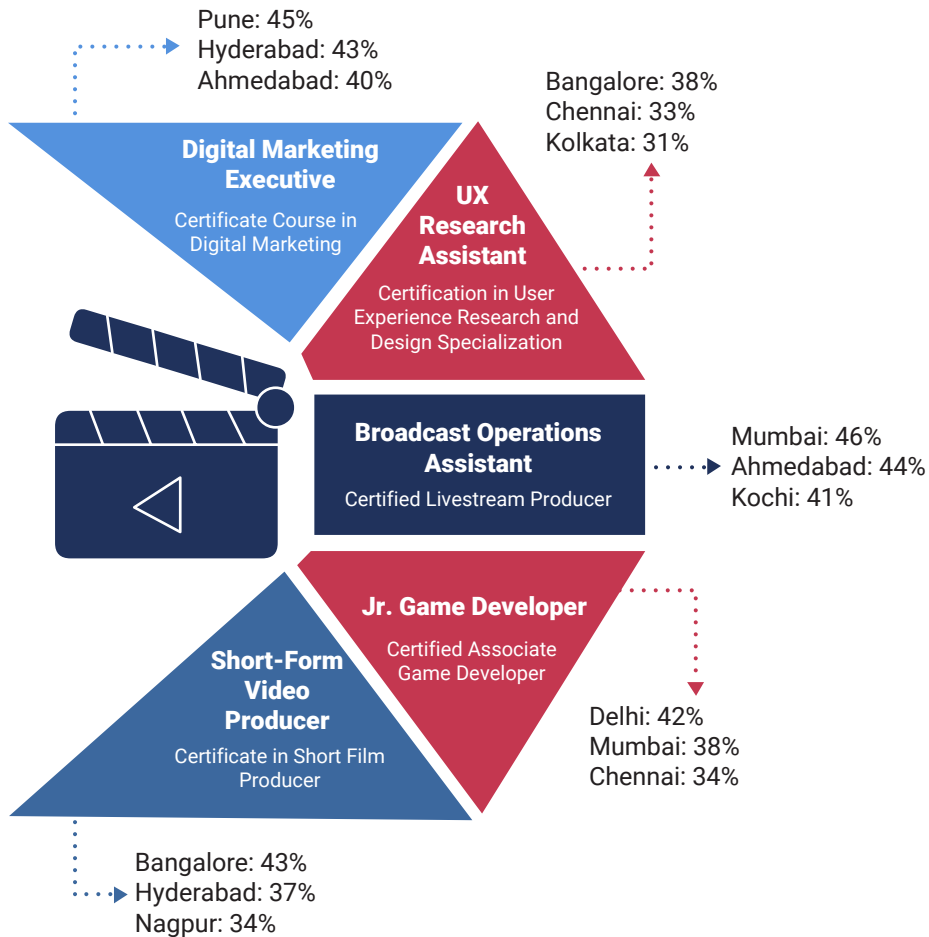
Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 67%

Highest Demand for **Ads Operations Executive in Pune (51%)** and **Digital Campaign Analyst in Hyderabad (47%)**

Note: Percentages alongside cities refer to the Intent to Hire
Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to Hire.
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

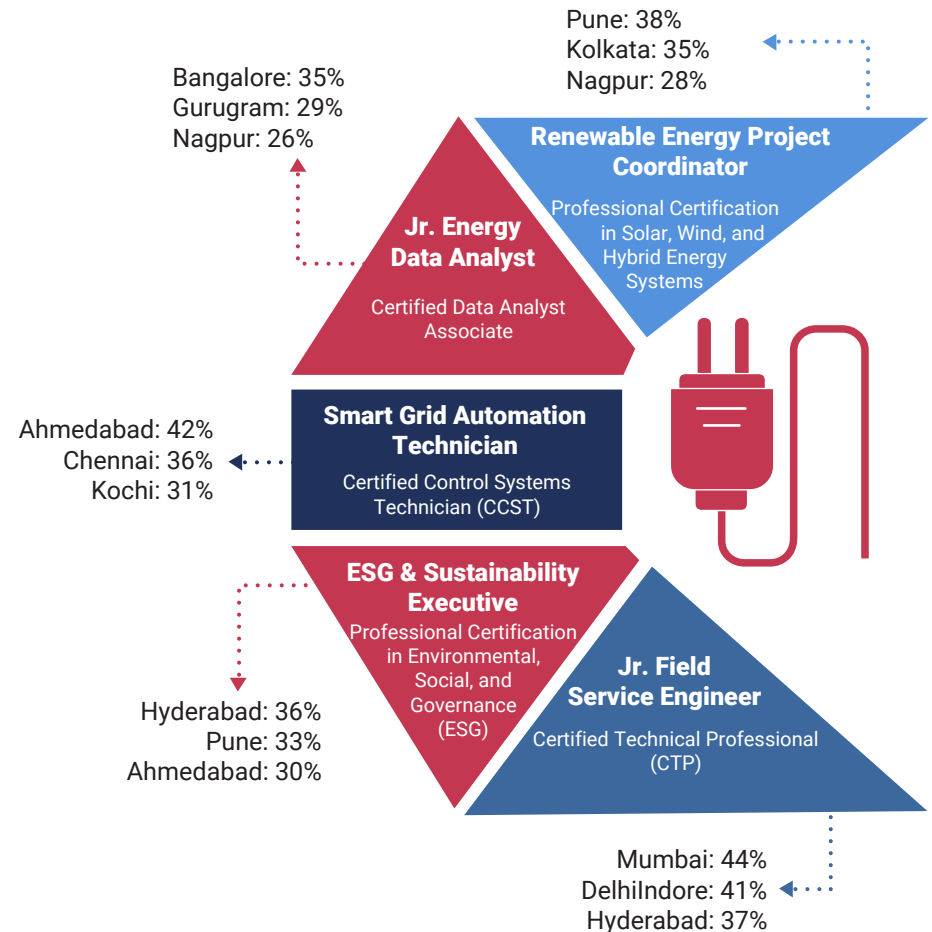
Media & Entertainment



Hiring Intent **54%** (January-June, 2026)
 Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 59%

Highest Demand for **Broadcast Operations Assistant in Mumbai (46%)** and **Digital Marketing Executive in Pune (45%)**

Power & Energy



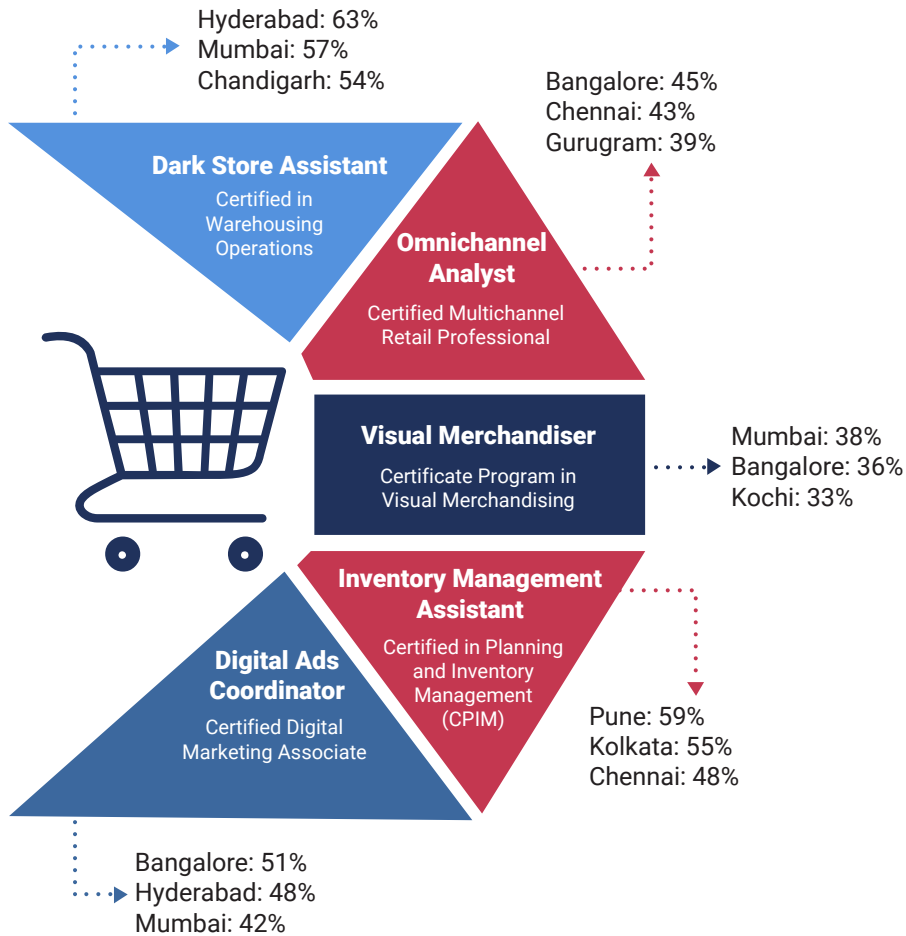
Hiring Intent **72%** (January-June, 2026)
 Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 69%

Highest Demand for **Jr. Field Service Engineer in Mumbai (44%)** and **Smart Grid Automation Technician in Ahmedabad (42%)**

Note: Percentages alongside cities refer to the Intent to Hire. Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to Hire. Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Retail

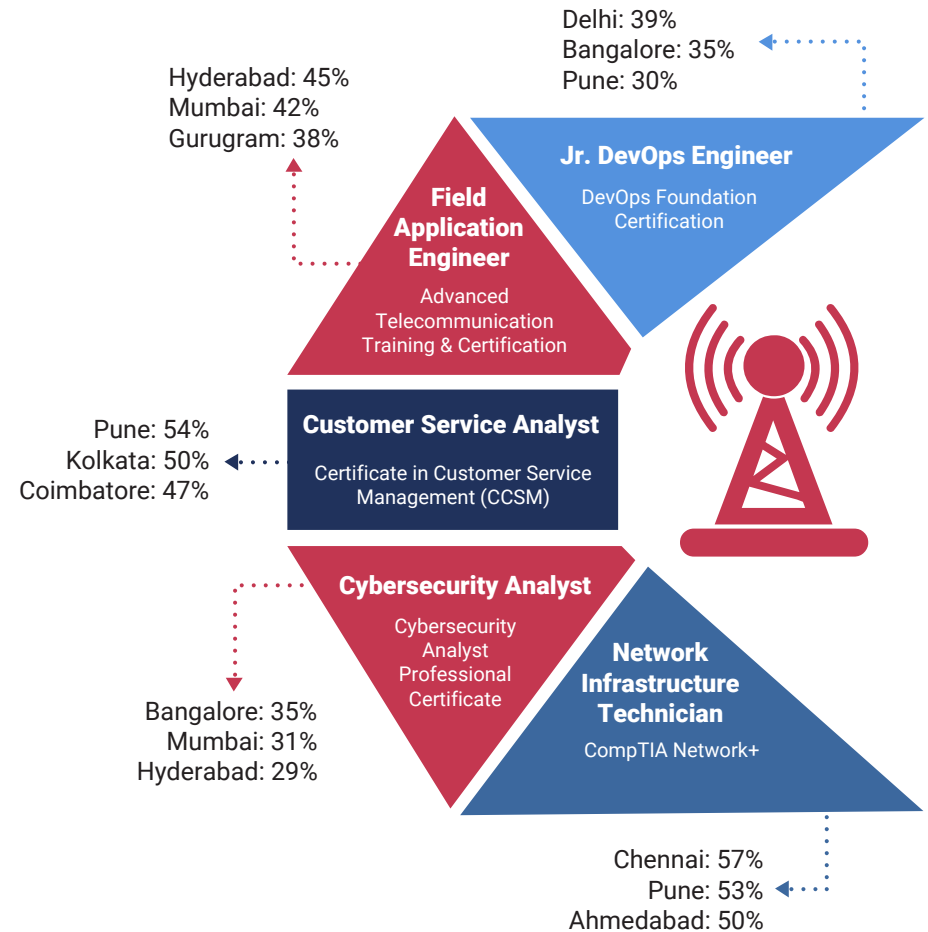


Hiring Intent **91%** (January-June, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 87%

Highest Demand for **Dark Store Assistant in Hyderabad (63%)** and **Inventory Management Assistant in Pune (59%)**

Telecommunication



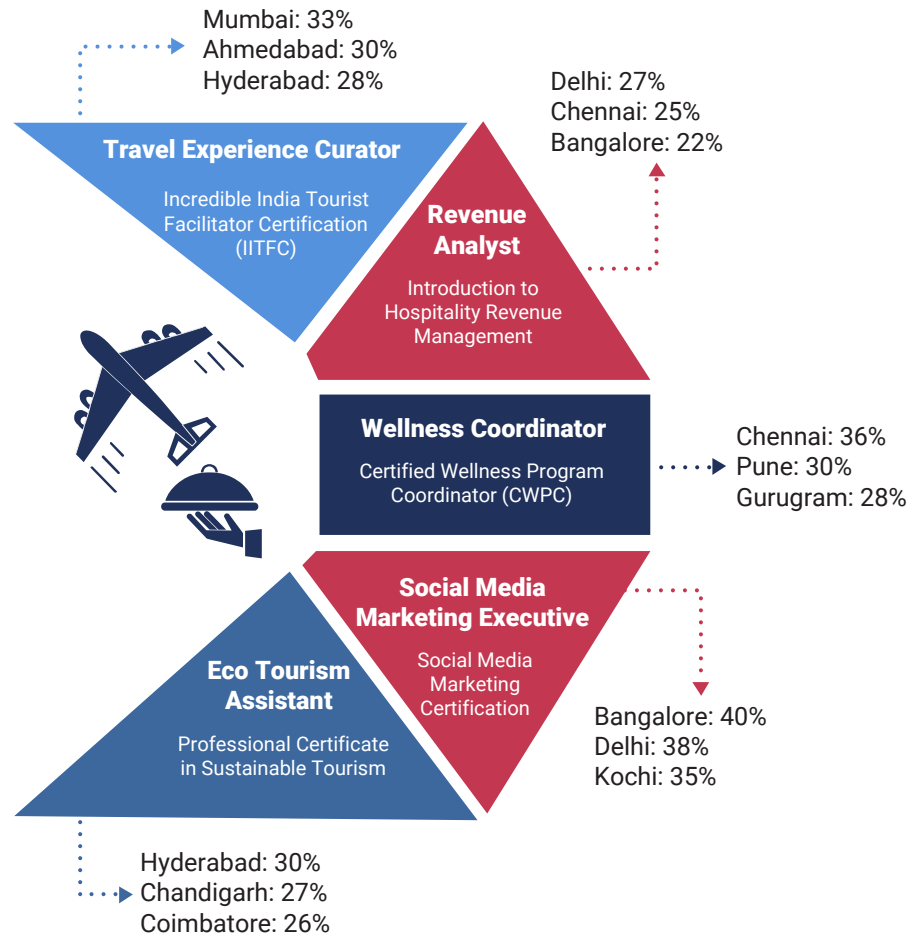
Hiring Intent **64%** (January-June, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 68%

Highest Demand for **Network Infrastructure Technician in Chennai (57%)** and **Customer Service Analyst in Pune (54%)**

Note: Percentages alongside cities refer to the Intent to Hire
Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to Hire.
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

Travel & Hospitality



Hiring Intent **77%** (January-June, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period July-December, 2025: 75%

Highest Demand for **Social Media Marketing Executive in Bangalore (40%)** and **Wellness Coordinator in Chennai (36%)**

*Note: Percentages alongside cities refer to the Intent to Hire
Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to Hire.
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.*



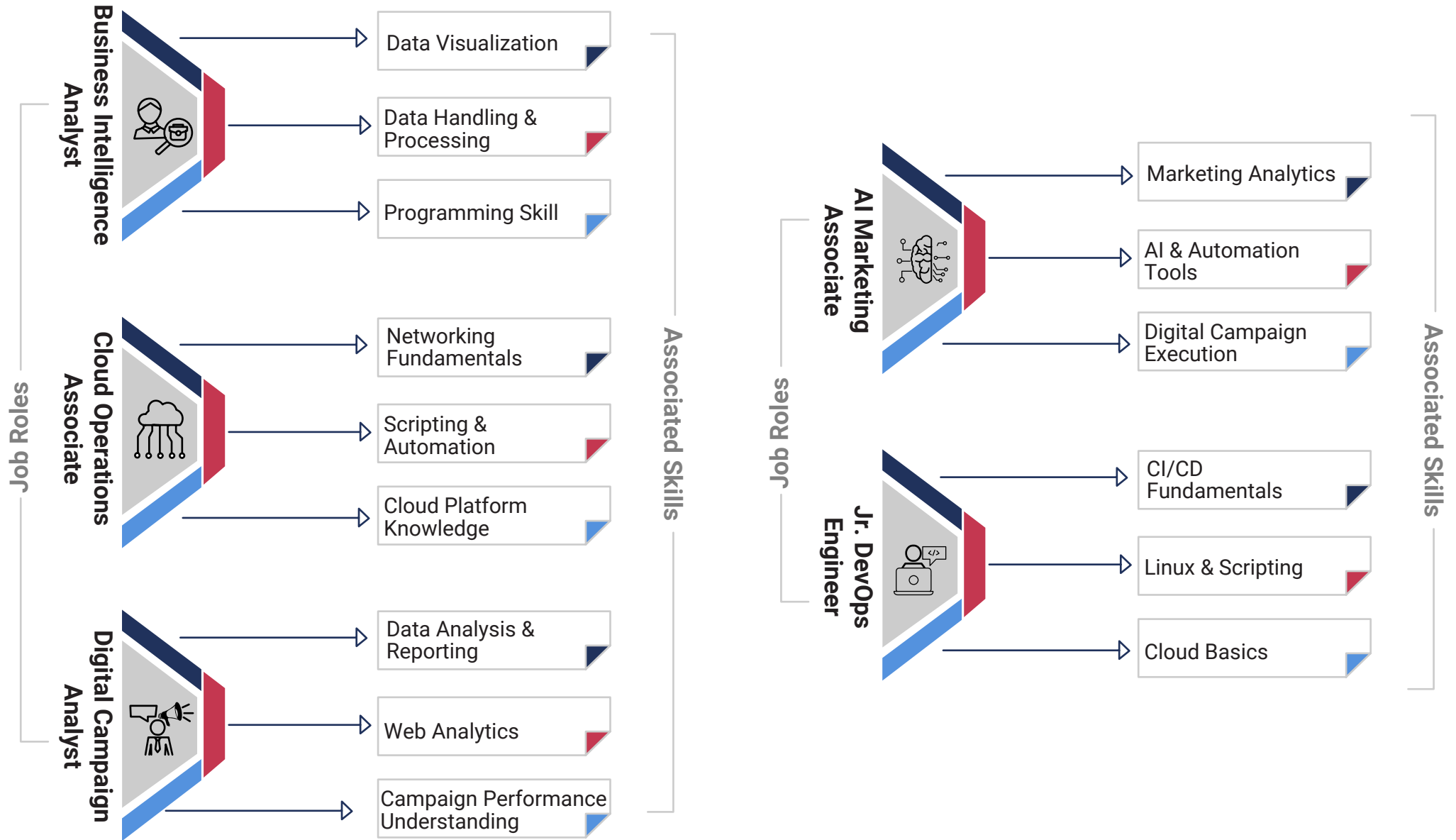
What Do Employers Look for in Freshers?

KEY JOB ROLES, DOMAIN SKILLS, SOFT SKILLS,
AND IN-DEMAND COURSES

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN FRESHERS?

Top 15 Job Roles in Demand for Freshers - Across Cities & Industries

Top 15 Job Roles in Demand and Associated Skills



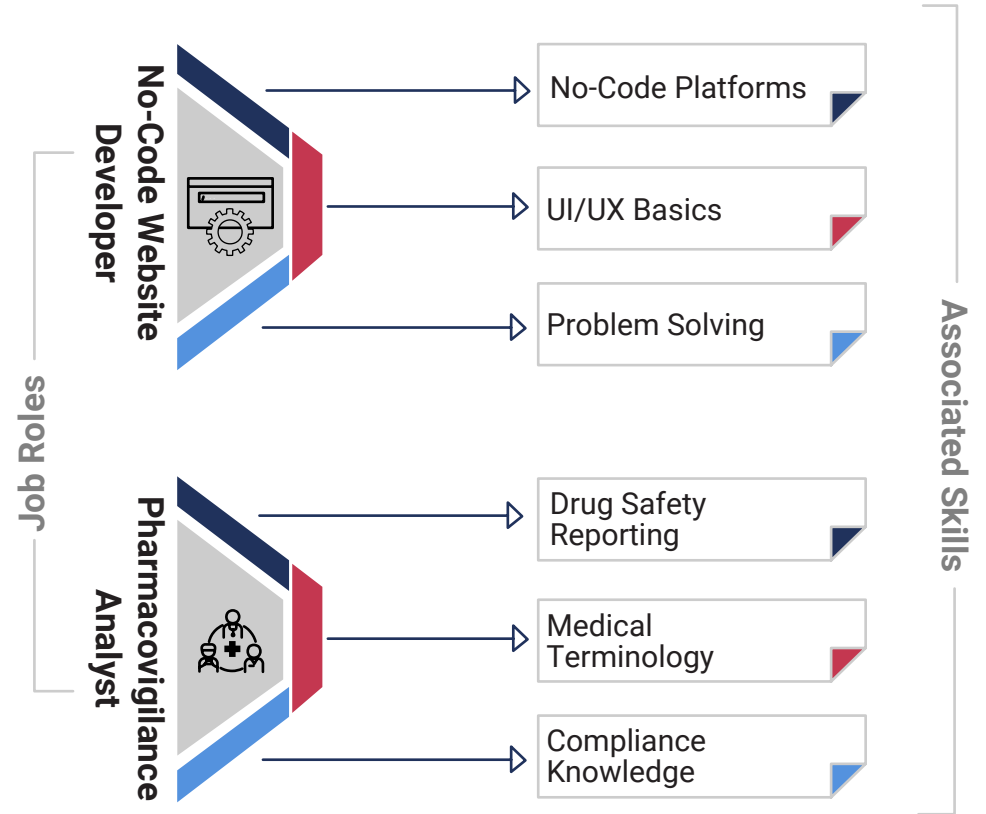
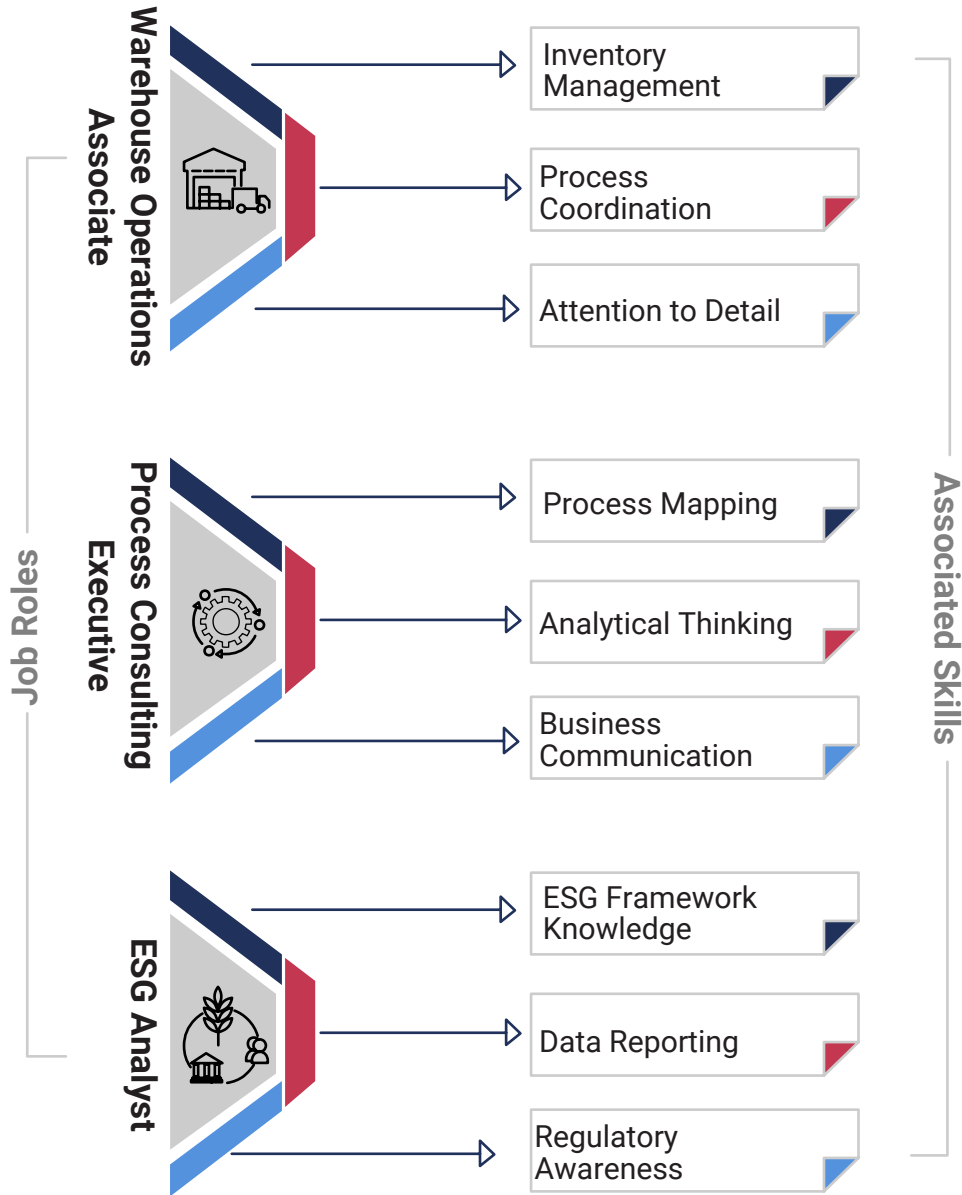
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY1, Jan – Jun, 2026)

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Top 15 Job Roles in Demand for Freshers - Across Cities & Industries

Top 15 Job Roles in Demand and Associated Skills



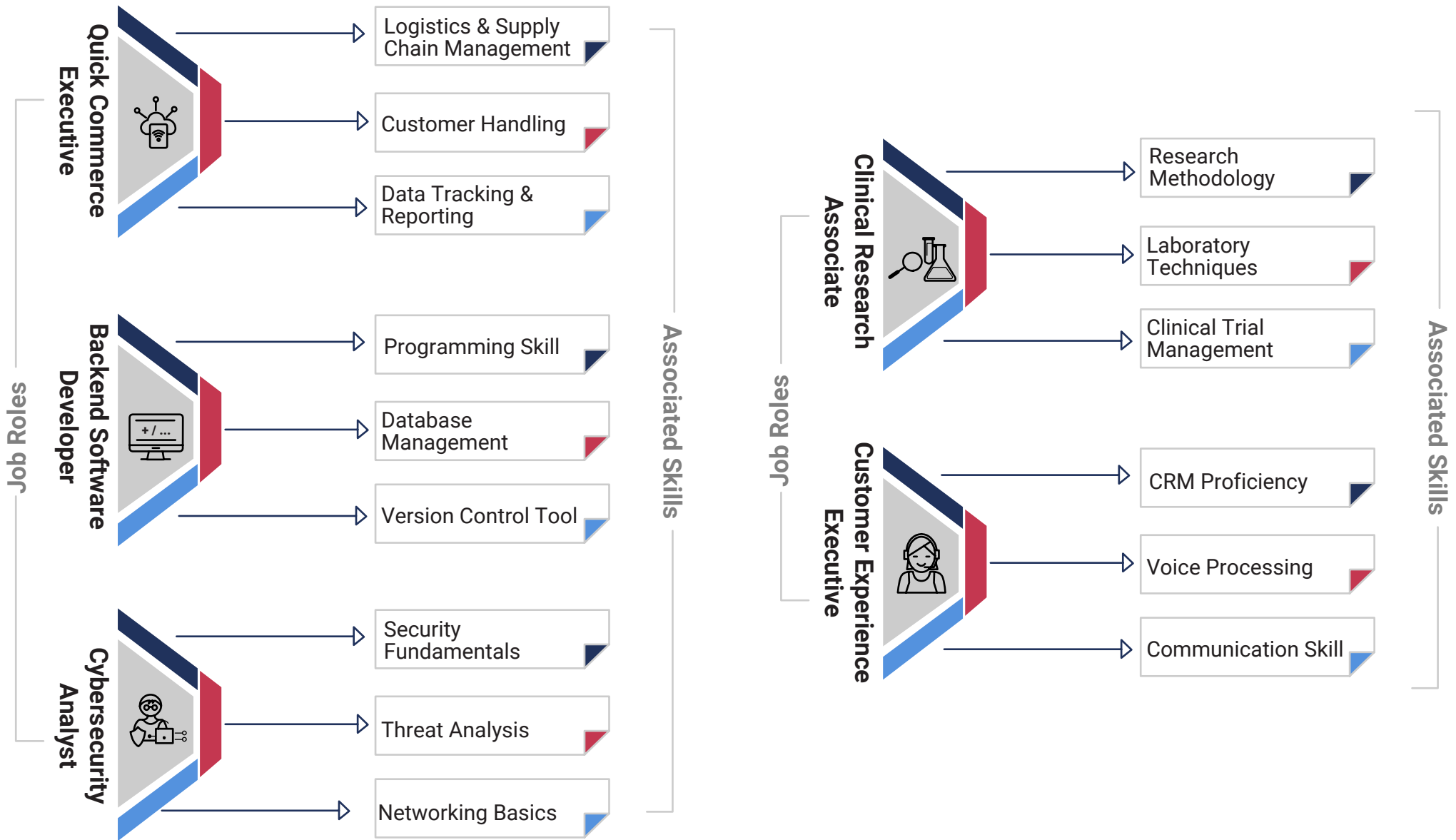
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY1, Jan – Jun, 2026)

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Top 15 Job Roles in Demand for Freshers - Across Cities & Industries

Top 15 Job Roles in Demand and Associated Skills

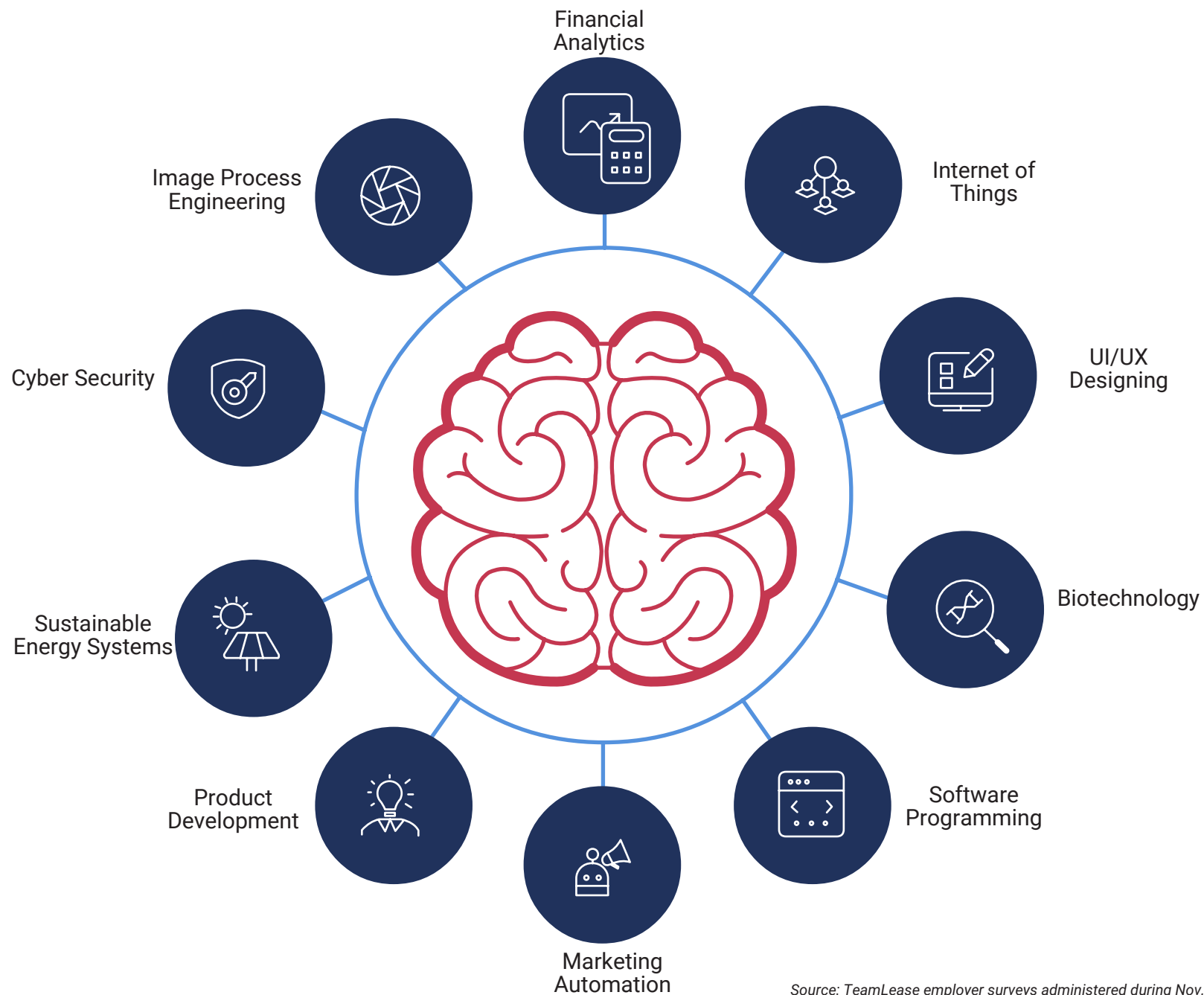


Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY1, Jan – Jun, 2026)

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN FRESHERS?

Top 10 Domain Skills in Demand for Freshers - Across Cities & Industries

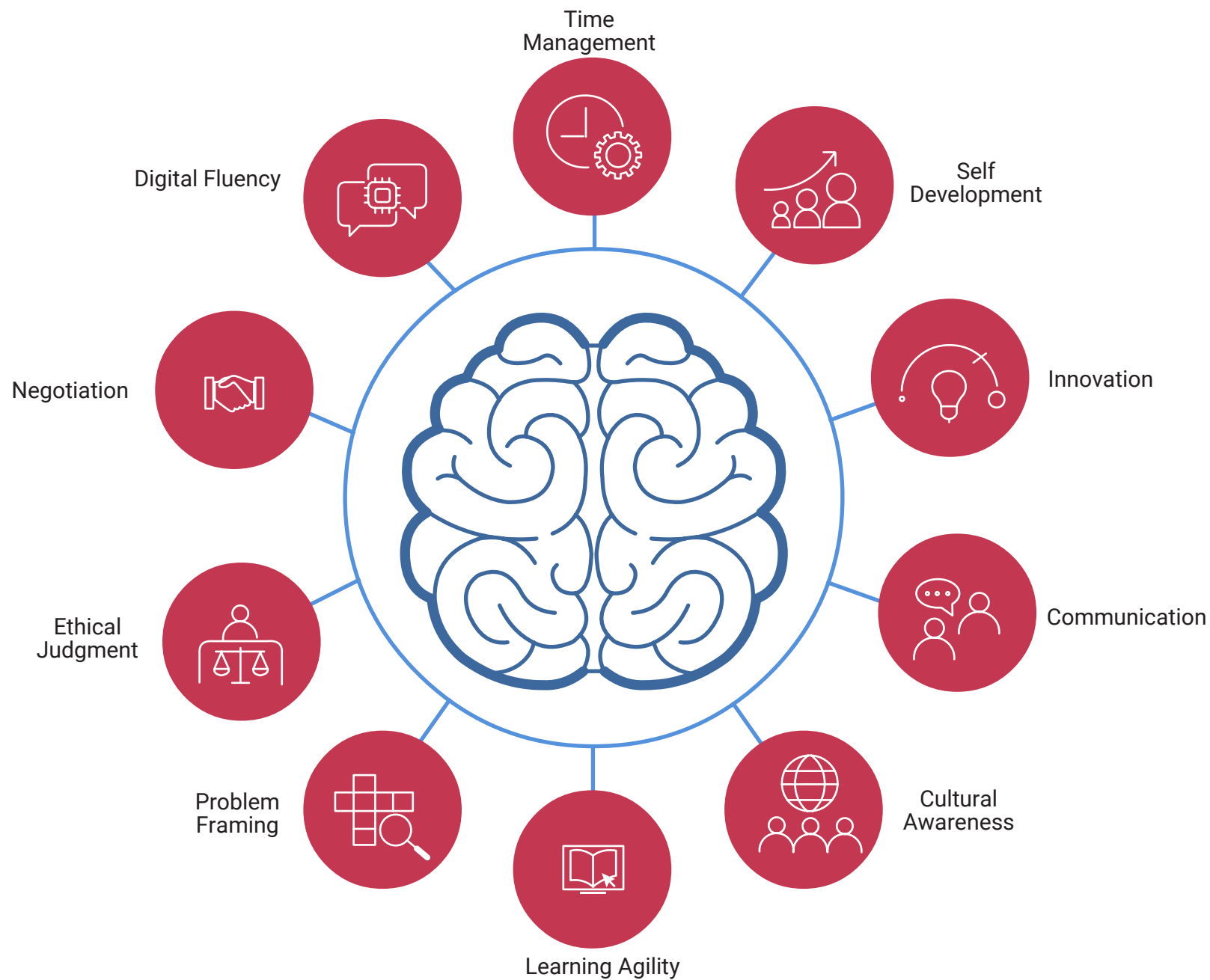


Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY1, Jan – Jun, 2026)

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN FRESHERS?

Top 10 Soft Skills in Demand for Freshers - Across Cities & Industries

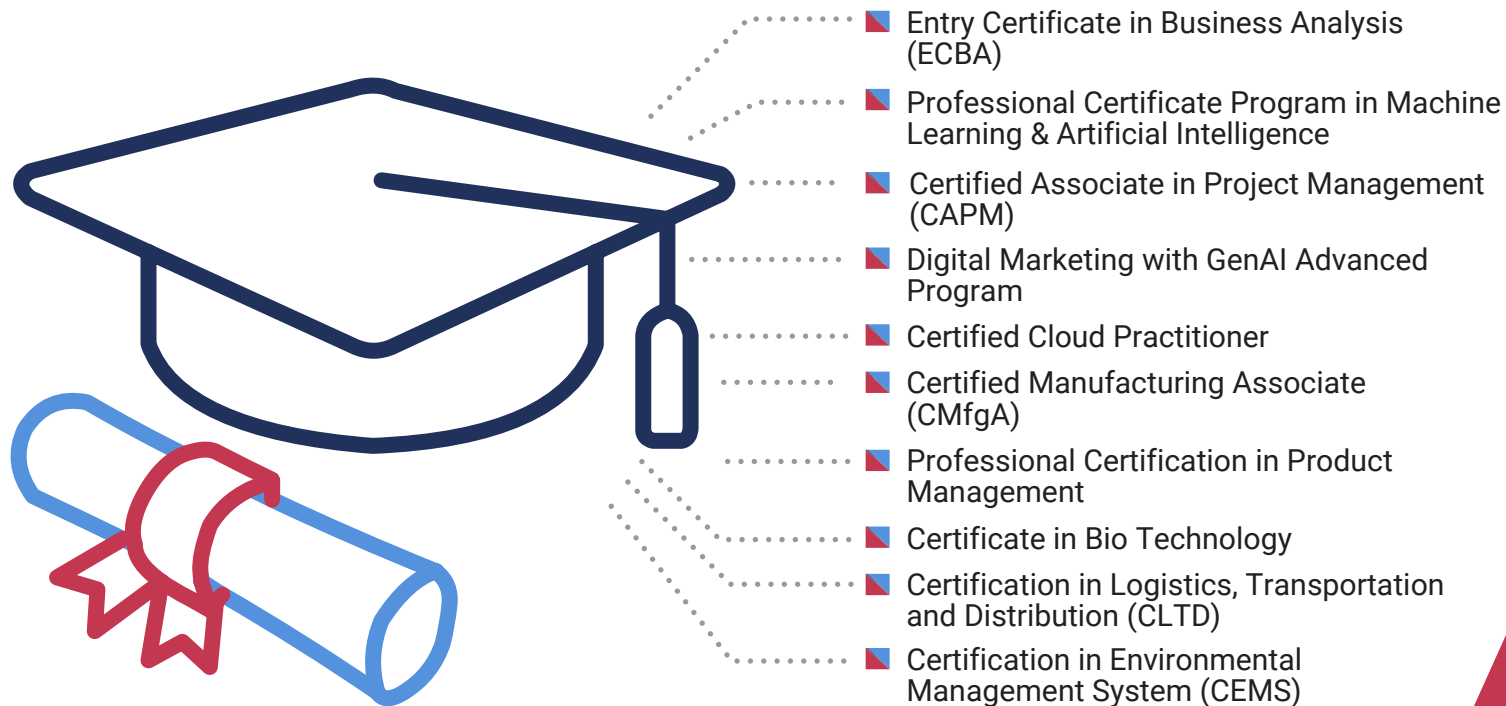


Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY1, Jan – Jun, 2026)

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN FRESHERS?

In-Demand Courses to Increase Employability



These are the most popular in-demand courses aligned to the skills expected from the candidates by the employers. These can boost a new candidate's chances of landing a job during the current HY.

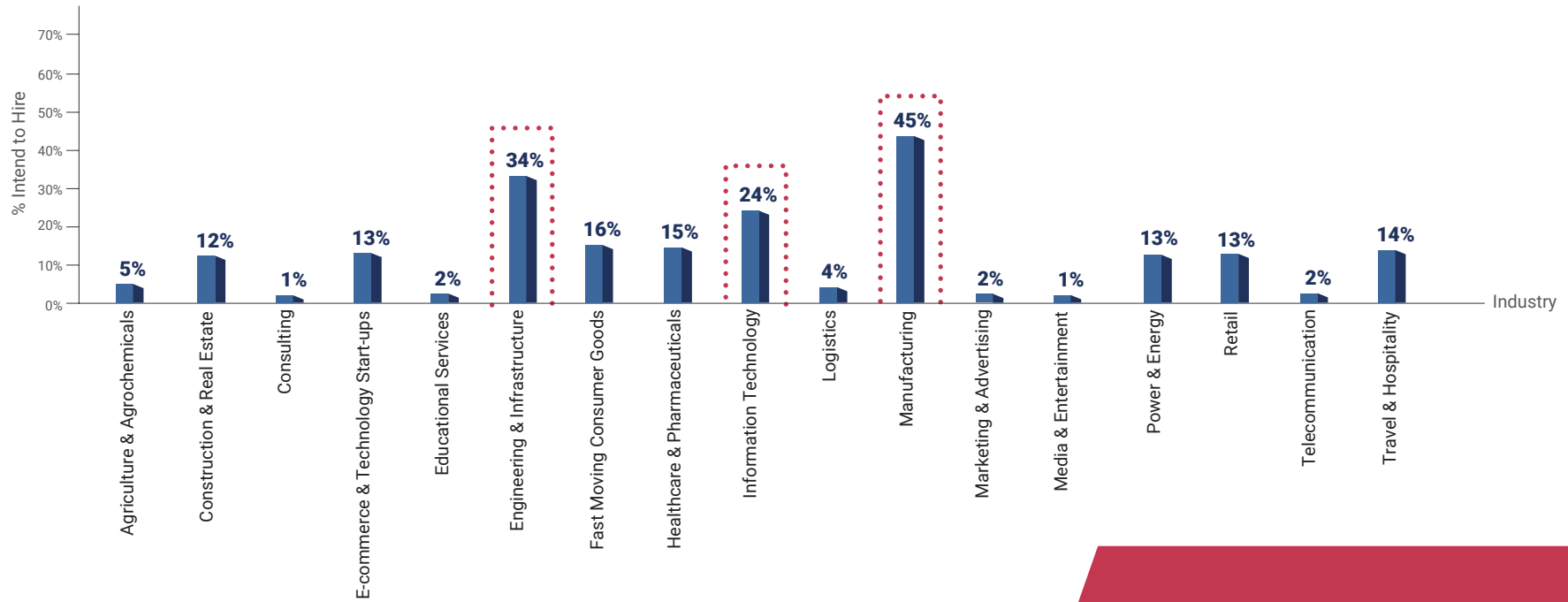
*Note: These courses are attributed to domain skills and soft skills which are in demand.
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.*



Degree Apprenticeship Hiring Sentiment

DEGREE APPRENTICES HIRING TRENDS

By Industry



Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to hire Degree Apprentices.

The top industries that intend to hire Degree Apprentices in the current HY [January-June, 2026] include Manufacturing: 45% [up from 37% in July-December, 2025], Engineering & Infrastructure: 34% [up from 29%] and Information Technology: 24% [up from 18%].

These industries also witnessed the highest intent growth of 5-8% over the previous HY [July-December, 2025].

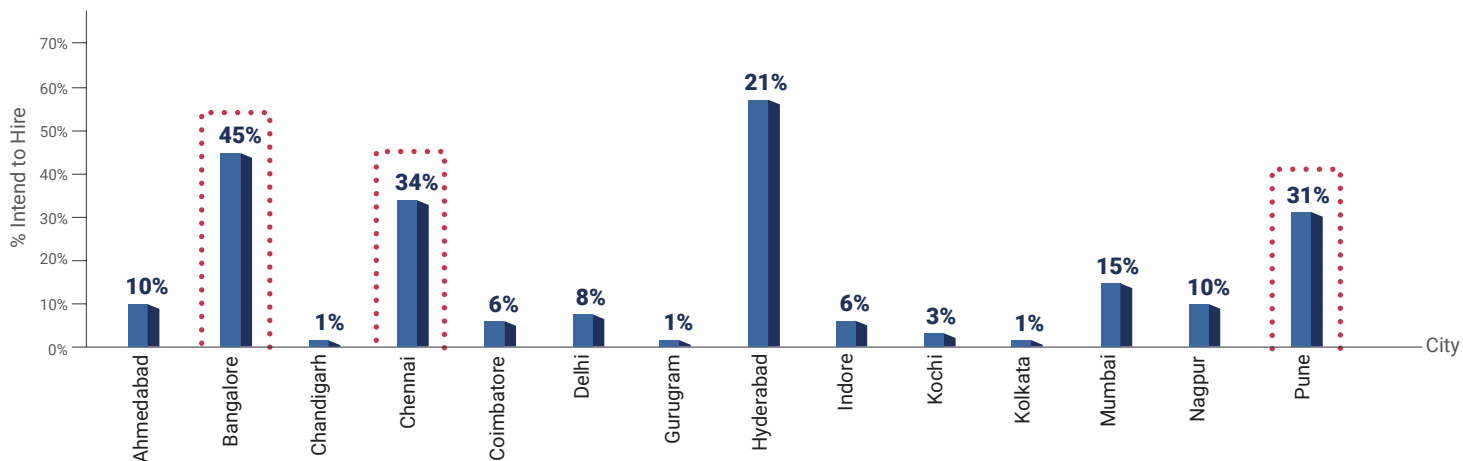
Note: Hiring period - January-June, 2026

Percentages indicate Intent to Hire

Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.

DEGREE APPRENTICES HIRING TRENDS

By City



Percentages are specific to each city, and represent the proportion of employers within each city who intend to hire Degree Apprentices.

Bangalore (45%), Chennai (34%), and Pune (31%) lead in Degree Apprentice hiring intent for January-June, 2026, each posting strong gains of 4-8% over the previous HY [July-December, 2025].

Note: Hiring period - January-June, 2026

Percentages indicate Intent to Hire

Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during Nov, 2025 - Jan, 2026.



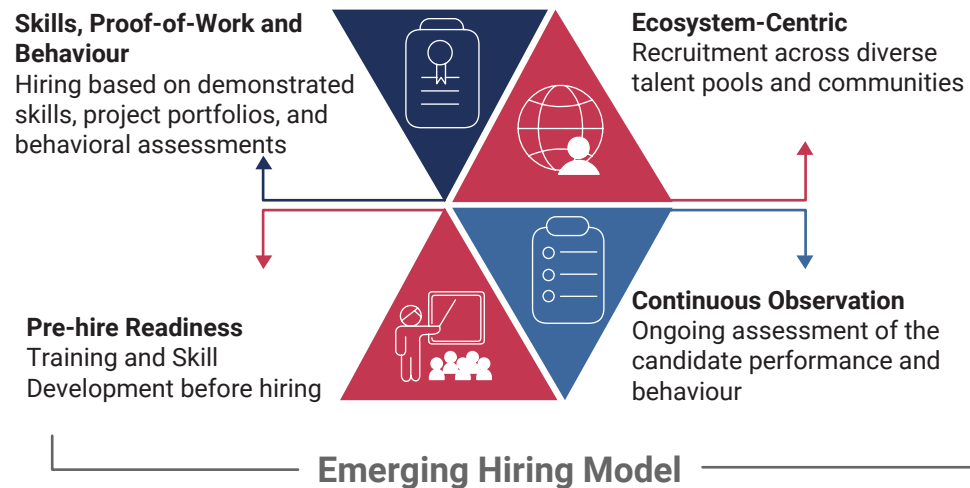
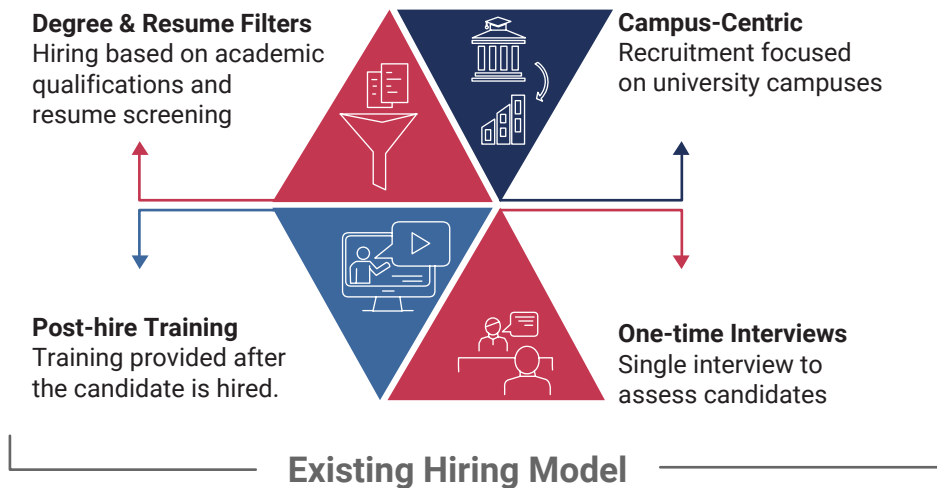
New Hiring Hotbeds

CORPORATE ECOSYSTEMS, SKILLS-FIRST
COMMUNITIES & THE RISE OF
NON-GRADUATE TALENT

NEW HIRING HOTBEDS

Corporate Ecosystems, Skills-First Communities & the rise of Non-Graduate Talent

How Hiring Models Are Moving From Credentials to Capability



Corporate Ecosystems as Structured Hiring Engines

Large enterprises and GCCs are institutionalizing fresher hiring through structured ecosystems like innovation labs, research internships, pre-placement programs, hackathons, early-career academies, and company-led learning communities. Alongside open-source platforms, industry Slack and Discord groups, these environments function as active hiring conduits. What makes this ecosystem powerful is that employers can observe fresher performance over time, reduce hiring risk, and accelerate onboarding, as candidates enter roles already familiar with tools, expectations, and work rhythms. What began in Information Technology and GCC is now slowly expanding across Manufacturing, BFSI, Healthcare, and Semiconductors, reflecting a change in early-career hiring models.

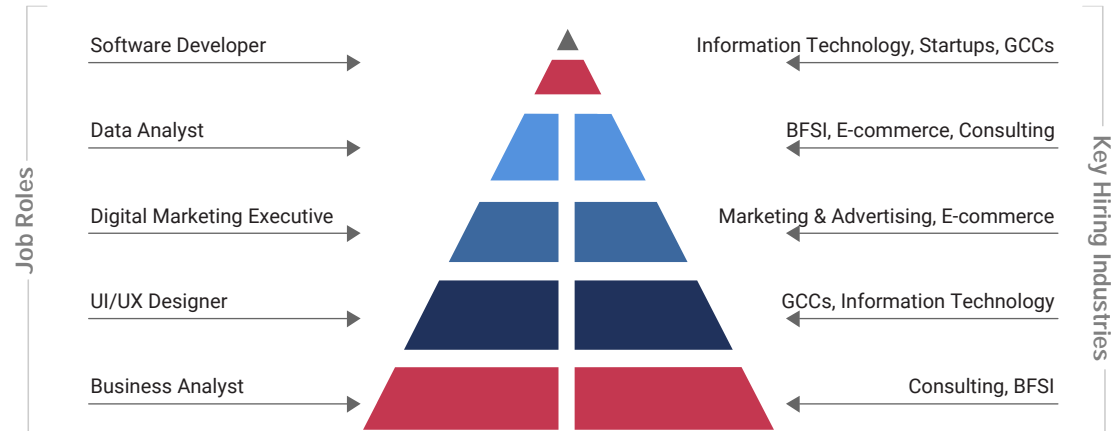
The way freshers are hired today extends well beyond campus placements or degree credentials. Entry into work is increasingly molded by where candidates show up, how they participate, and what skills they are able to demonstrate across corporate ecosystems, skills-first talent pools, and online communities.

Corporate Ecosystems, Skills-First Communities & the rise of Non-Graduate Talent

Skills-First & Non-Graduate Talent Pools Are Gaining Traction

As hiring shifts into ecosystems, degrees naturally lose their centrality. Skills-first hiring is moving into the mainstream, with employers opening fresher roles to non-traditional candidates, self-taught learners, certification-led entrants, and community-trained talent. Capability is now validated through proof-of-work; tasks completed, challenges solved, internships undertaken, and real-world projects delivered, rather than academic pedigree alone. This change is widening access to fresher opportunities across Tech, Operations, AI and Analytics, Manufacturing, and Customer Experience Roles, making early-career hiring more inclusive and outcome-driven.

Skills-First Roles Driving Fresher Hiring Demand



Talent Communities as Discovery-Led Hiring Channels

Online talent communities: open-source forums, functional groups, tech circles, and problem-solving platforms, have evolved into active hiring marketplaces. Recruiters increasingly source freshers they have observed contributing consistently over time, rather than relying solely on job portal applications. In these spaces, authentic engagement, sharing solutions, collaborating on projects, and participating in challenges, build reputation capital that directly leads to interviews and offers.

Universities Evolving into Ecosystem Anchors

Institutions are transitioning from placement gateways to ecosystem builders, fostering campus clubs, Industry-linked Labs, Apprenticeships, Live projects, and Innovation Cells that mirror market-driven Skills evaluation. Employers are engaging earlier through Curriculum co-design, Mentorship, and Challenge-based assessments. For freshers, these university-led micro-ecosystems offer output-based exposure, portfolios over scores, and create continuous learning-to-work pathways that extend well beyond graduation. By prioritizing participation in these hotbeds, freshers can bypass crowded job portals and position themselves as low-risk, high-potential hires in a skills-driven market. At the same time employers can benefit from earlier visibility, stronger skill validation, and faster, more confident hiring decisions.

In the age of AI, fresh graduate employability demands a nuanced convergence of domain expertise, adaptability, and contextual intelligence. This report not only quantifies shifting employer sentiment but also sharpens institutional awareness of emerging roles and critical competencies, empowering higher education to proactively reimagine curriculum design and deepen industry engagement.

Prof. Yogesh Upadhyay

Vice Chancellor
ITM University, Gwalior

Prof. Ashu Rani

Vice-Chancellor,
Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar
University, Agra

In today's intensely competitive global environment, institutions that strategically harness high-quality, actionable data to guide decision-making will emerge as true leaders. The Career Outlook Report's rich, granular insights into fresher hiring patterns and rapidly evolving skill priorities powerfully reinforce the urgency of transforming academic ecosystems.

To remain relevant and future-ready, institutions must deeply embed work-integrated learning, degree apprenticeships, and continuous, real-time industry feedback into their curricula-ensuring youths are not only academically strong but also workforce-ready, industry-aligned, and globally competitive.

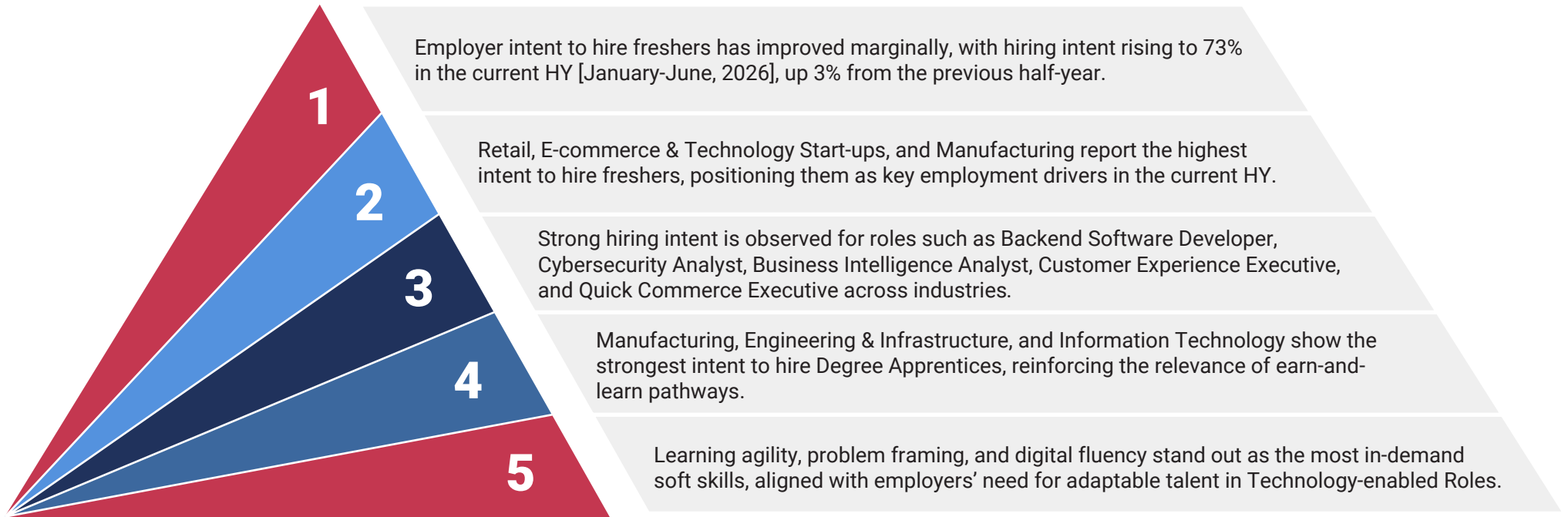
Fresh graduate employability today requires a nuanced blend of domain knowledge, adaptability and contextual skills. This Report not only quantifies the evolving employer sentiment but also elevates institutional awareness of in-demand roles and competencies, enabling higher education to proactively reimagine program design and industry engagement.

Dr. Jainish Bhagat

Director, CDOE
PP Savani University, Surat

A smiling man in a blue shirt holding a notebook in a modern office setting. The background shows a bright, open-plan office with people working at desks. A blue and red geometric graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Key Takeaways

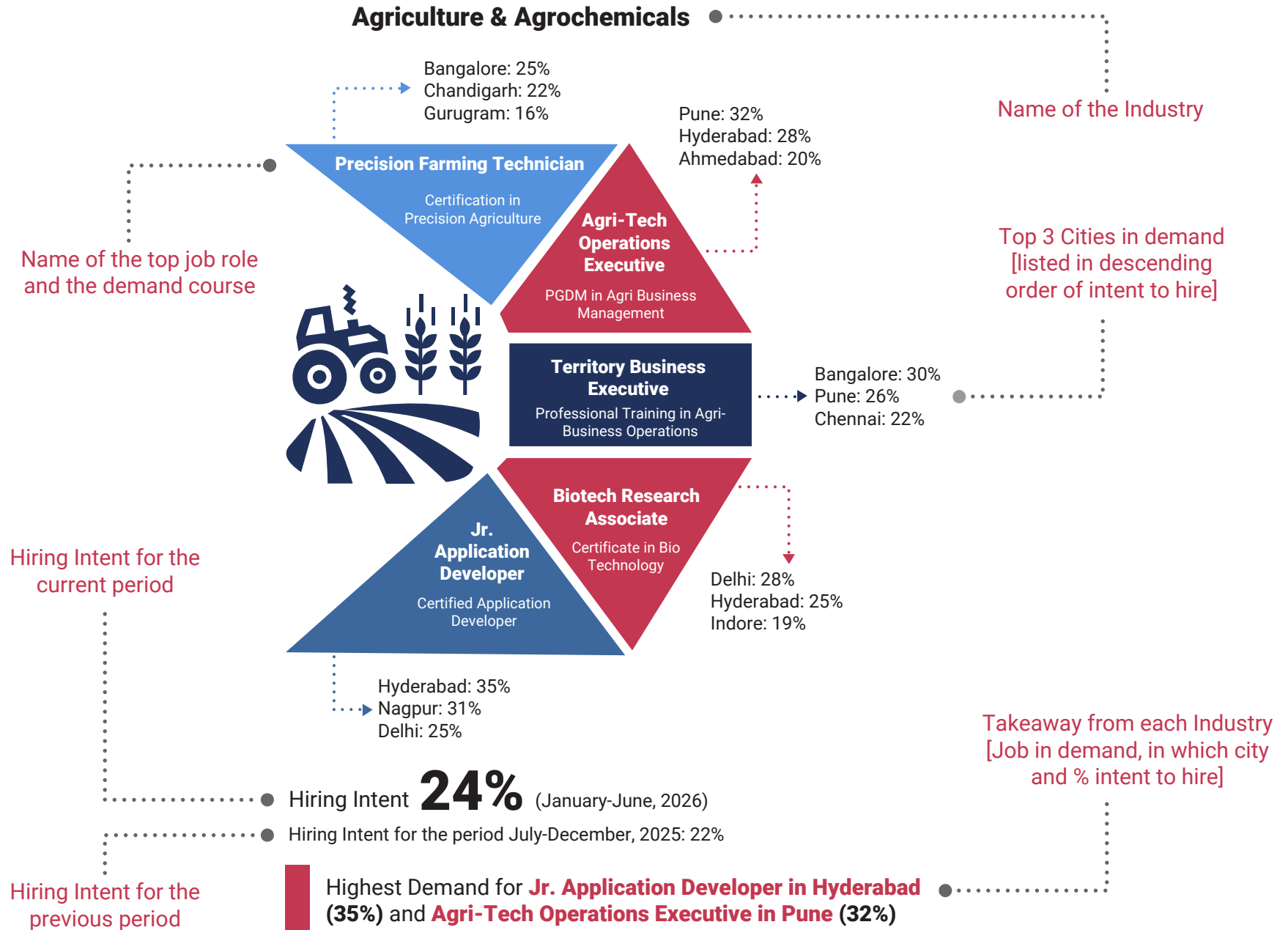




Annexure

INTERPRETATIONS, SAMPLE SIZE, METHODOLOGY,
& BIBLIOGRAPHY

Reading the data tables:



Percentages indicate the related intent to hire for the role

Freshers, & Degree Apprenticeship: Sample Size

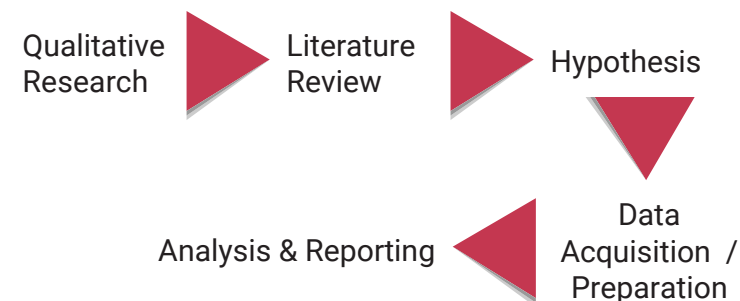
Survey to estimate Intent to Hire Freshers:

Total sample size: 1,051

1. 771 employers intend to hire freshers (within which 46 also intend to hire degree apprentices).
2. 219 employers intend to hire degree apprentices (within which 46 also intend to hire freshers).

The survey was carried out between November, 2025 and January, 2026.

Methodology



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