

CAREER OUTLOOK REPORT

HY2, JULY – DECEMBER
2026



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Preface

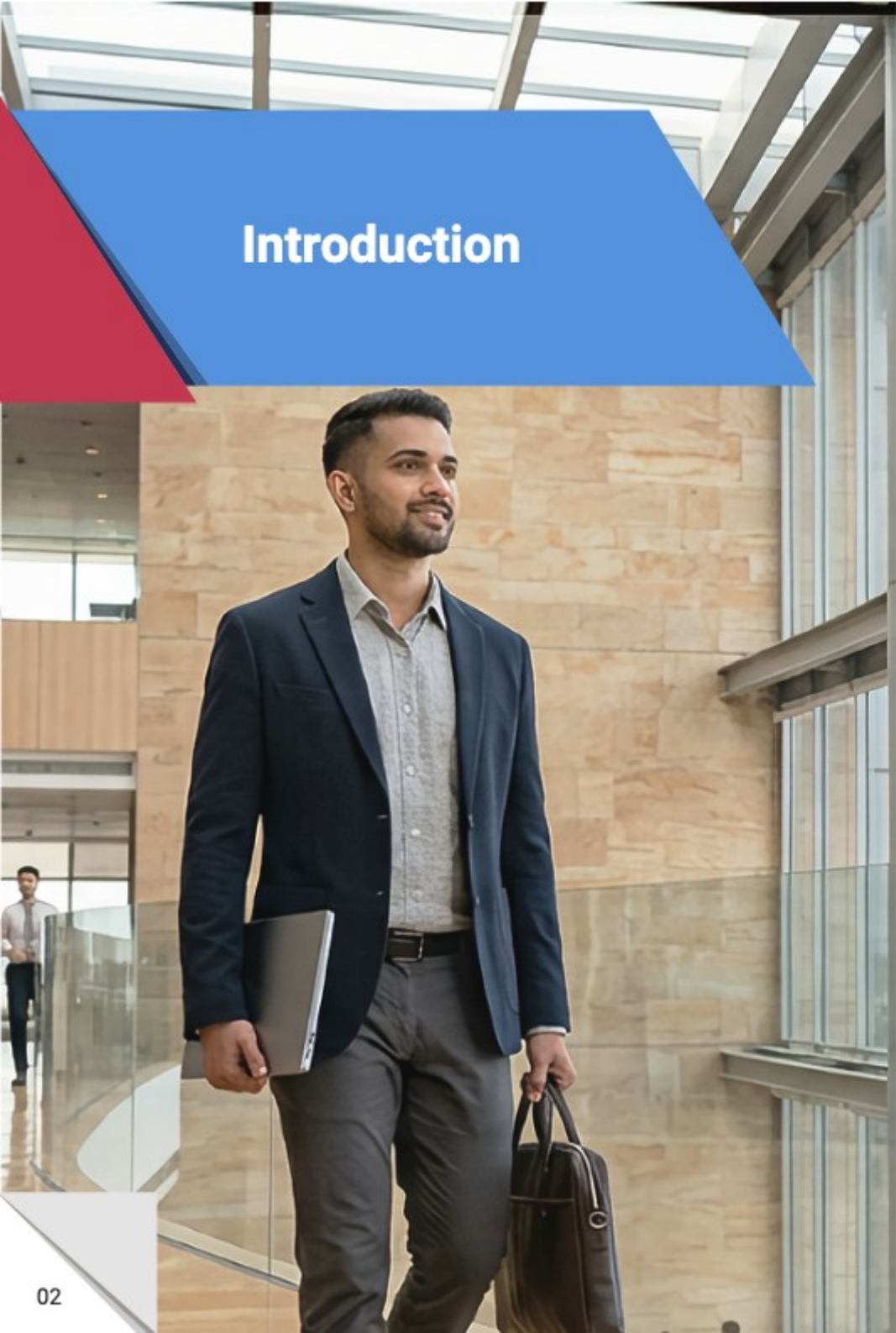


India's fresher hiring outlook remains encouraging, with 75% of employers intending to hire fresh talent during July–December 2026. E-commerce & Technology Start-ups, Retail and Manufacturing lead this demand, while Bangalore, Mumbai and Chennai remain the strongest employment hubs. At the same time, the opportunity is becoming more selective, with employers placing greater emphasis on practical capability, digital readiness and workplace behaviour.

The findings reflect a clear shift from qualification-led hiring to capability-led hiring. Accountability, attention to detail, critical thinking, work ethics and adaptability are becoming increasingly important, alongside domain skills such as full stack engineering, cloud security and business analytics. Bachelor's degrees continue to hold strong value, but academic credentials must increasingly be supported by practical exposure, workplace familiarity and the ability to apply knowledge.

This edition also highlights the relevance of degree apprenticeships and work-integrated learning. As employers expect freshers to contribute earlier, institutions must embed internships, projects, simulations and apprenticeships more deeply into education. At TeamLease EdTech, we believe that Making India Employable requires stronger alignment between learning and work, so that young people enter the workforce with both qualifications and demonstrated capability.

Shantanu Rooj
Founder & CEO
TeamLease EdTech Limited



Introduction

The Career Outlook Report, HY2 2026, examines employer hiring intent for freshers and degree apprentices across India for July–December 2026. Based on responses from 1,097 employers, the report analyses hiring trends across industries, cities, qualifications, job roles, domain skills, soft skills and degree-apprenticeship opportunities.

Overall fresher hiring intent stands at 75%, up from 73% in the previous half-year. E-commerce & Technology Start-ups and Retail lead at 93%, followed by Manufacturing at 89%. Bangalore records the highest city-level hiring intent at 89%, followed by Mumbai at 75% and Chennai at 71%. The report also identifies AI Application Developer, Jr. Semiconductor Design Engineer, Data Centre Operations Associate, Programmatic Advertising Associate and Inventory & Dispatch Executive among the leading roles for freshers.

Beyond hiring numbers, this edition explores how AI, automation, evolving skill requirements and changing workplace expectations are reshaping early-career employability. Its spotlight section examines the gap between employer expectations and fresher viewpoints, while underlining the importance of practical experience, digital fluency, communication, accountability and continuous learning.



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 which 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.

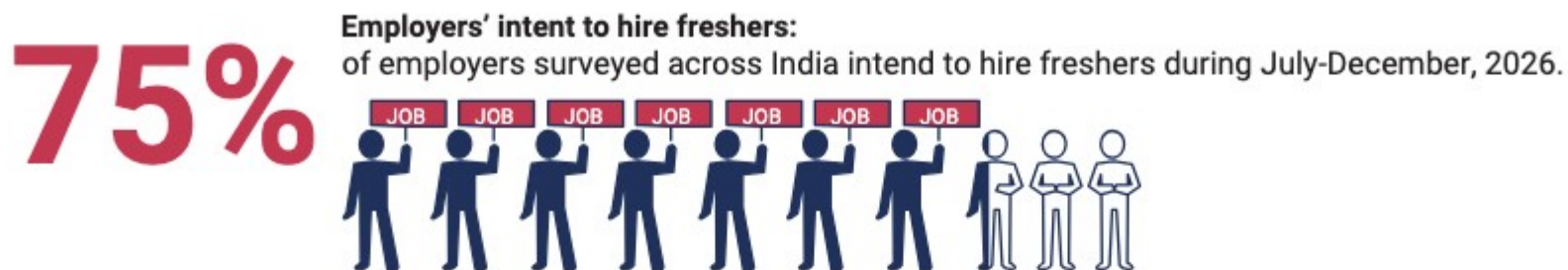
Hiring Sentiment: is the likelihood of an employer hiring people for their organisation during a specified time period.

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.

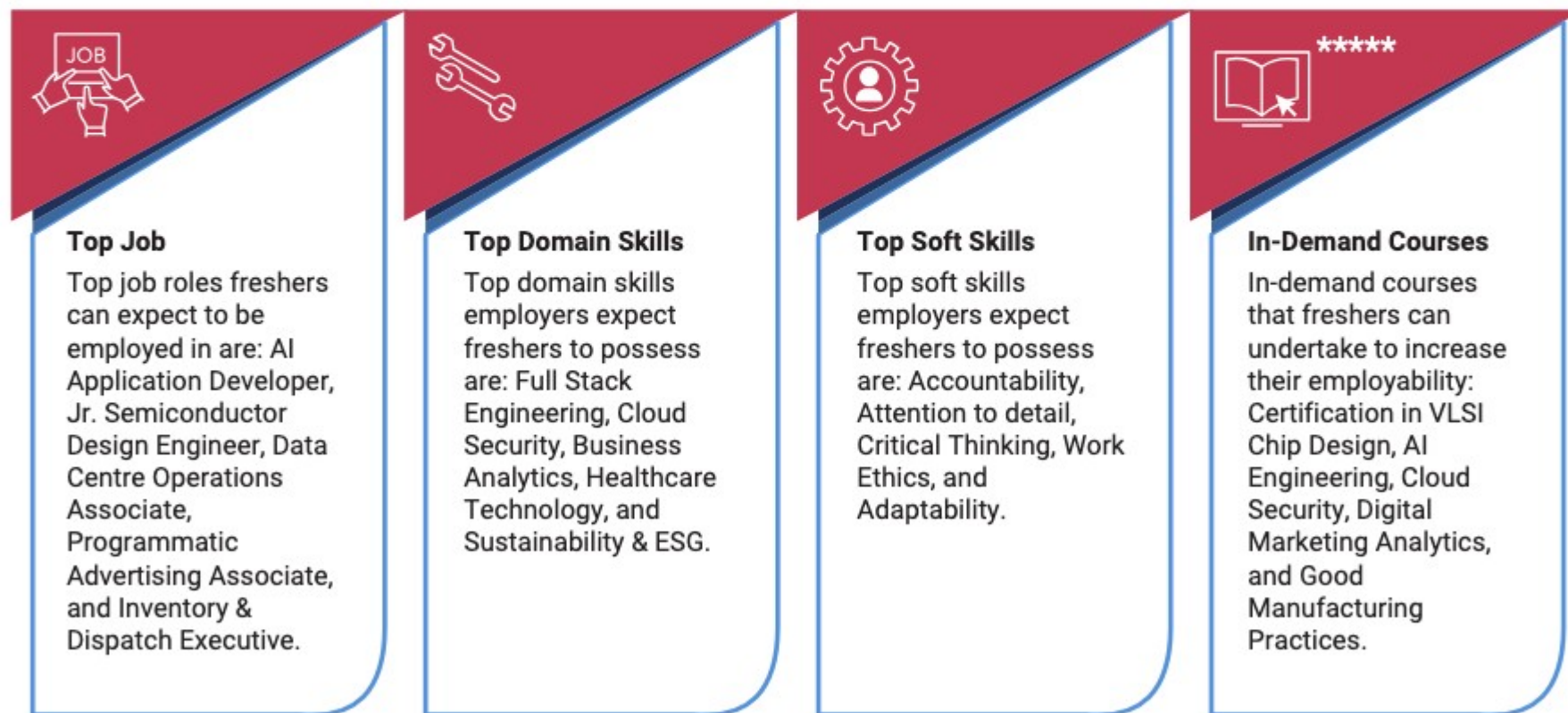
Executive Summary



Hiring Intent for Freshers during July-December, 2026



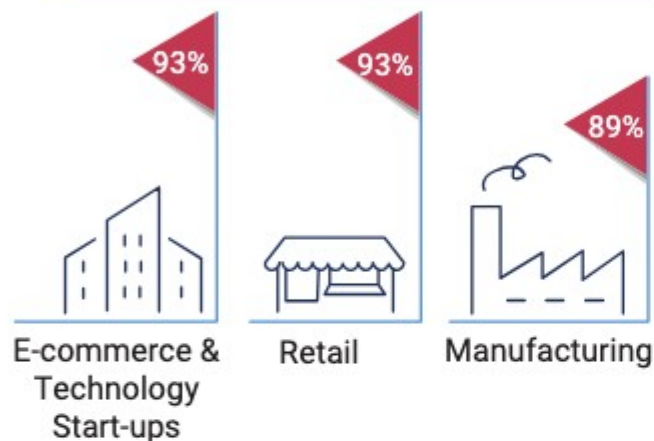
Job roles and skills that are in demand for freshers during July-December, 2026



Hiring Intent for Freshers during July-December, 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 July-December, 2026:



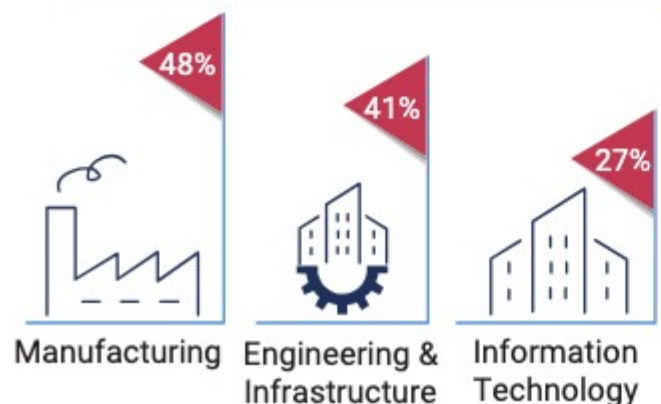
Top 3 cities that intend to hire freshers during July-December, 2026:



Hiring Intent for Degree Apprentices during July-December, 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 July-December, 2026:

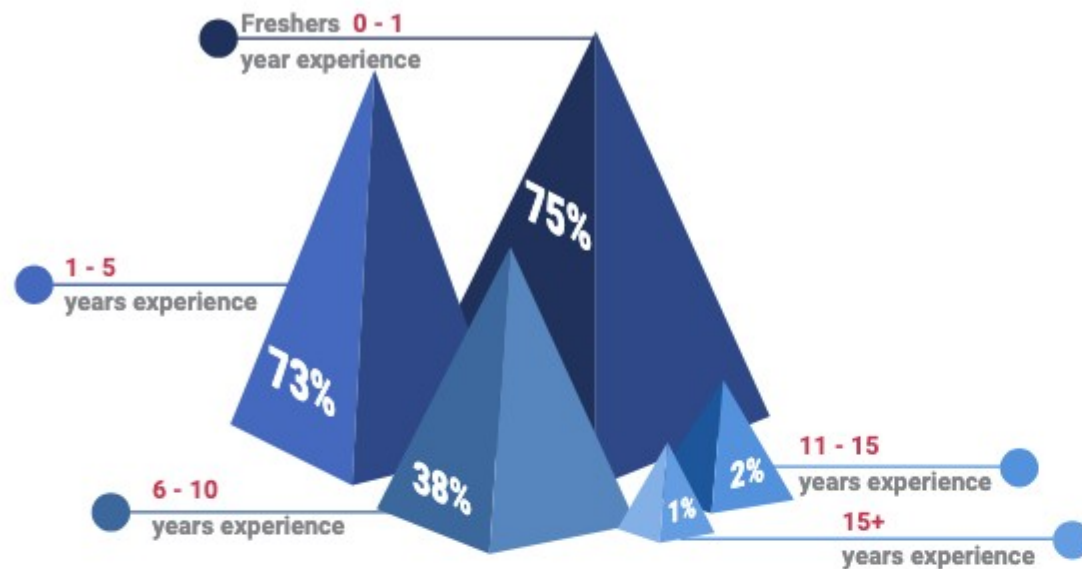


Top 3 cities that intend to hire degree apprentices during July-December, 2026:



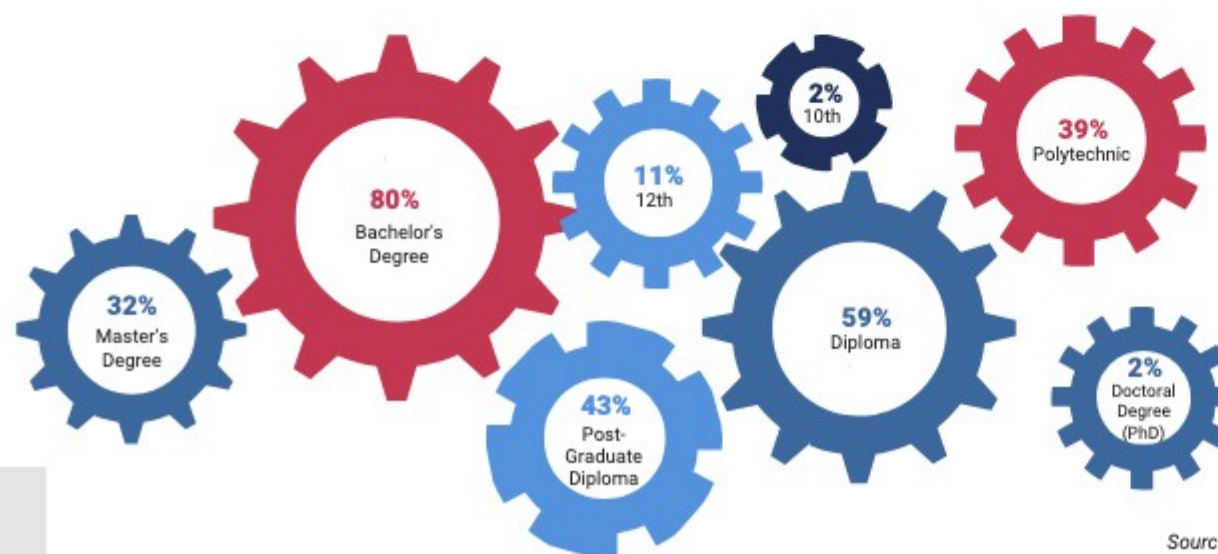
Employers' Intent To Hire Freshers

OVERVIEW OF HIRING INTENT IN INDIA



**Overall
Intent to
Hire: 84%**

Hiring sentiment remains robust, with overall hiring intent at 84% across categories. Fresher hiring intent has also strengthened to **75% in July-December 2026**, compared with 73% in the previous half-year, indicating a modest improvement in entry-level hiring demand.



Percentages represent the proportion of employers who are intending 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 which represents the percentage of employers likely to hire during the six-month period that is in consideration.

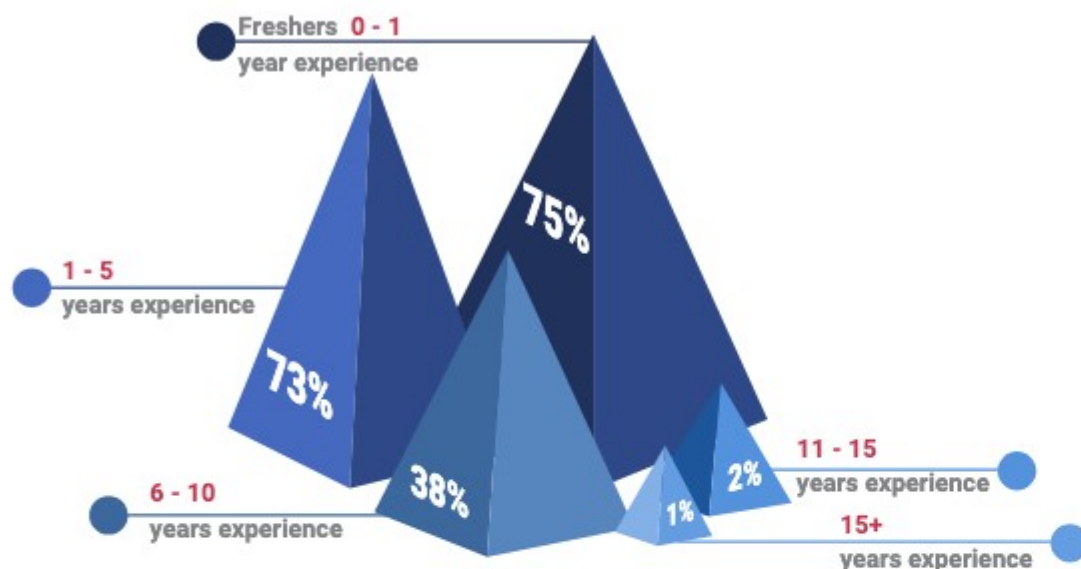
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY2, Jul – Dec, 2026)

OVERVIEW OF HIRING INTENT IN INDIA [HY2, 2026]

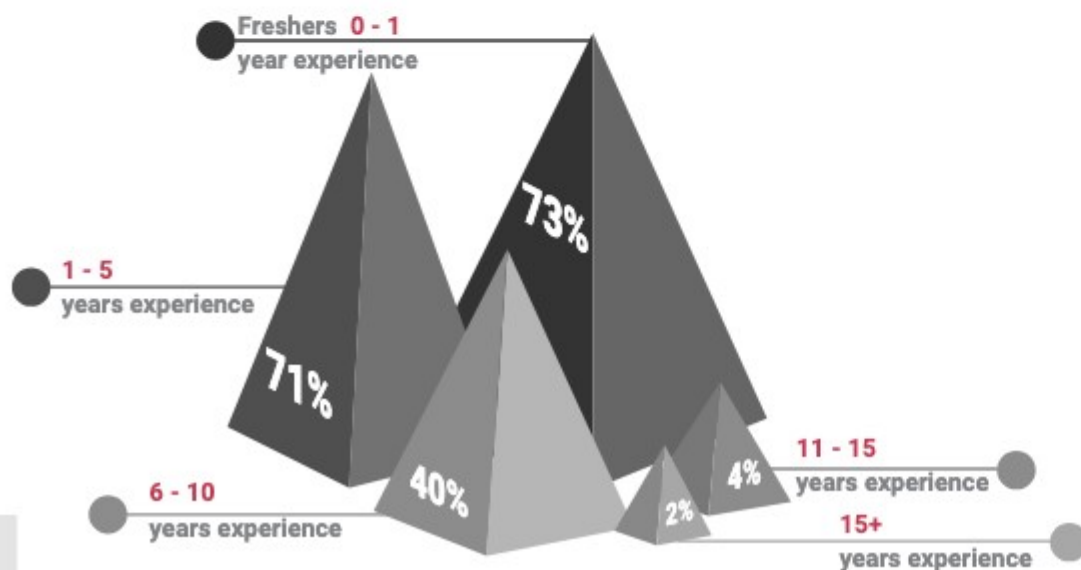
A Comparison with HY1, January-June, 2026 - Across all Categories

Hiring intent during July-December, 2026



Percentages represent the proportion of employers who are intending to hire freshers. The percentages exceed 100% as respondents were allowed to select multiple options.

Hiring intent during January-June, 2026



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

Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY2, Jul - Dec, 2026)



E-commerce & Technology Start-ups

- India's e-commerce and start-up ecosystem continues to expand, with quick commerce, D2C models, digital marketplaces, and MSME digitisation increasing the need for entry-level talent across marketplace operations, fulfilment, customer support, and digital coordination roles.
- The growth of creator-led commerce and AI-enabled discovery is further supporting fresher hiring across product data management, channel partner support, influencer marketing coordination, and dispatch functions, where digital fluency and operational agility are increasingly valued.



Retail

- Rising incomes, urbanisation, omnichannel integration, and the expansion of organized retail into Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities are strengthening demand for fresh talent across store operations, customer engagement, and retail technology functions.
- The shift toward phygital retail, hyperlocal fulfilment, and AI-led personalisation is further creating entry-level opportunities across customer experience, category management, quick-commerce operations, in-store sales, and technology-enabled retail roles.



Manufacturing

- The manufacturing industry continues to gain momentum, supported by rising private investment, government-backed industrial initiatives, and the adoption of automation and Industry 4.0 systems, strengthening fresher hiring across process engineering, quality, production, and instrumentation functions.
- The expansion of smart manufacturing, robotics-assisted production, and precision quality systems is also creating opportunities across industrial automation, tooling design, controls, process quality, measurement, and testing roles.



Logistics

- The expansion of e-commerce, quick-commerce networks, integrated infrastructure, and digitally enabled warehousing is driving sustained fresher demand across supply chain, fulfilment, inventory, and operations coordination functions.
- Growth in Grade-A warehousing, micro-fulfilment, and real-time supply chain systems is further opening entry-level opportunities across dispatch operations, warehouse automation, logistics planning, client support, and e-commerce fulfilment roles.

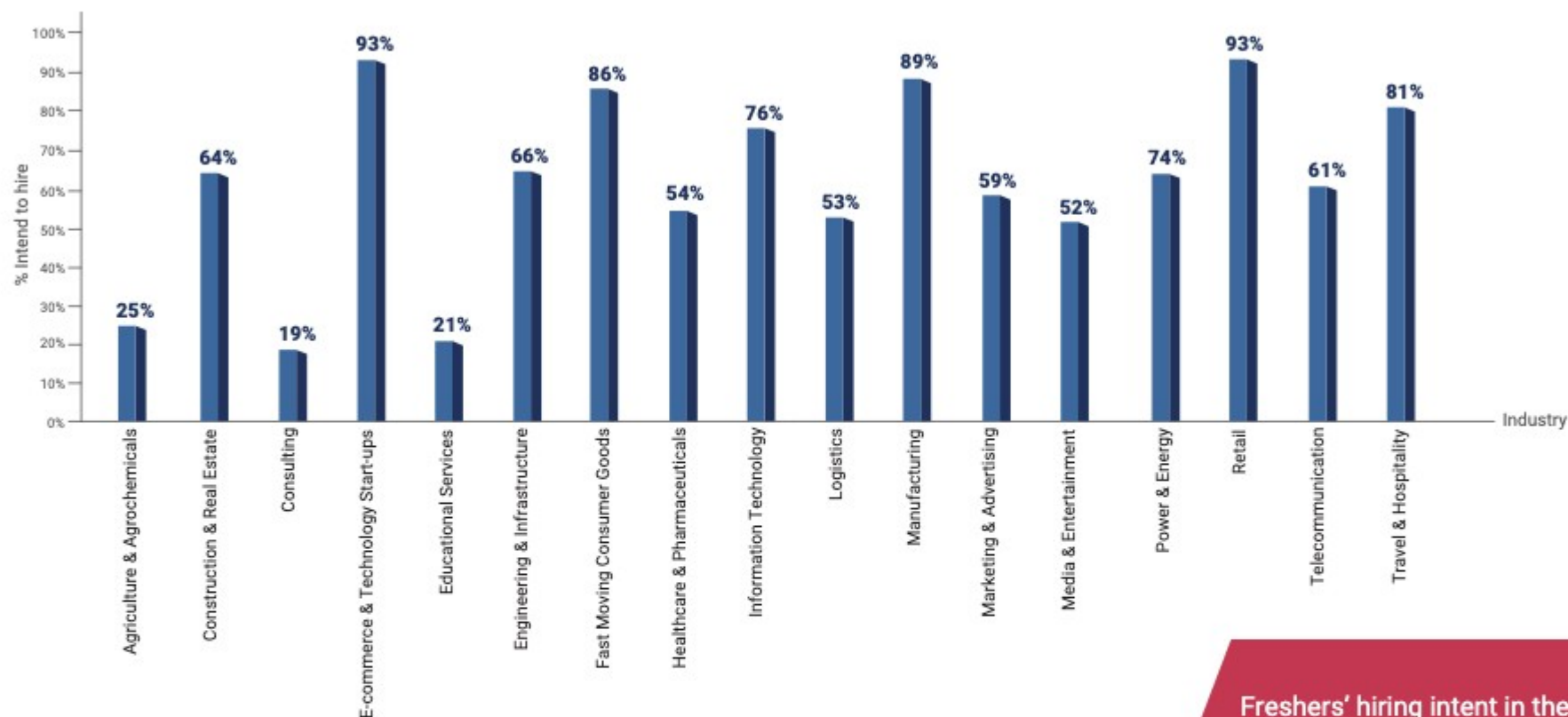
Fresher Hiring Sentiment

BY INDUSTRY AND CITY



FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT

By Industry



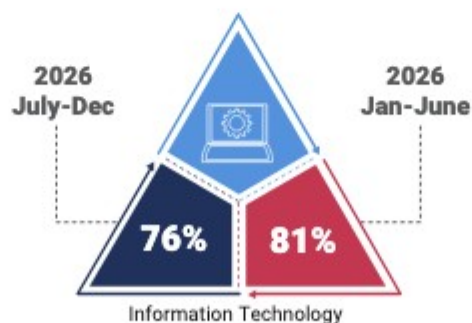
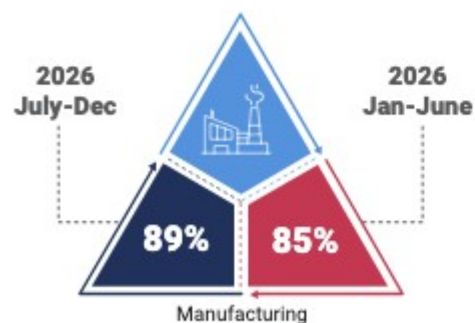
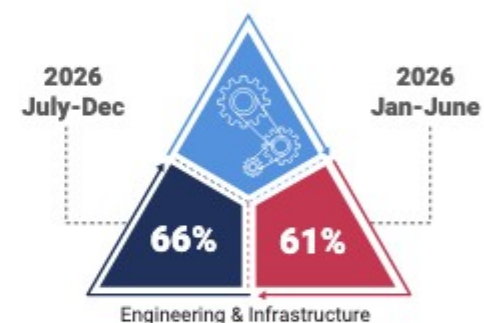
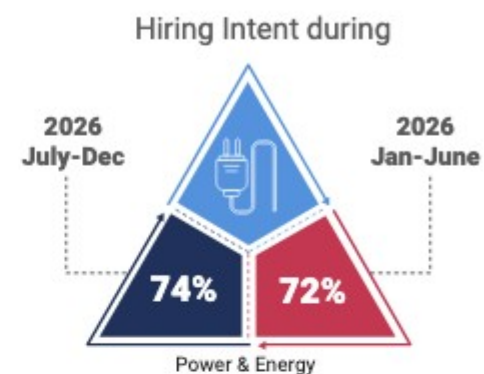
Percentages are specific to each industry, and represent the proportion of employers within each industry who intend to hire.

Freshers' hiring intent in the current HY [July-December, 2026] is led by E-commerce & Technology Start-ups (93%), Retail (93%) and Manufacturing (89%), reflecting strong entry-level demand driven by digital adoption, consumer market expansion, and industrial growth.

Note: Hiring period - July-December, 2026. Percentages indicate Intent to Hire
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT [HY2, 2026]

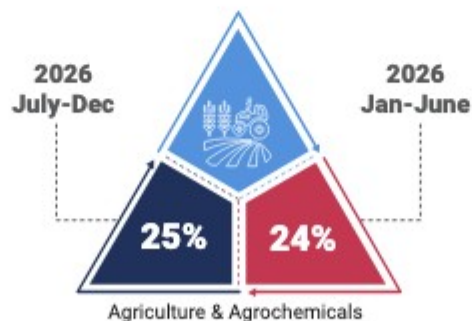
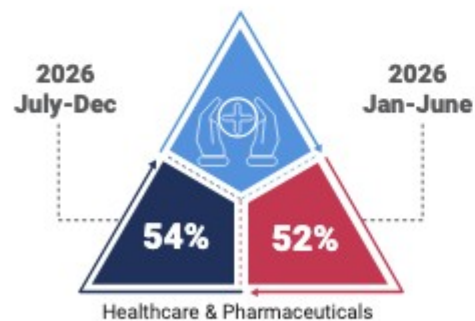
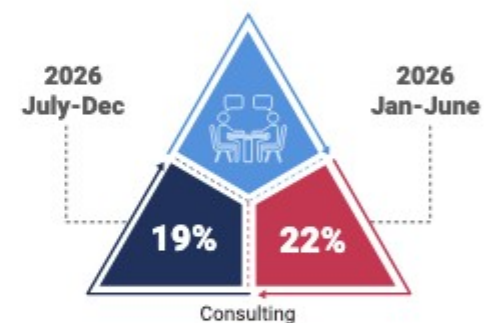
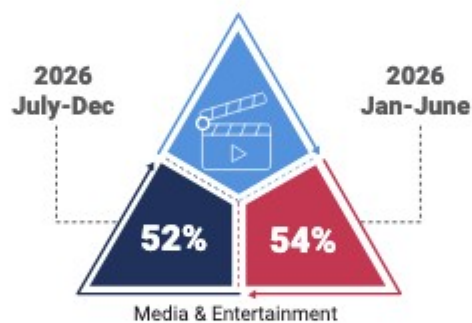
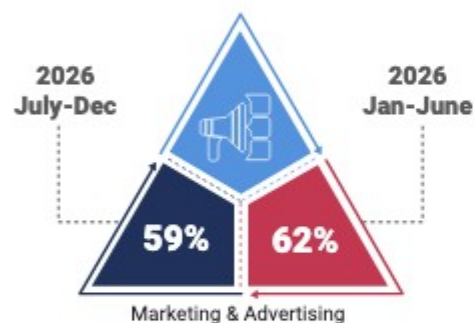
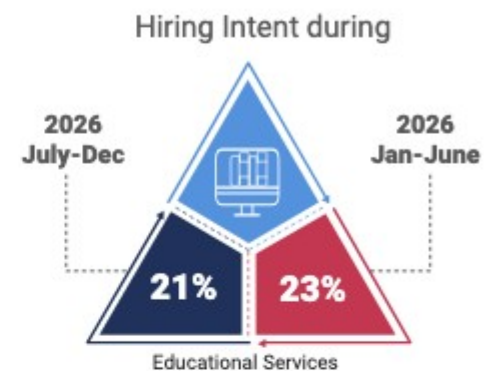
A Comparison with HY1 January-June, 2026 - By Industry



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

FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT [HY2, 2026]

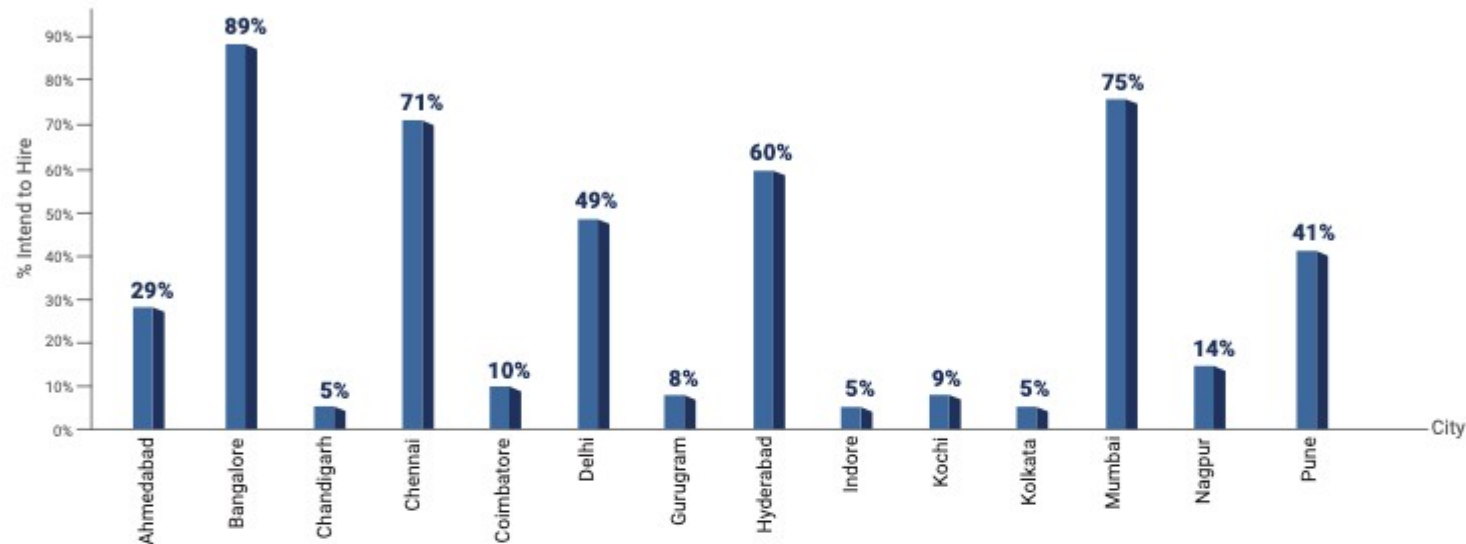
A Comparison with HY1 January-June, 2026 - By Industry



Note: Industries are listed in descending order of intent to hire
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 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 [July-December, 2026] is led by Bangalore (89%), followed by Mumbai (75%) and Chennai (71%), highlighting entry-level demand across key urban employment hubs.

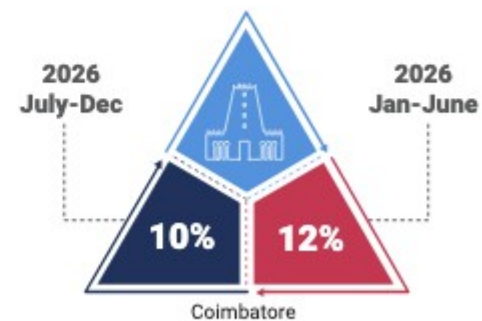
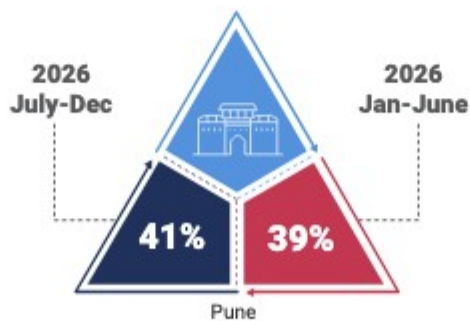
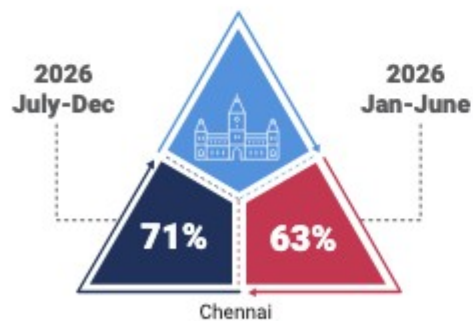
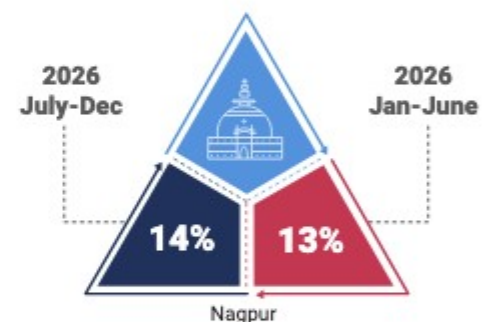
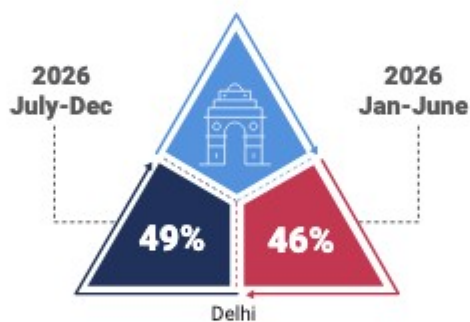
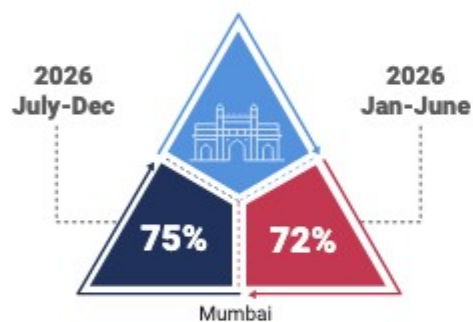
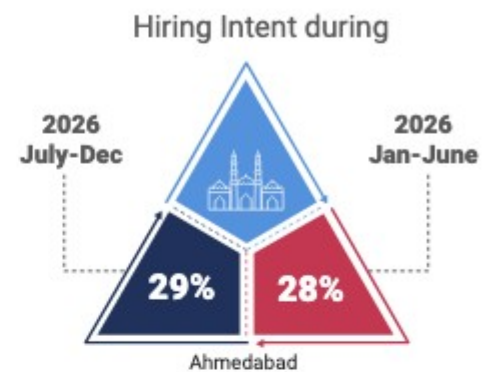
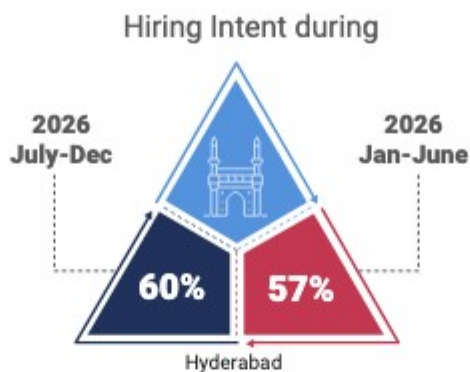
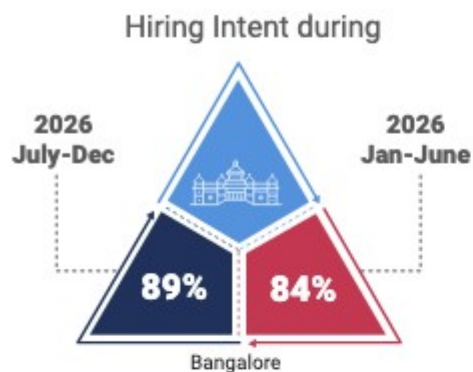
Note: Hiring period - July-December, 2026

Percentages indicate Intent to Hire

Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

FRESHER HIRING SENTIMENT [HY2, 2026]

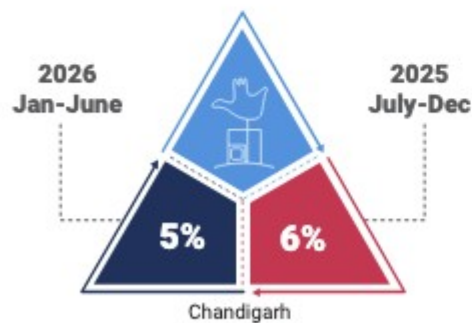
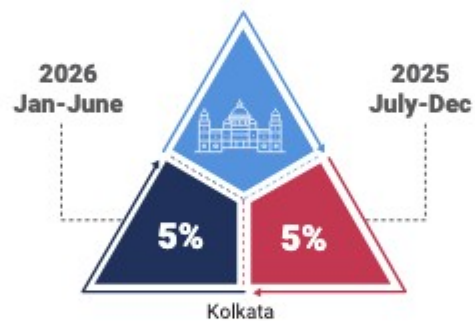
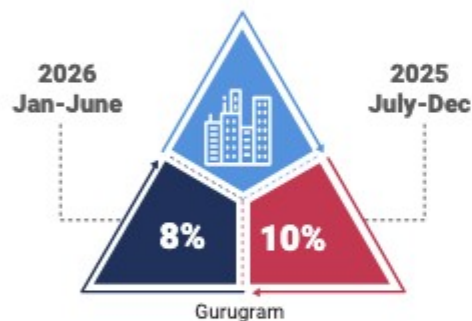
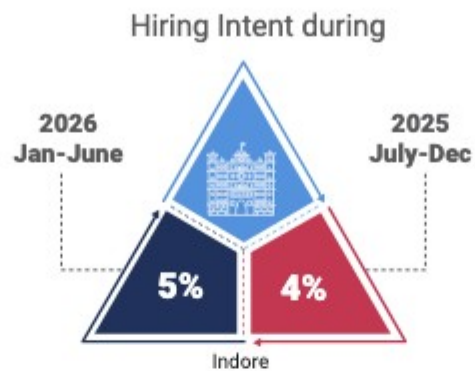
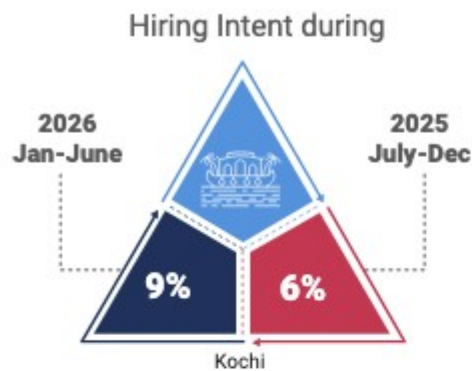
A Comparison with HY1 January-June, 2026 - By City



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

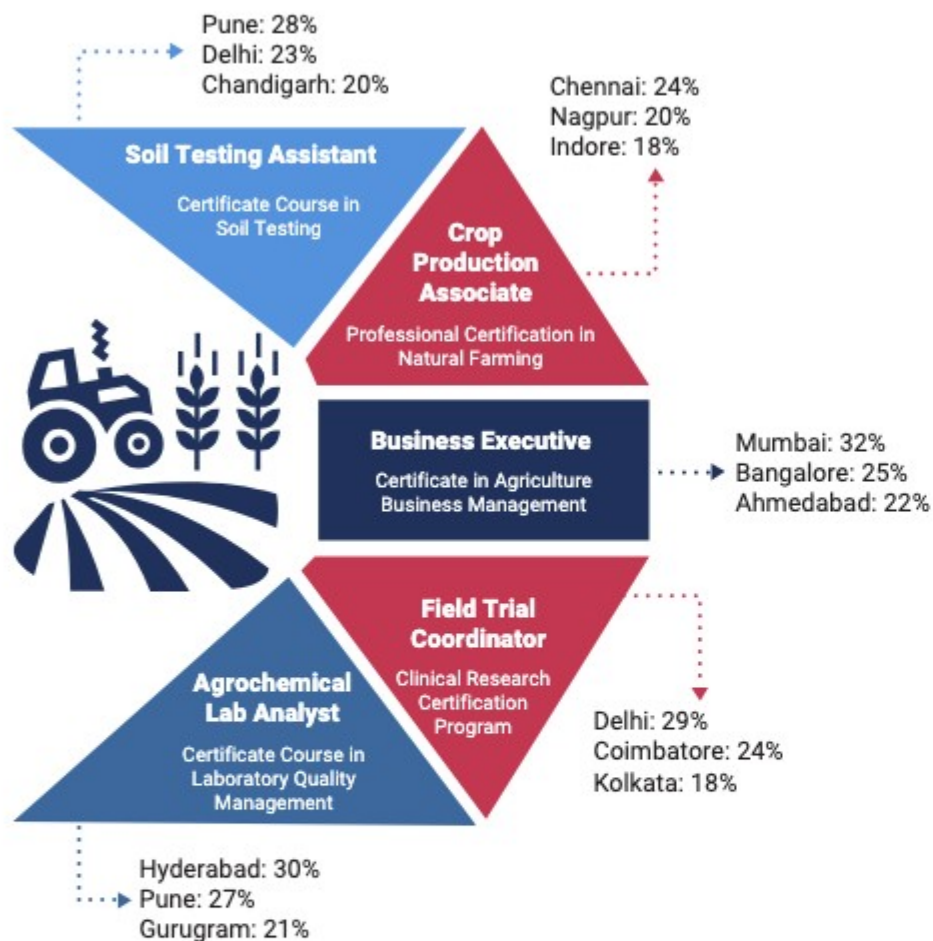
Hiring Trends

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



HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Agriculture & Agrochemicals

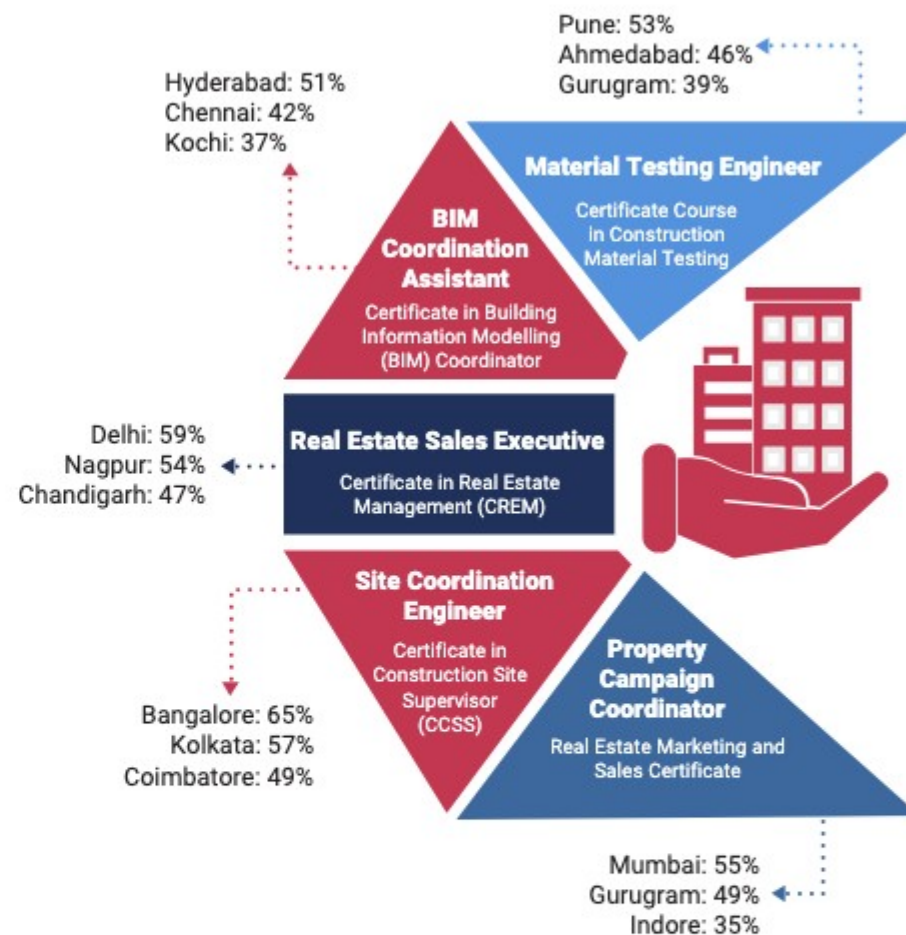


Hiring Intent **25%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 24%

Highest Demand for **Business Executive in Mumbai (32%)** and **Agrochemical Lab Analyst in Hyderabad (30%)**

Construction & Real Estate



Hiring Intent **64%** (July-December, 2026)

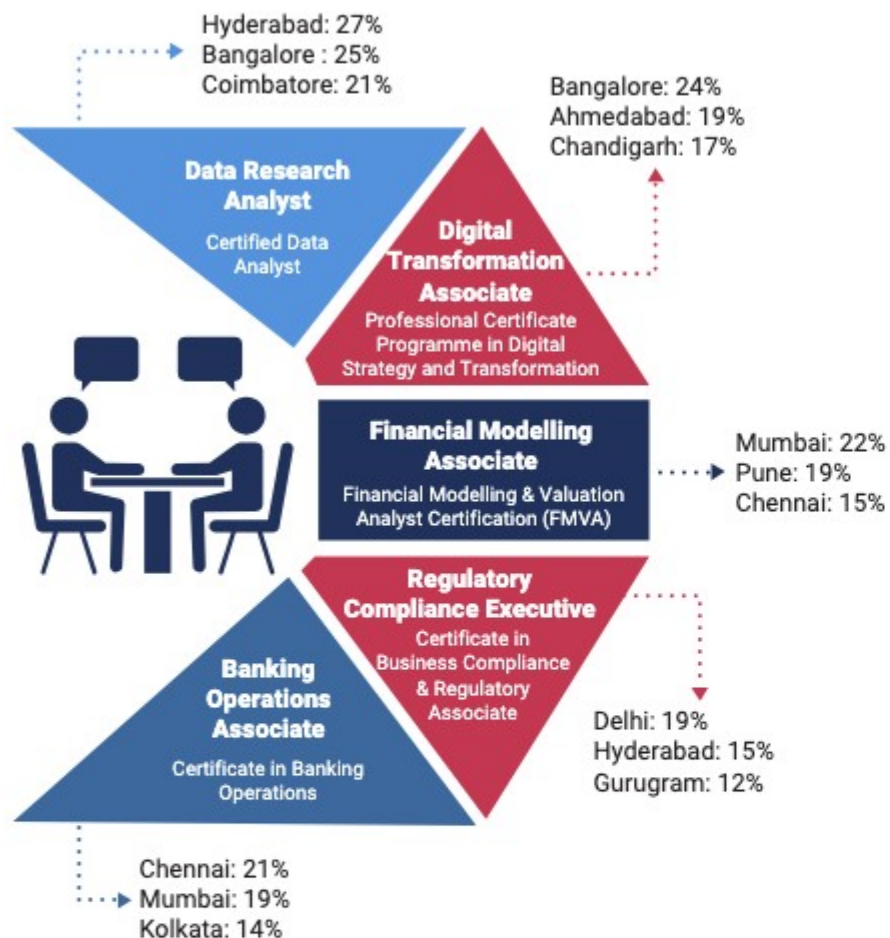
Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 62%

Highest Demand for **Site Coordination Engineer in Bangalore (65%)** and **Real Estate Sales Executive in Delhi (59%)**

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 May, 2026 - July, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Consulting

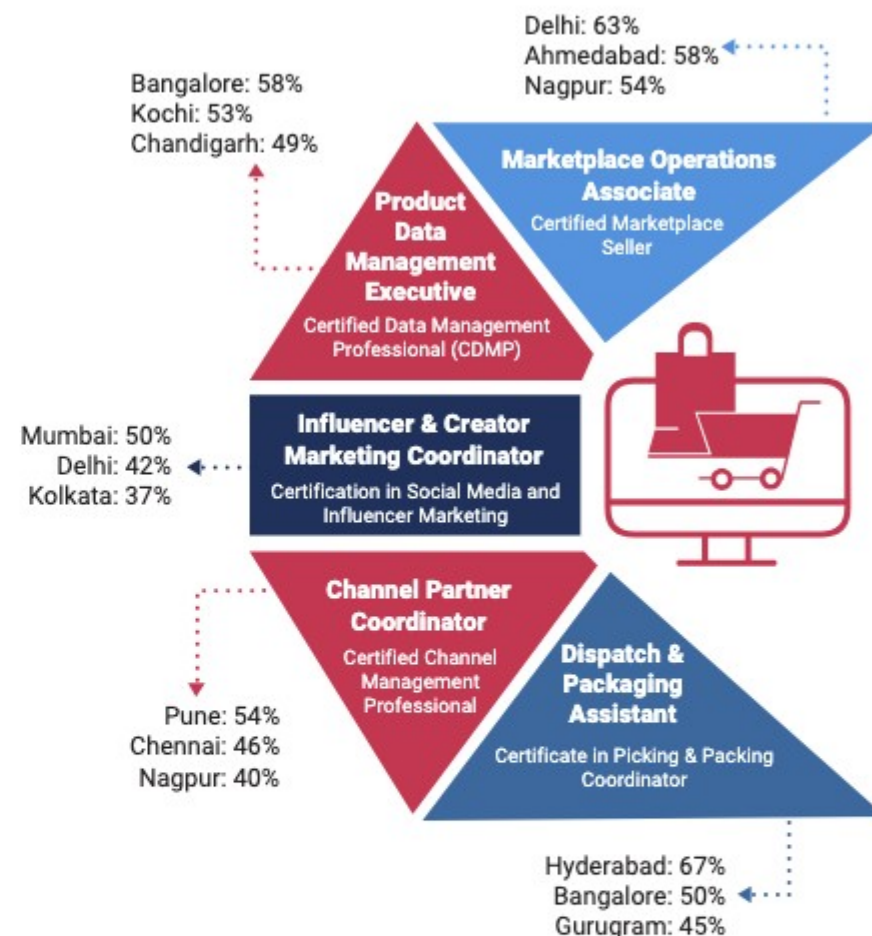


Hiring Intent **19%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 22%

Highest Demand for **Data Research Analyst in Hyderabad (27%)** and **Digital Transformation Associate in Bangalore (24%)**

E-commerce & Technology Start-ups



Hiring Intent **93%** (July-December, 2026)

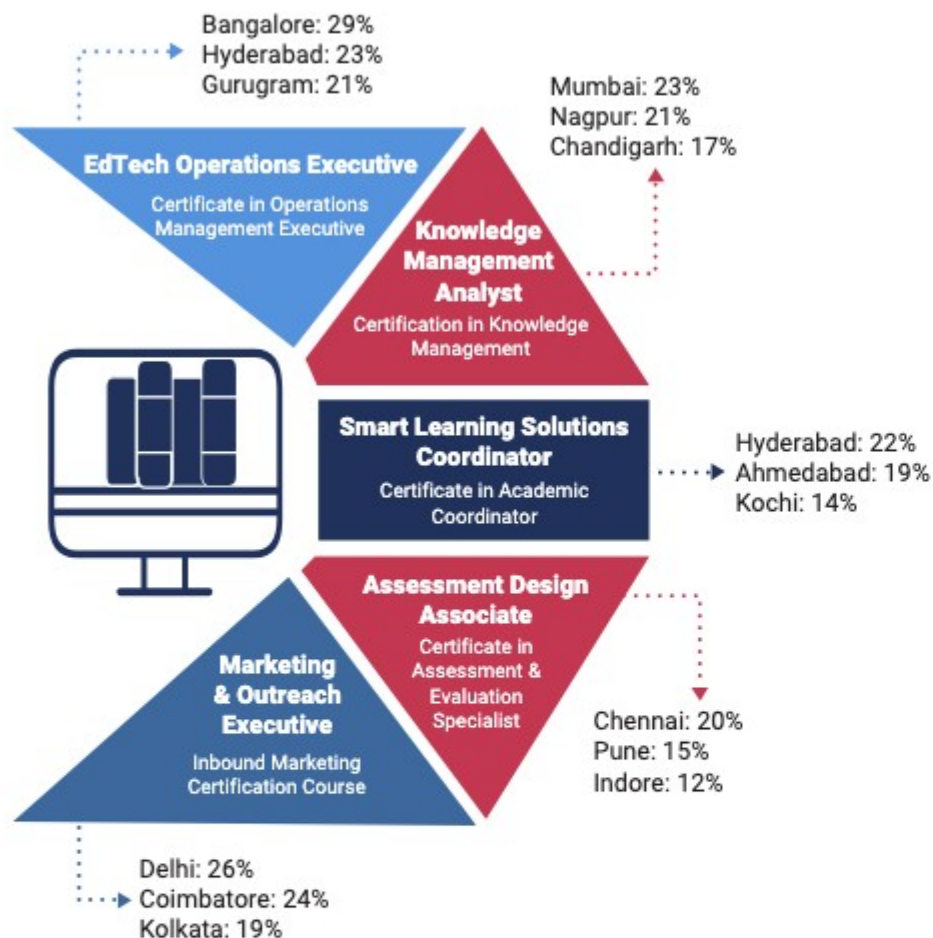
Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 90%

Highest Demand for **Dispatch & Packaging Assistant in Hyderabad (67%)** and **Marketplace Operations Associate in Delhi (63%)**

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 May, 2026 - July, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Educational Services

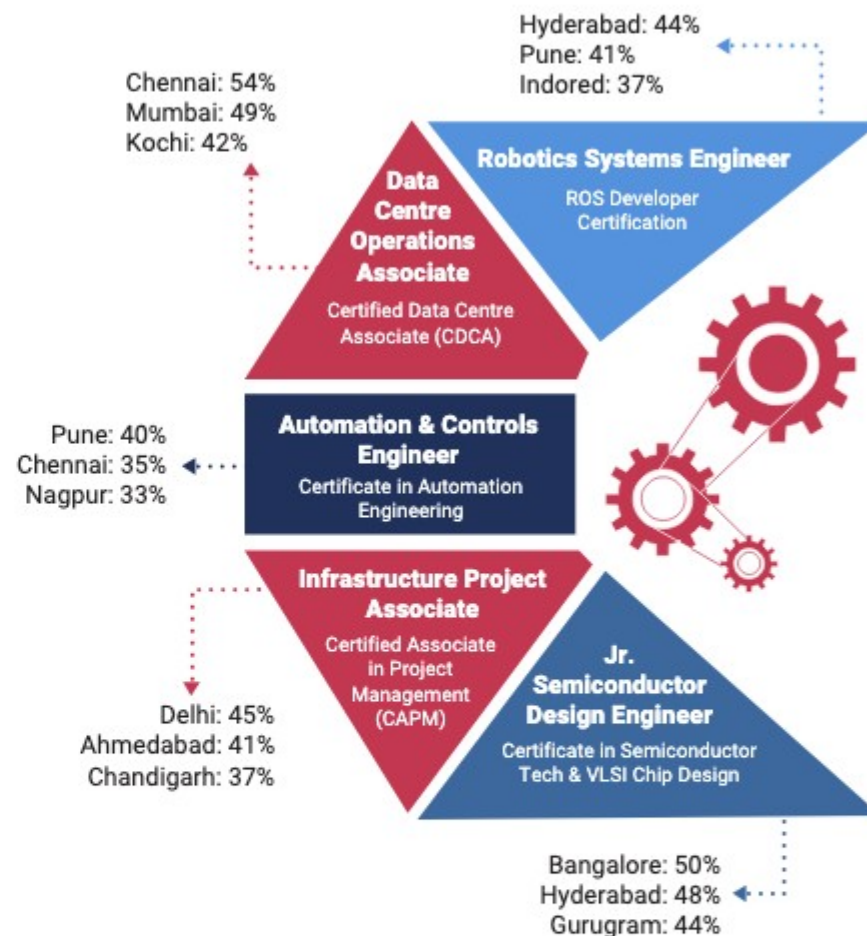


Hiring Intent **21%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 23%

Highest Demand for **EdTech Operations Executive in Bangalore (29%)** and **Marketing & Outreach Executive in Delhi (26%)**

Engineering & Infrastructure



Hiring Intent **66%** (July-December, 2026)

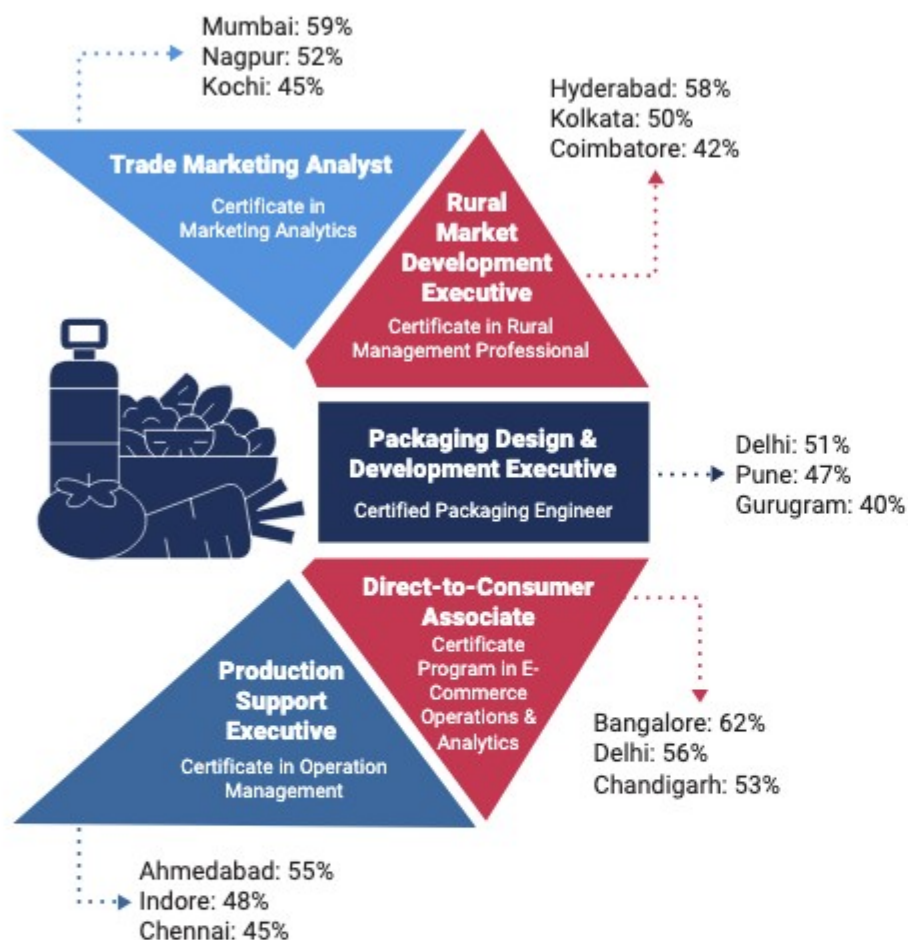
Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 61%

Highest Demand for **Data Centre Operations Associate in Chennai (54%)** and **Jr. Semiconductor Design Engineer in Bangalore (50%)**

*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 May, 2026 - July, 2026.*

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)

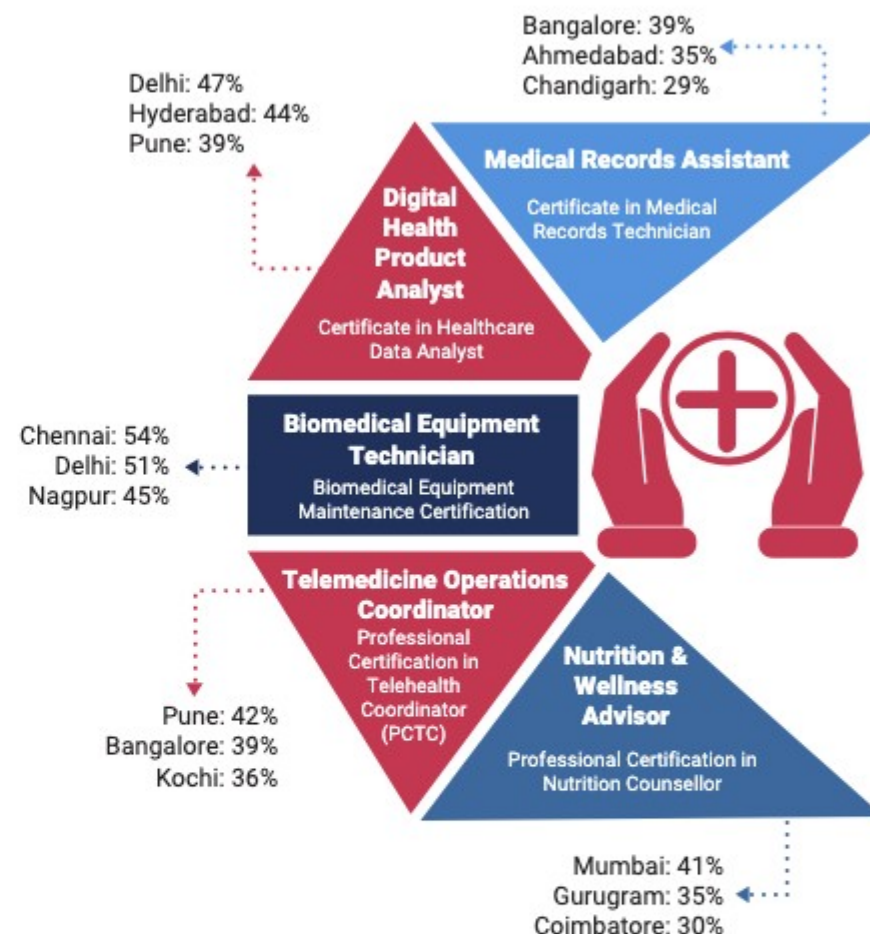


Hiring Intent **86%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 80%

Highest Demand for **Direct-to-Consumer Associate** in **Bangalore (62%)** and **Trade Marketing Analyst** in **Mumbai (59%)**

Healthcare & Pharmaceuticals



Hiring Intent **54%** (July-December, 2026)

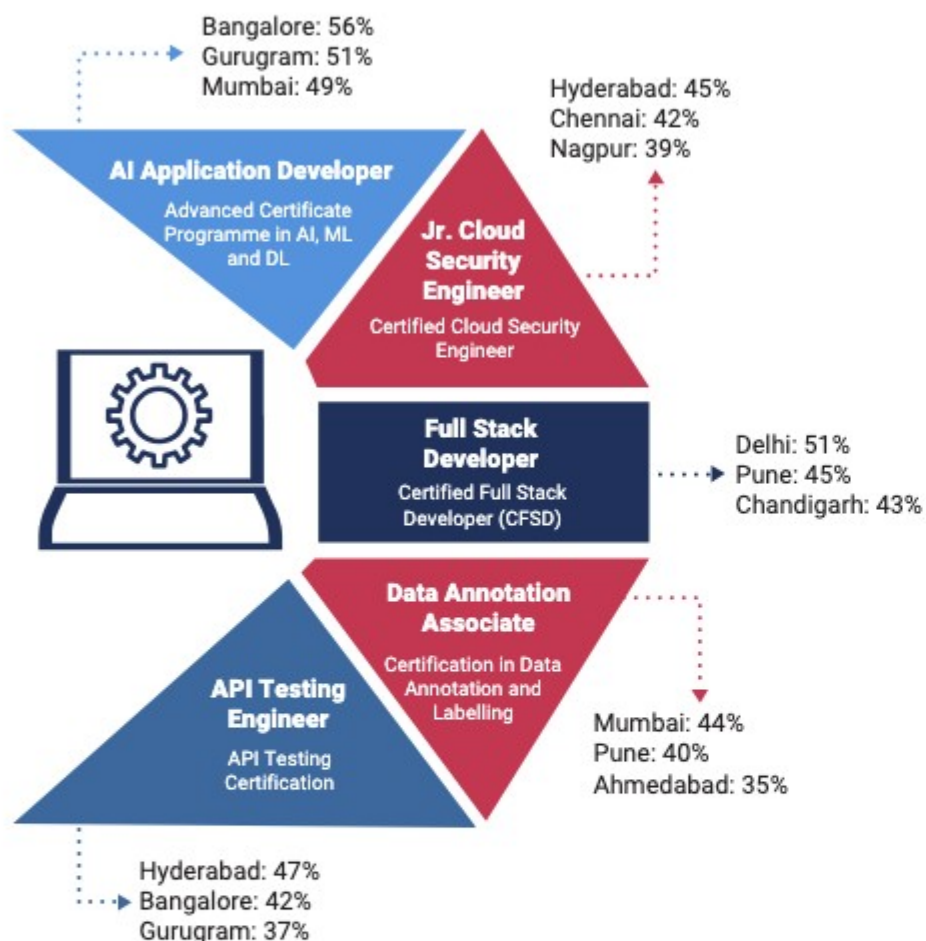
Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 52%

Highest Demand for **Biomedical Equipment Technician** in **Chennai (54%)** and **Digital Health Product Analyst** in **Delhi (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 May, 2026 - July, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Information Technology

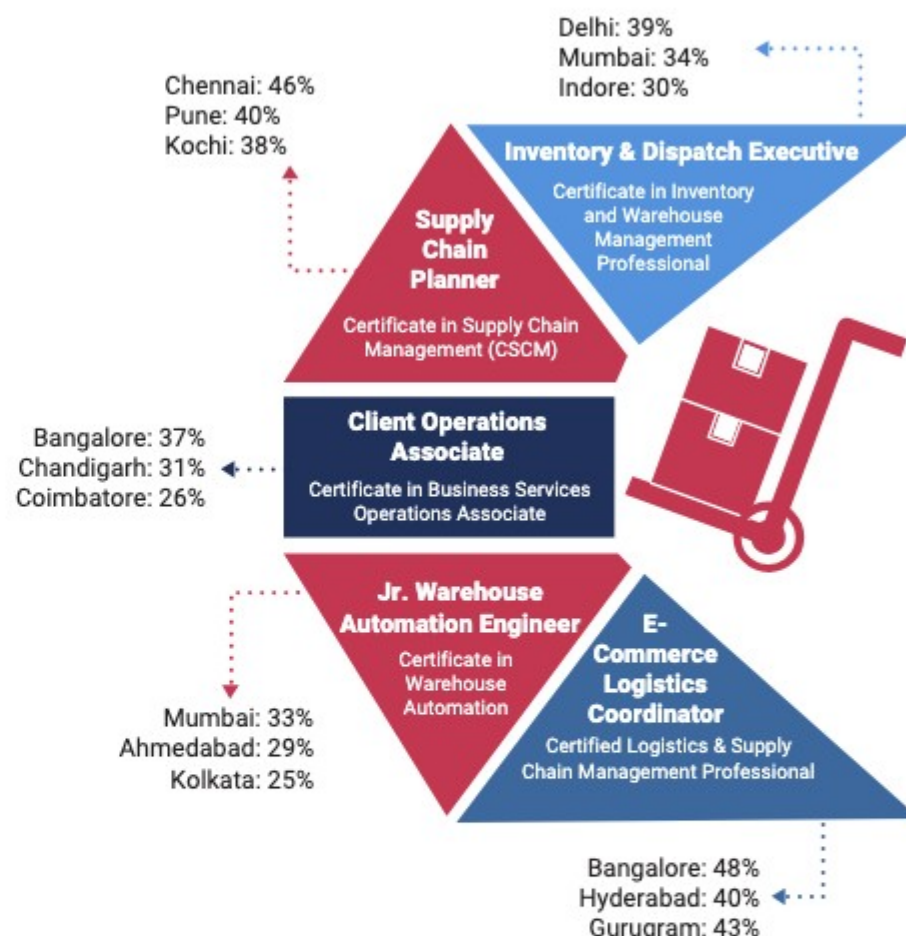


Hiring Intent **76%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 81%

Highest Demand for **AI Application Developer in Bangalore (56%)** and **Full Stack Developer in Delhi (51%)**

Logistics



Hiring Intent **53%** (July-December, 2026)

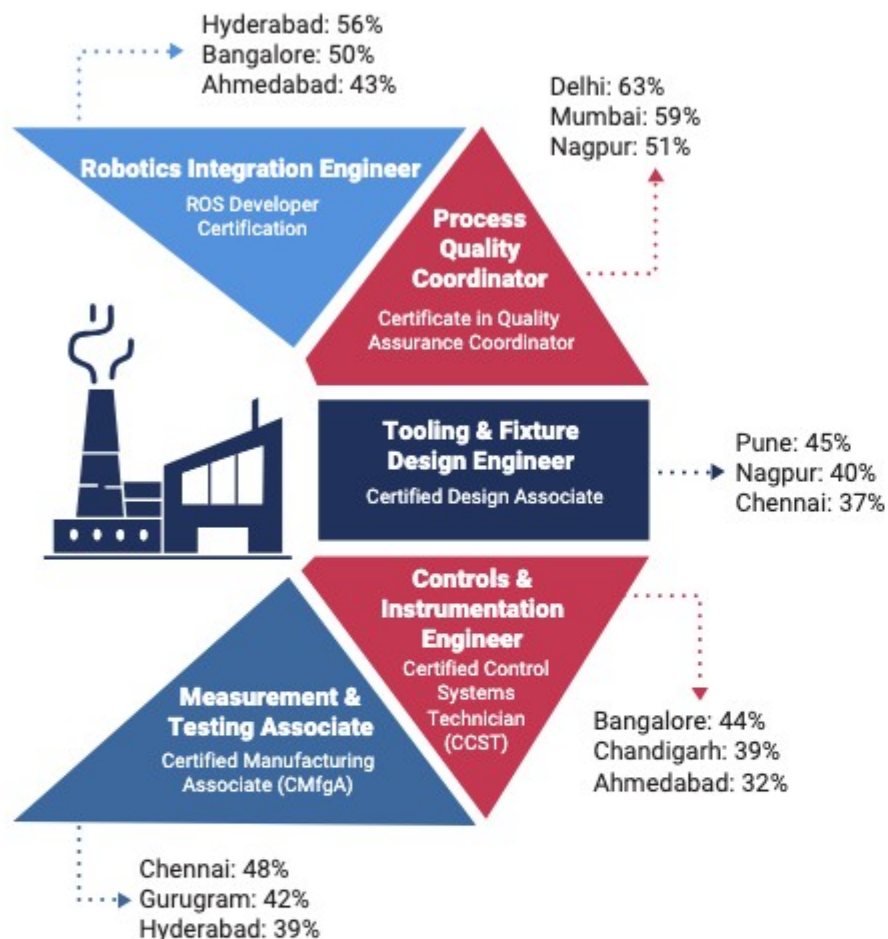
Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 48%

Highest Demand for **E-Commerce Logistics Coordinator in Bangalore (48%)** and **Supply Chain Planner in Chennai (46%)**

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 May, 2026 - July, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Manufacturing

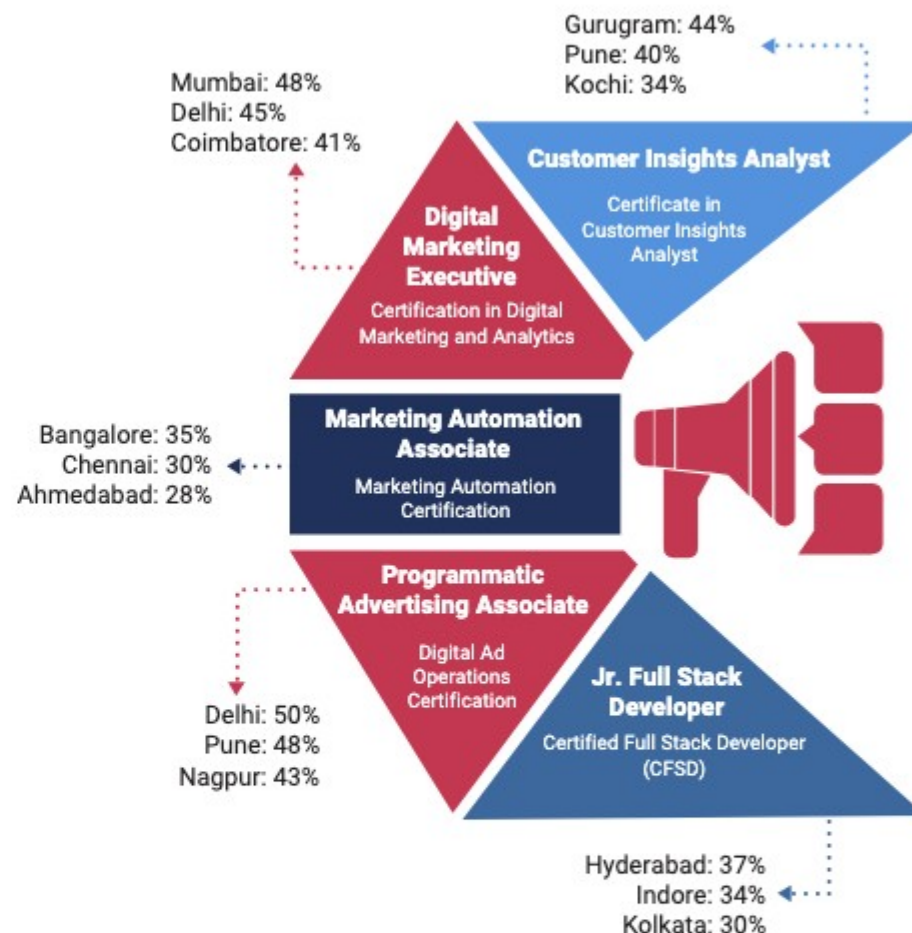


Hiring Intent **89%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 85%

Highest Demand for **Process Quality Coordinator in Delhi (63%)** and **Robotics Integration Engineer in Hyderabad (56%)**

Marketing & Advertising



Hiring Intent **59%** (July-December, 2026)

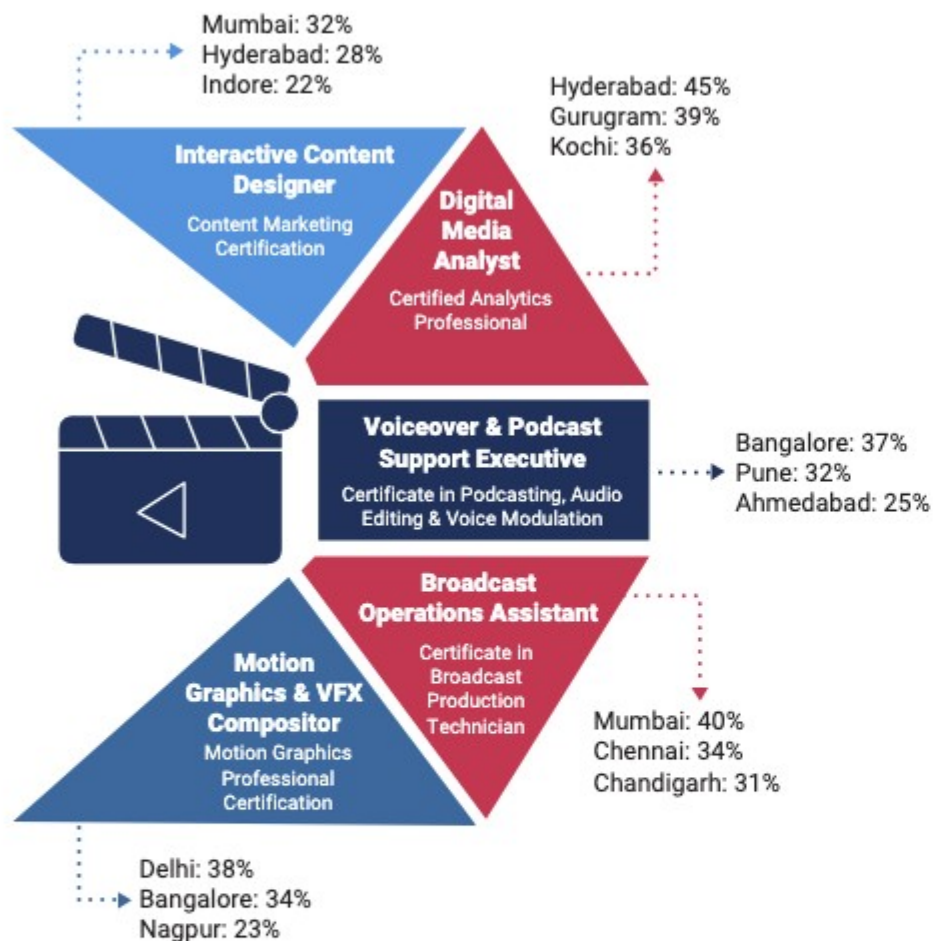
Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 62%

Highest Demand for **Programmatic Advertising Associate in Delhi (50%)** and **Digital Marketing Executive in Mumbai (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 May, 2026 - July, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Media & Entertainment

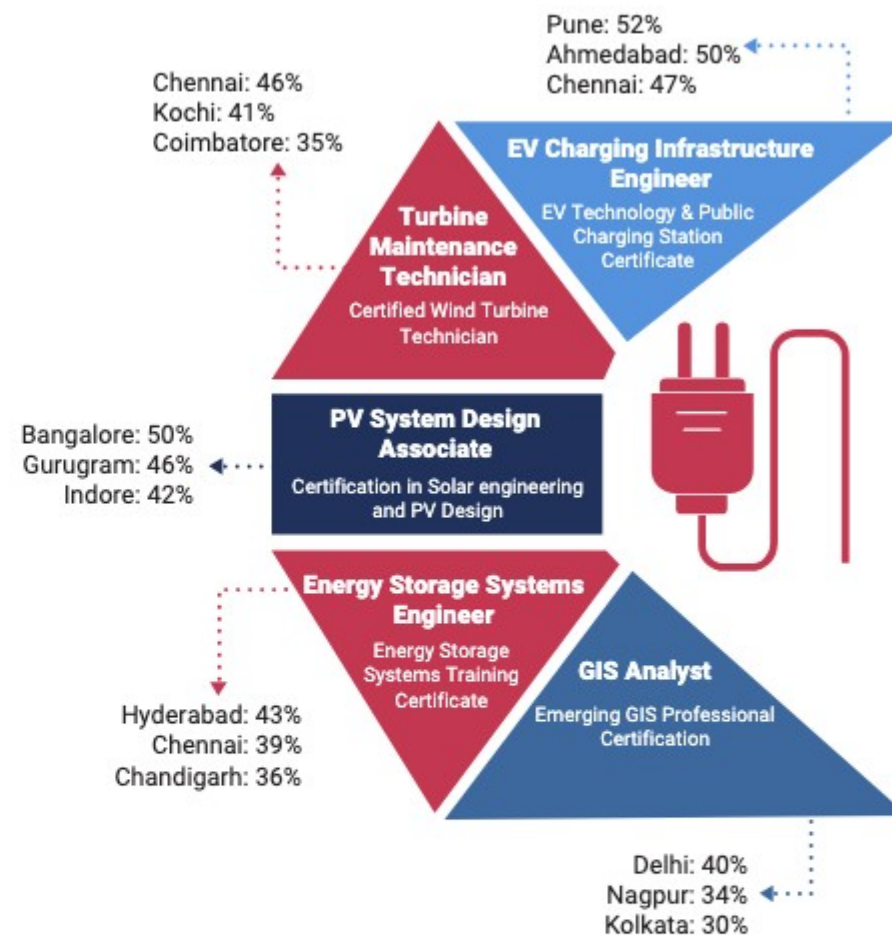


Hiring Intent **52%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 54%

Highest Demand for **Digital Media Analyst in Hyderabad (45%)** and **Broadcast Operations Assistant in Mumbai (40%)**

Power & Energy



Hiring Intent **74%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 72%

Highest Demand for **EV Charging Infrastructure Engineer in Pune (52%)** and **PV System Design Associate in Bangalore (50%)**

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 May, 2026 - July, 2026.

HIRING TRENDS - JOB ROLES VS. CITIES

Retail

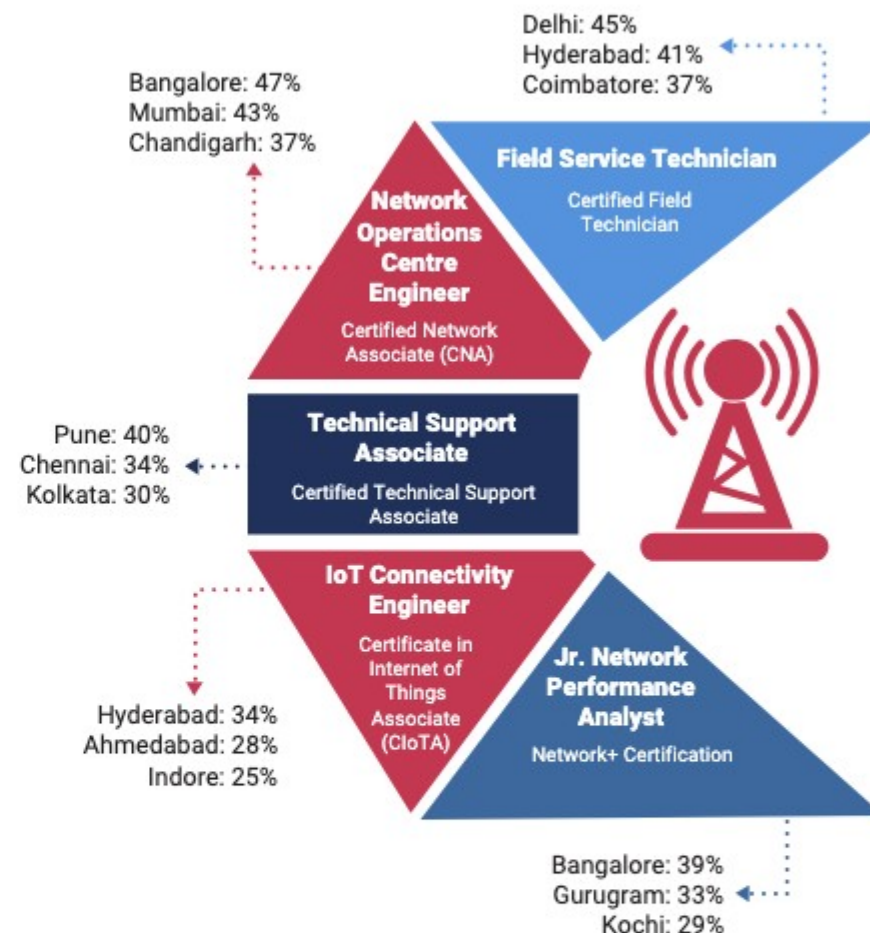


Hiring Intent **93%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 91%

Highest Demand for **In-Store Sales Promoter in Mumbai (67%)** and **Category Buying Assistant in Delhi (64%)**

Telecommunication



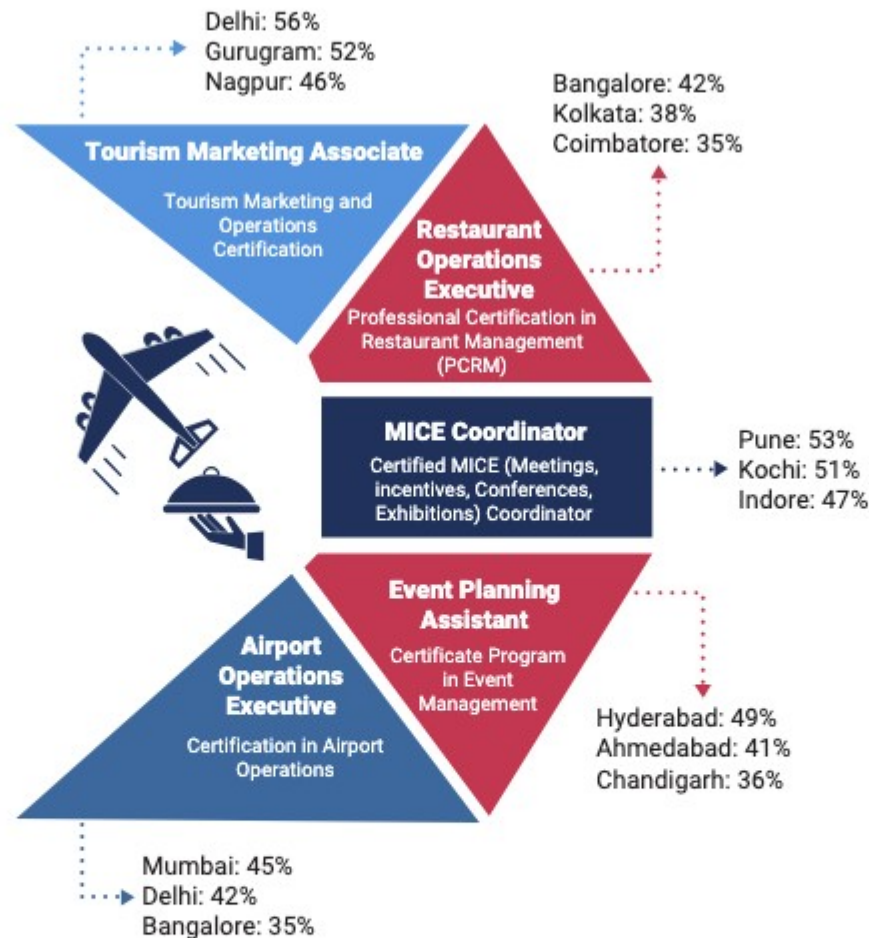
Hiring Intent **61%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 64%

Highest Demand for **Network Operations Centre Engineer in Bangalore (47%)** and **Field Service Technician in Delhi (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 May, 2026 - July, 2026.

Travel & Hospitality



Hiring Intent **81%** (July-December, 2026)

Hiring Intent for the period January-June, 2026: 77%

Highest Demand for **Tourism Marketing Associate in Delhi (56%)** and **MICE Coordinator in Pune (53%)**

*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 May, 2026 - July, 2026.*

What Do Employers Look for in Freshers?

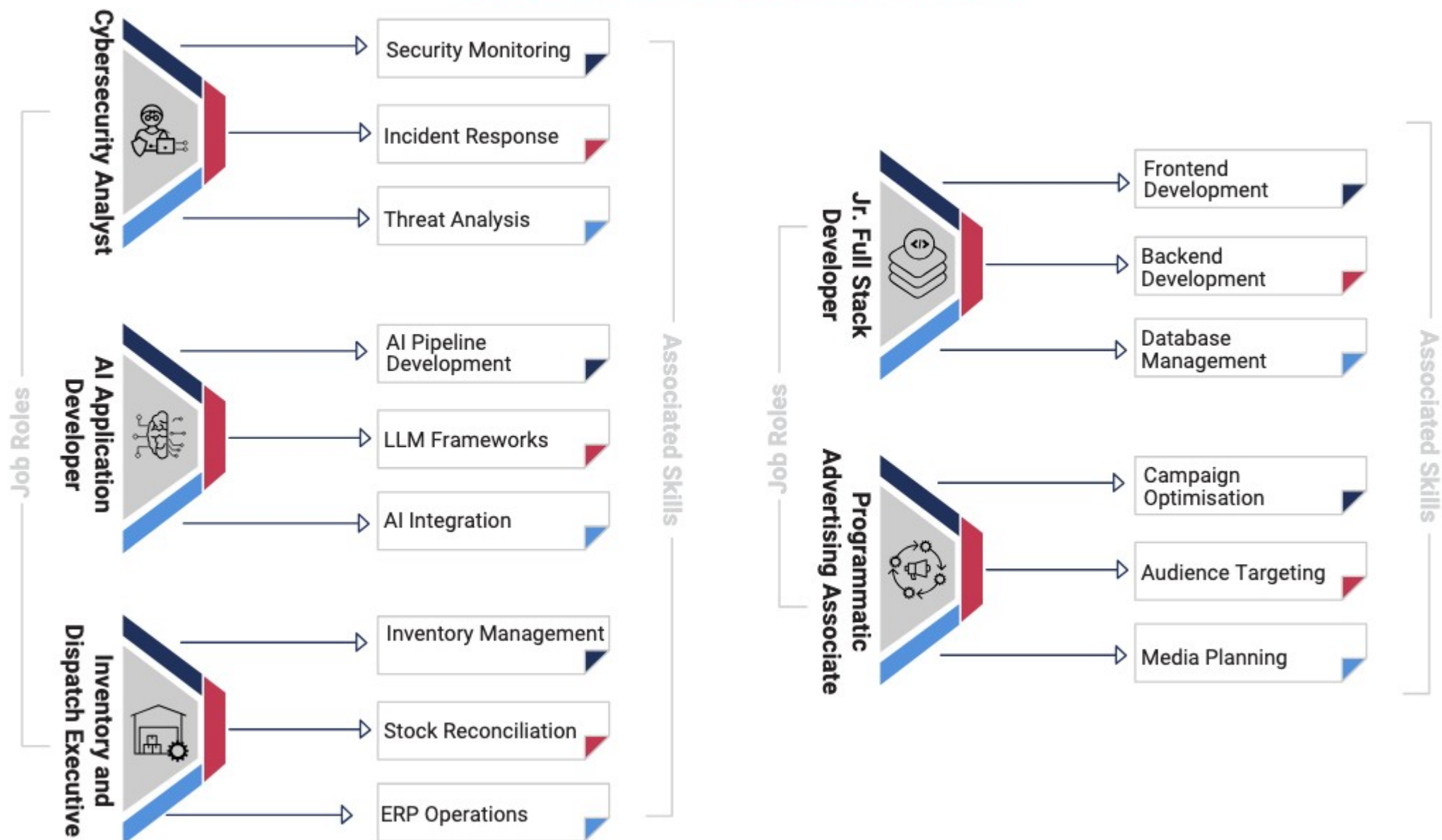
KEY JOB ROLES, DOMAIN SKILLS, SOFT SKILLS,
AND IN-DEMAND COURSES



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



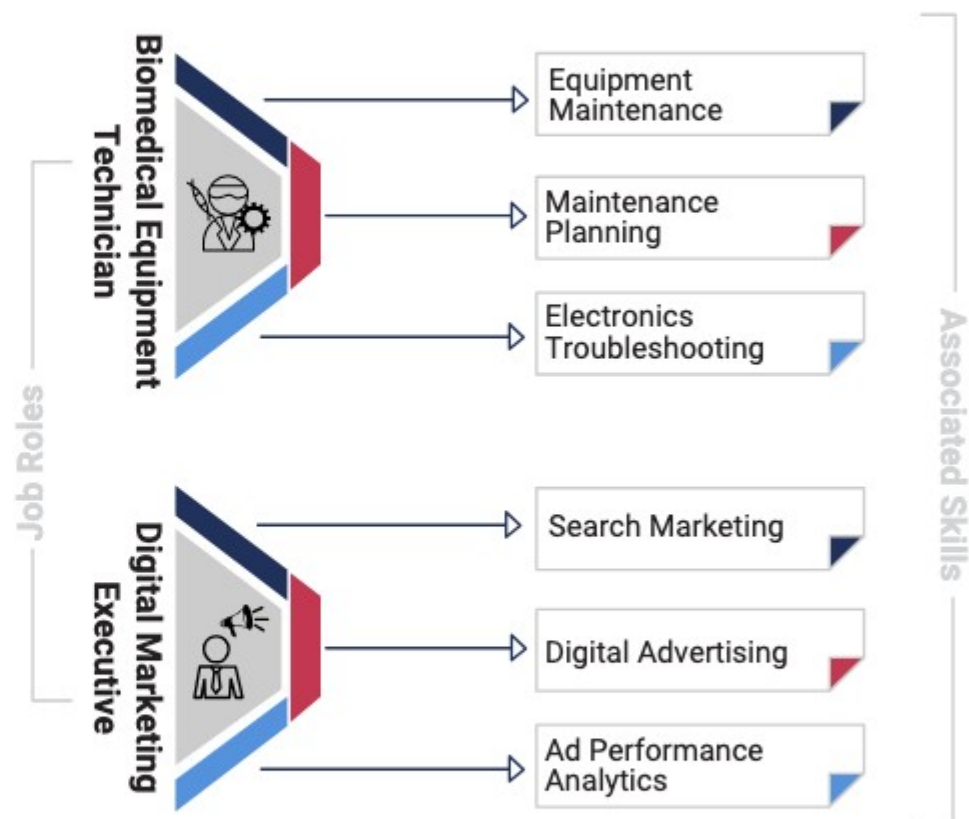
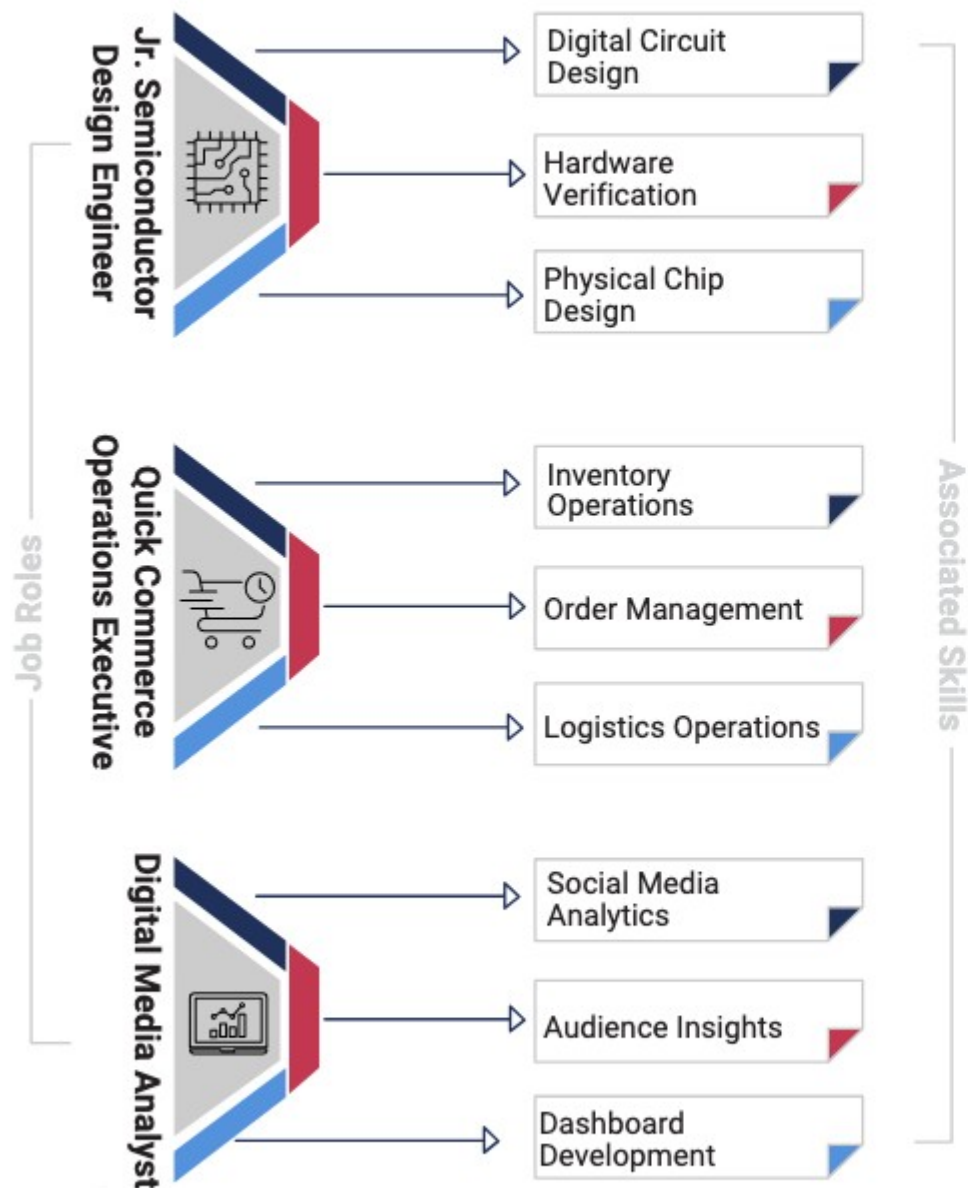
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY2, Jul – Dec, 2026)

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN FRESHERS?

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Top 15 Job Roles in Demand and Associated Skills



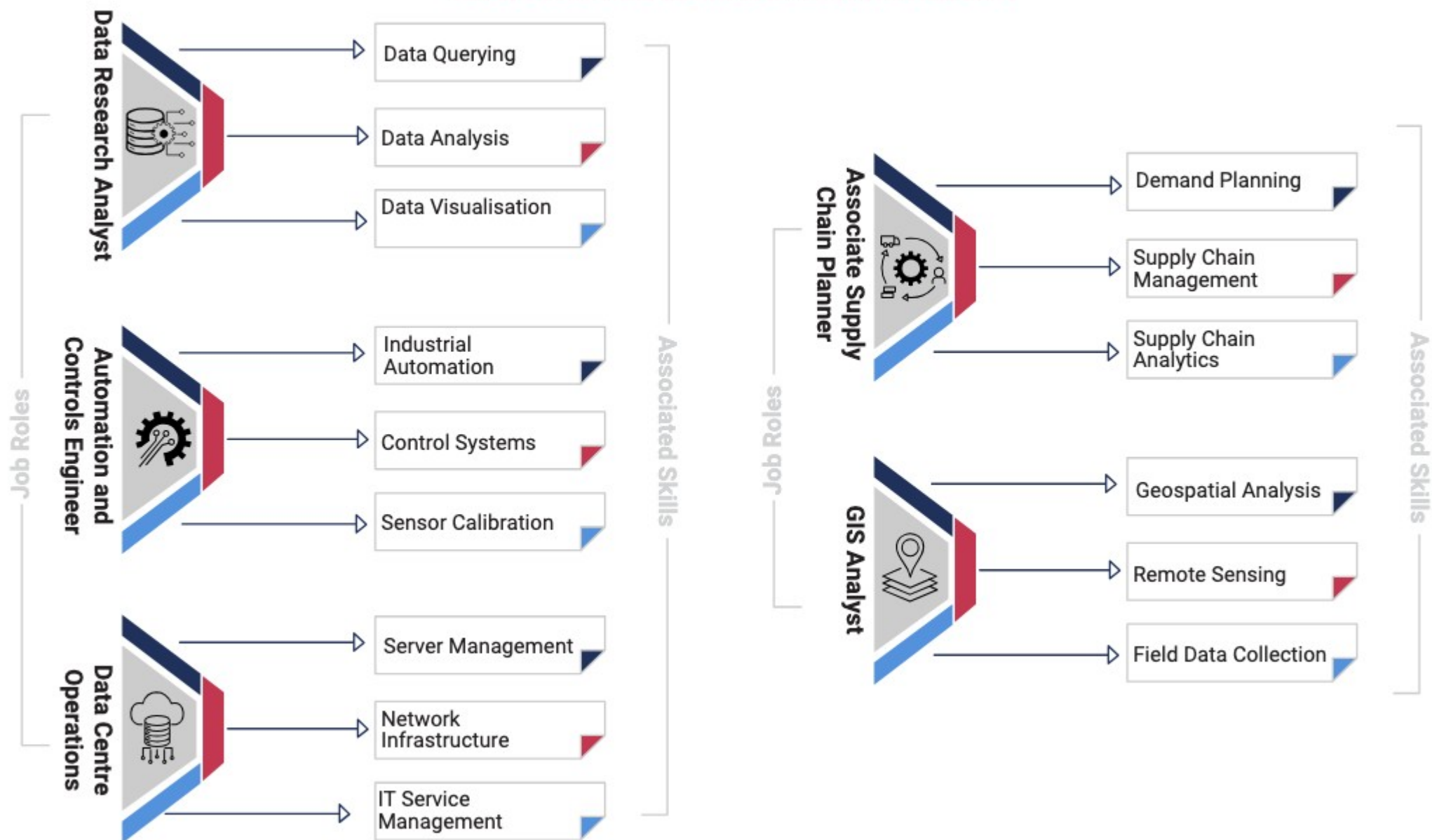
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY2, Jul - Dec, 2026)

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

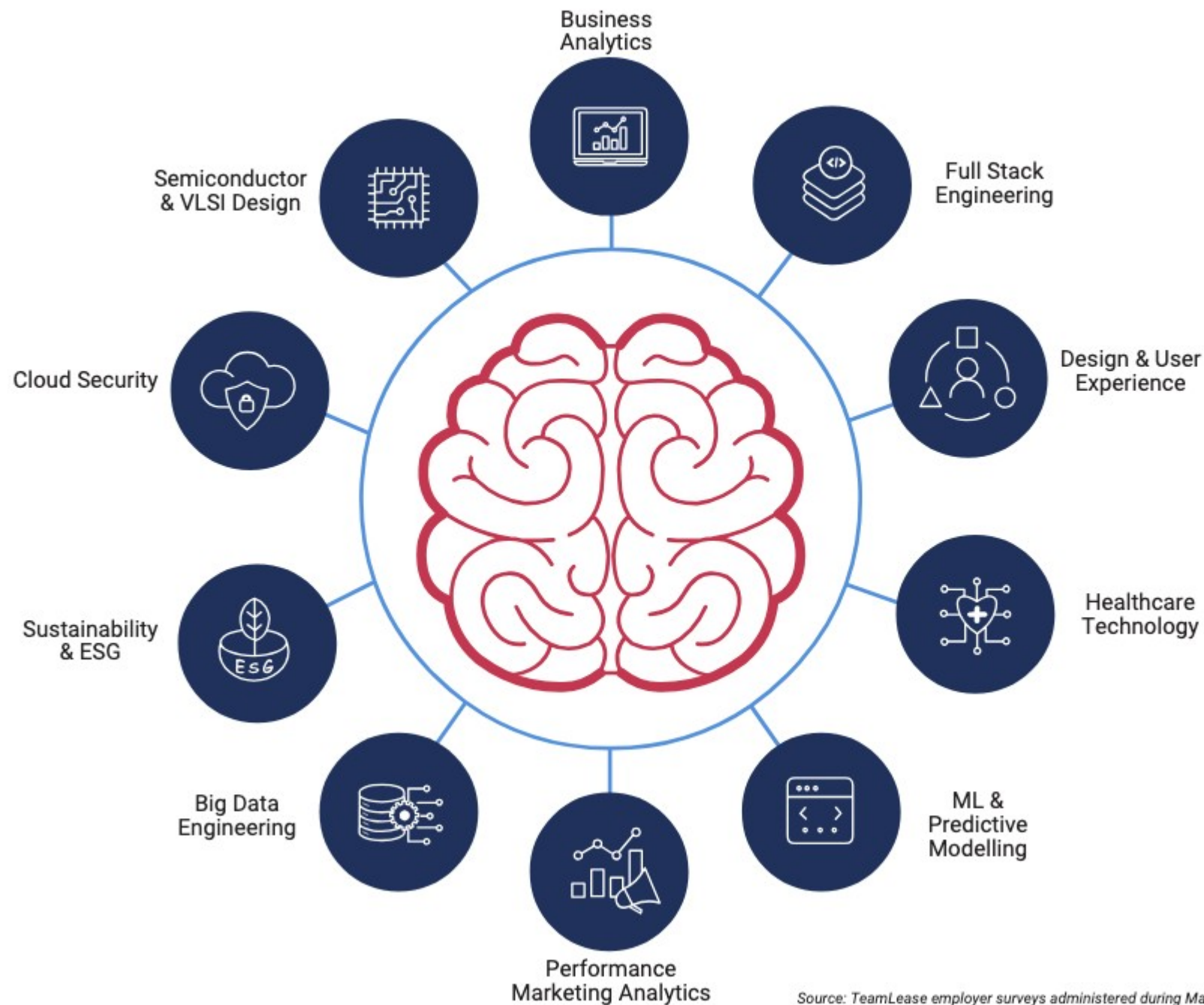


Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY2, Jul – Dec, 2026)

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN FRESHERS?

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

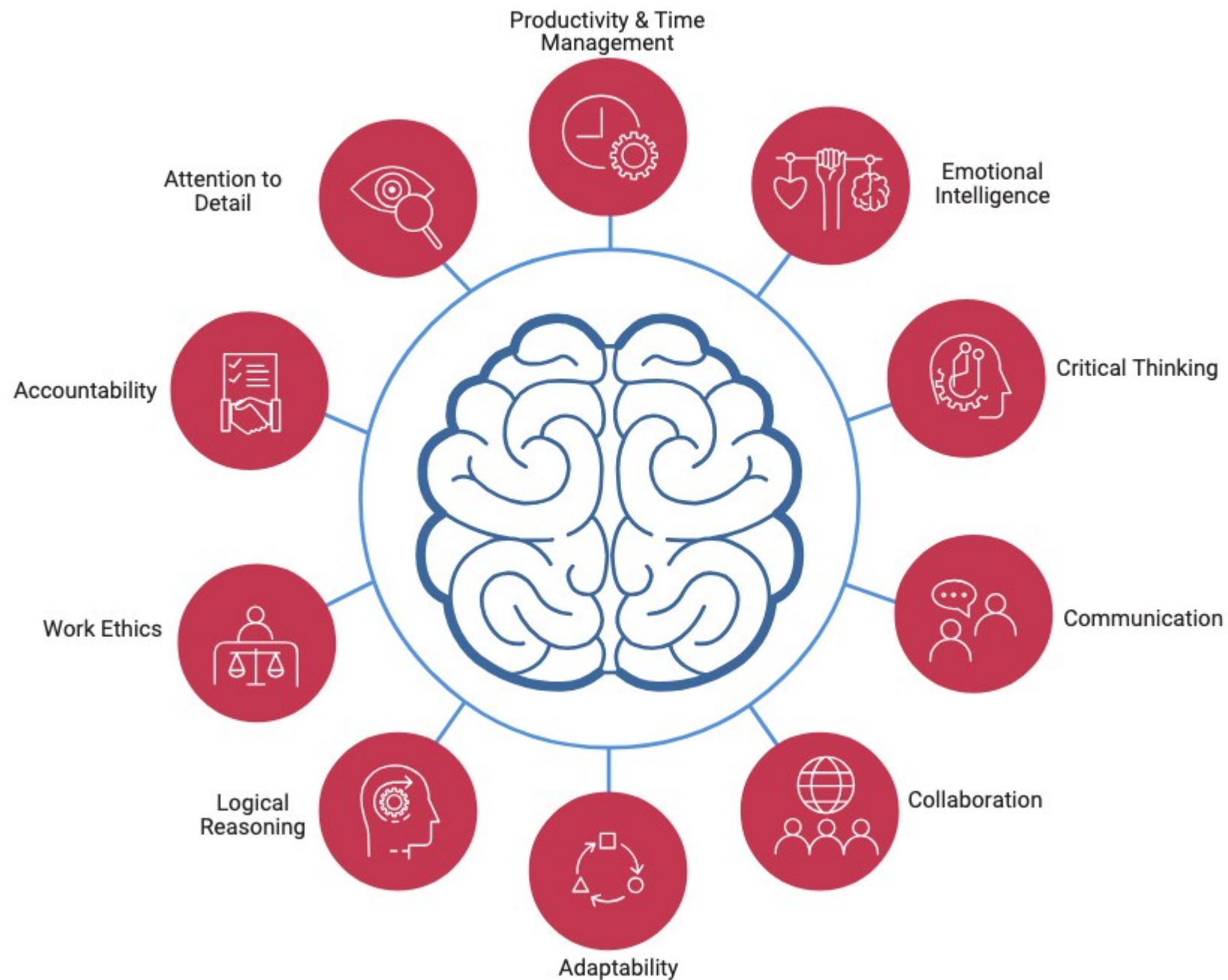


Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY2, Jul – Dec, 2026)

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN FRESHERS?

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

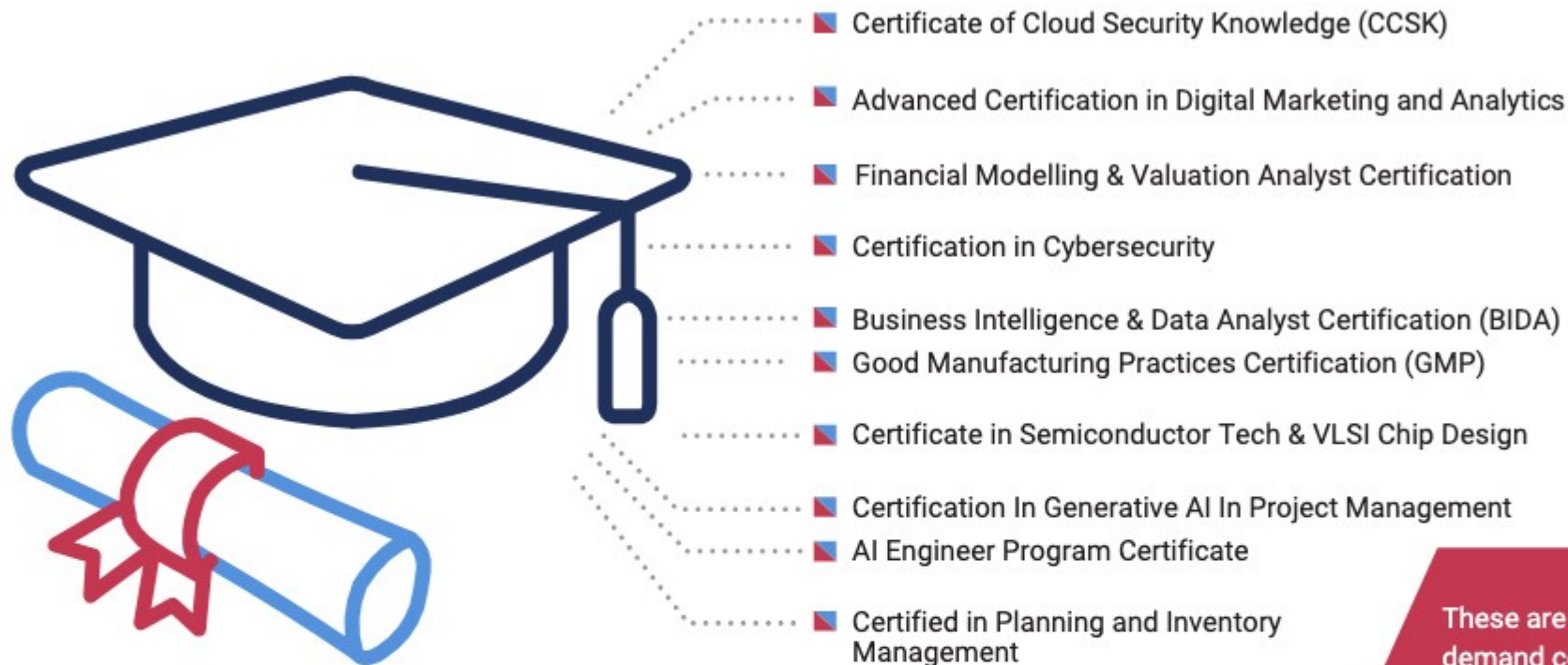


Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY2, Jul – Dec, 2026)

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR IN FRESHERS?

In-Demand Courses to Increase Employability



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

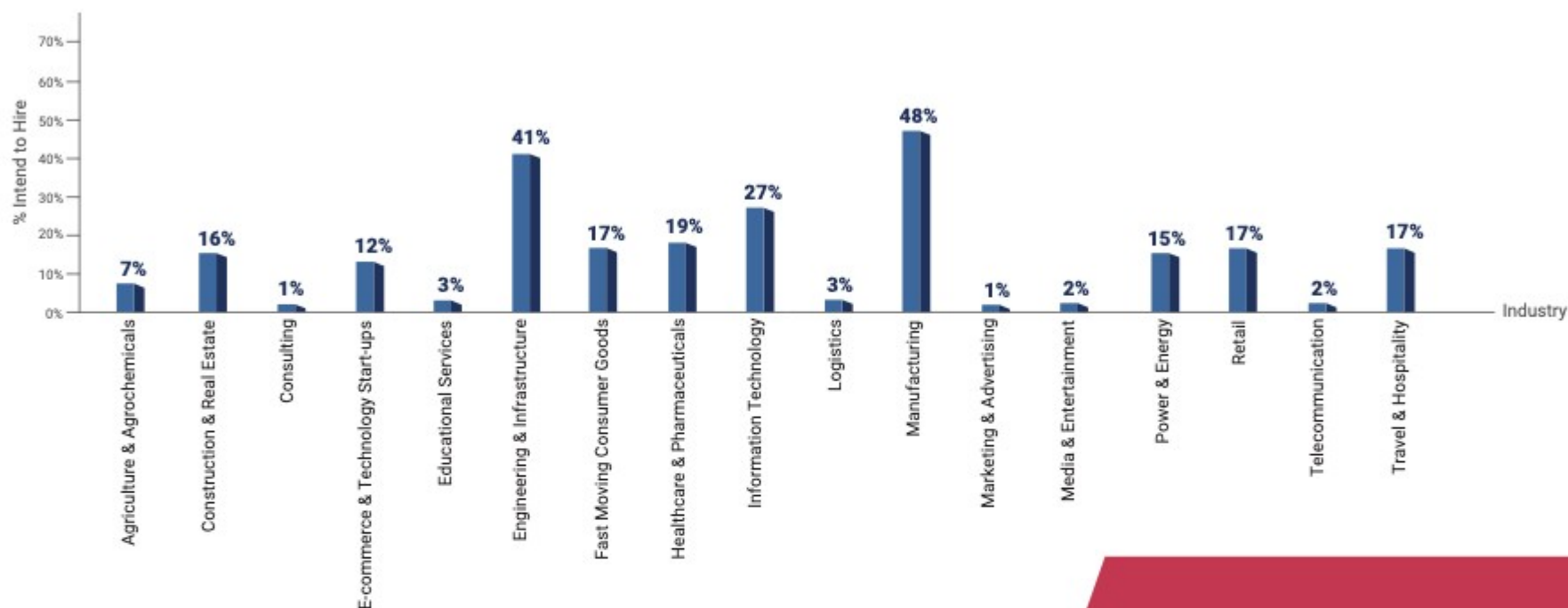
*Note: These courses are attributed to domain skills and soft skills which are in demand.
Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.*

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 [July-December, 2026] include Manufacturing (48%), Engineering & Infrastructure (41%) and Information Technology (27%). Engineering & Infrastructure witnessed the highest growth in hiring intent, increasing by 7% over the previous HY [January-June 2026].

Note: Hiring period - July-December, 2026

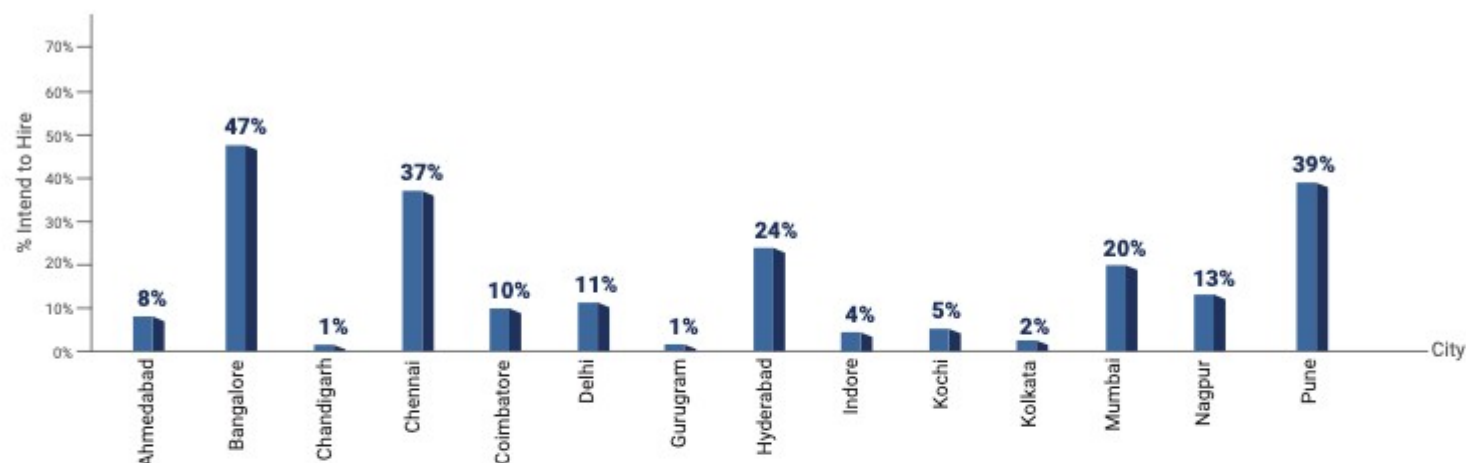
Percentages indicate Intent to Hire

Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY2, Jul - Dec, 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 (47%), Pune (39%), and Chennai (37%) lead Degree Apprentice hiring intent in July-December, 2026, with Pune recording the strongest growth of 8% over the previous HY [January-June, 2026].

Note: Hiring period - July-December, 2026

Percentages indicate Intent to Hire

Source: TeamLease employer surveys administered during May, 2026 - July, 2026.

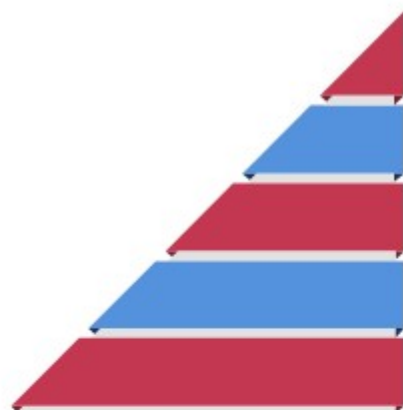
TeamLease EdTech Career Outlook Report (HY2, Jul – Dec, 2026)

Gen Z and the Workplace

ALIGNING EXPECTATIONS WITH EARLY-CAREER REALITY



Aligning Expectations with Early-Career Reality



Area of Difference

- Job-Ready Skills vs. Scope to Learn
- Immediate Digital Readiness vs. On-the-Job Development
- Professional Readiness vs. Managerial Support
- Performance Before Progression vs. Early Career Visibility
- Accountability vs. Flexibility

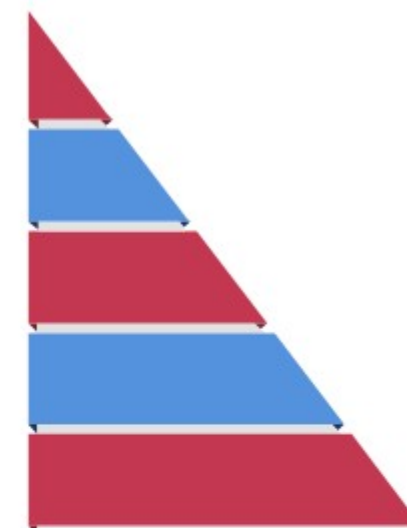
Freshers should demonstrate practical capability through internships, projects, portfolios, or assessments before joining.

Basic familiarity with AI tools, digital platforms, and technology-enabled workflows is expected from the outset.

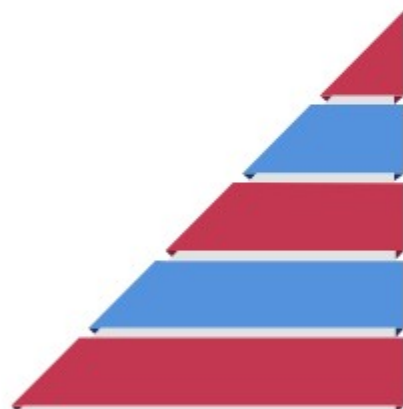
Communication, collaboration, adaptability, and workplace professionalism are considered baseline requirements.

Career progression should follow consistent performance, reliability, and demonstrated commitment.

Freshers are expected to take ownership, remain responsive, and deliver consistently.



Employer Expectations



Fresher Viewpoints

- The first job should provide opportunities to gain experience, apply academic knowledge, and develop practical skills.
- Emerging technology skills can be developed through structured training and workplace exposure after joining.
- Regular feedback, coaching, and clear guidance are essential for adjusting to the workplace.
- Freshers expect visible learning opportunities, meaningful responsibilities, and clarity on career growth.
- Flexibility, autonomy, and trust are viewed as important elements of a positive work environment.

Understanding the Gap Between Employer Expectations and Fresher Viewpoints

The transition from education to employment is growing more complex. Employers expect freshers to arrive practically ready to contribute; freshers, however, often expect their first job to be where readiness is built. The result is a gap in how both sides define performance, growth, and workplace experience.

Aligning Expectations with Early-Career Reality

Shrinking Learning Runway

AI and automation are reducing routine entry-level tasks, raising expectations for freshers to contribute meaningfully from day one.

Skill-Application Gap

Freshers often bring strong theoretical knowledge but need support applying it to real business problems and workplace situations.

Campus-to-Corporate Transition

As technical skills become more accessible, communication, collaboration, adaptability, accountability, and problem-solving are the real differentiators; and the steepest learning curve for most freshers.

Limited Practical Exposure

Many entry-level roles expect prior experience; experience most graduates haven't had the chance to build before joining.

Expectations-Reality Gap

Freshers want rapid growth and meaningful work early on; employers see the first years as time to build capability and credibility.

AI Is Redefining Entry-Level Work

As automation takes over routine tasks, freshers are expected to bring stronger problem-solving, judgement, and digital capability from day one.

Skills Are Evolving Faster Than Curricul

Technology and business needs are changing fast enough that learning agility and continuous upskilling are now essential.

Fit and Ownership Now Matter More

Rising fresher turnover is pushing employers to weigh professionalism, adaptability, and long-term fit more closely with communication, collaboration, ownership, and problem-solving now shaping hiring decisions alongside technical capability.

The Hire-and-Train Model Is Declining

Organisations are becoming more selective about large training investments, expecting candidates to arrive workplace-ready.

Skills Mismatches Are Becoming More Costly

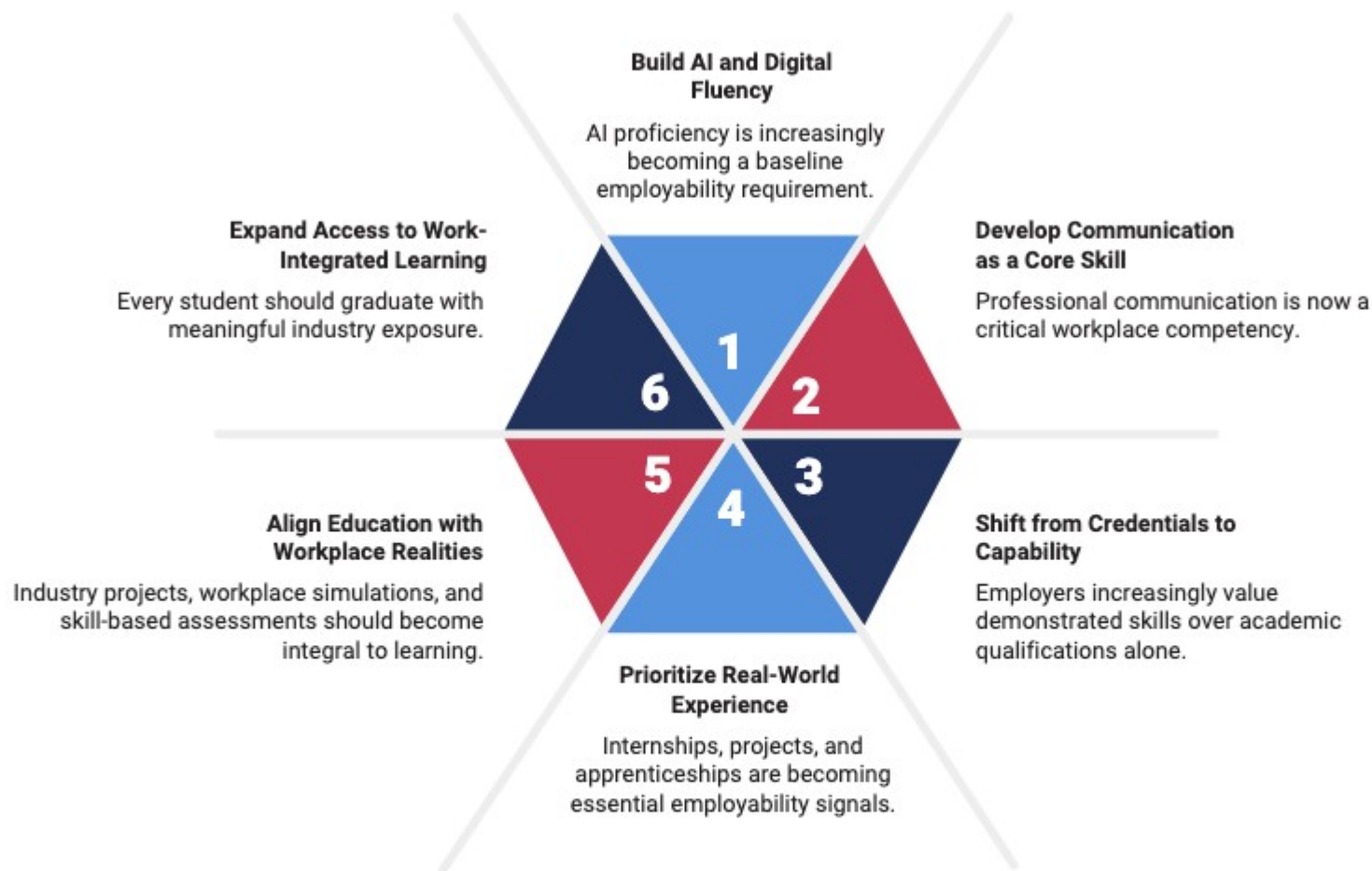
Employers are prioritizing job-ready talent, since extended ramp-up time can affect productivity and delivery timelines.

The Key Challenges Freshers Face When Entering the Workforce

Challenges today extend beyond technical skills, as employer expectations evolve faster than education systems can keep up.

Structural Shifts Reshaping Fresher Employability

The changing nature of work is reshaping what employers expect, placing greater weight on readiness, adaptability, and continuous learning.



How Freshers and Institutions Can Strengthen Workplace

As employers shift from qualification-led hiring to capability-led hiring, both freshers and educational institutions must adapt. The focus is increasingly moving from acquiring credentials to demonstrating workplace readiness, practical experience, and continuous learning.

A degree was once a certificate to be framed; it must now become a compass to be used. The rising appetite for fresh graduates is a welcome tide, but a tide only lifts boats that are seaworthy. Universities cannot keep building vessels in dry dock, teaching theory not connected to real work. Classrooms must open their windows to industry, letting internships, live projects and digital fluency blow through the curriculum like fresh air. A graduate's true credential is not the degree framed on the wall, but the confidence carried through the door.

Dr. Jawahar Suriseti

Vice Chancellor
Rungta International Skills
University

Knowing the answers may help you succeed in school, but knowing how to ask the right questions is what prepares you for life. As artificial intelligence becomes deeply integrated into our daily lives, the relationship between humans and machines continues to evolve at an unprecedented pace. This shift doesn't diminish the importance of learning, rather reinforces it. Education has never been about memorizing facts; it has always been about developing first-principles thinking, intellectual curiosity, and a deep understanding of how the world works. As AI reshapes industries and employer expectations, these capabilities will increasingly define career readiness and long-term professional success. In an era where information is only a prompt away, the true differentiator is not access to information, but the ability to reason, question, connect ideas and exercise sound judgement. AI is an extraordinary amplifier of human potential, but not a substitute for human thinking. Students must learn to evaluate problems, apply technology responsibly and create solutions that deliver measurable value. The future workforce will need engineers who can combine technical depth with adaptability, communication and an understanding of real-world contexts. Overall one can say Artificial Intelligence is "प्रज्ञा सर्वस्य जननी" (Prajña sarvasya janani), that means "Intelligence is the mother/source of everything."

Prof. Dharmendra Singh

Director
Indian Institute of Information & Technology, Vadodara

The Career Outlook Report highlights a growing shift from qualification-led hiring to capability-led hiring, with employers placing greater emphasis on practical skills, digital readiness, communication and the ability to apply knowledge in workplace situations. This makes experiential learning increasingly important across higher education. Industry projects, internships, simulations, virtual laboratories, case-based learning and collaborative problem-solving can help bridge the gap between theory and practice. For online and distance education, the opportunity is to combine flexibility and access with these applied learning experiences, enabling learners to demonstrate not only what they have studied, but also what they can contribute in a professional environment. Strengthening this connection between education and employment will be critical to improving learner outcomes and building a more workplace-ready talent pool.

Prof. (Dr.) Shauvik Roy Chowdhury

Professor,
School of Business & Sr. Director - CDOE, MDP & Industry Collaboration Adamas University

Key Takeaways





Annexure

INTERPRETATIONS, ABBREVIATIONS,
SAMPLE SIZE, METHODOLOGY, & BIBLIOGRAPHY



Analysis

The company dashboard of logistics dashboard and analysis dashboard, and route optimization hubs present side-by-side logistics networks, the real-world routing solutions.

Route Optimization Hubs

Dashboard Total
32.37 km
Transportation Index
4.4.5
Transportation Index
3.5.5.1 km/h



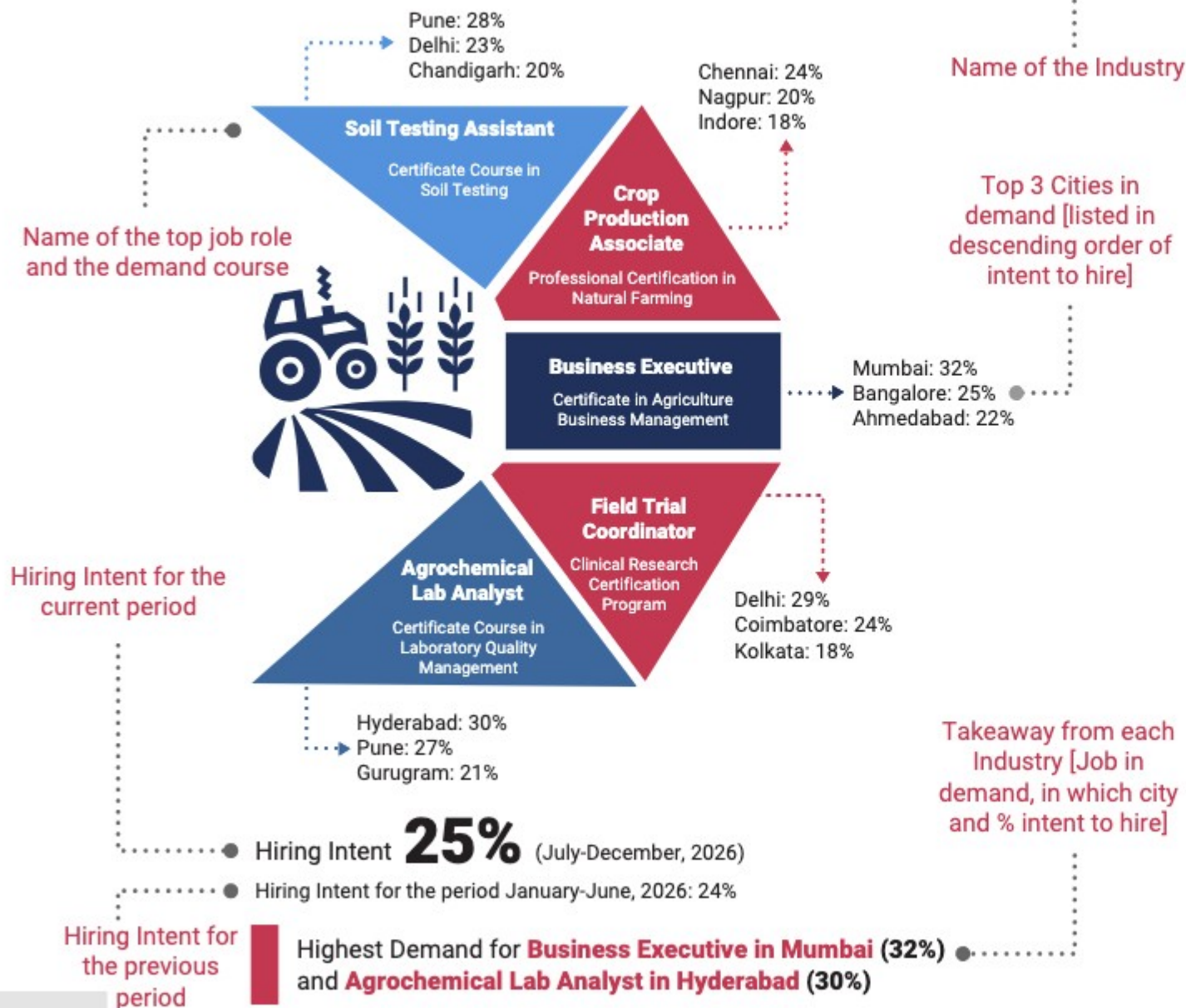
Transit Time Deviations



INTERPRETATIONS - INDUSTRY TRENDS & ABBREVIATIONS

Reading the data tables:

Agriculture & Agrochemicals



Abbreviations	Full Form / Meaning
Ad	Advertisement
AI	Artificial Intelligence
DL	Deep Learning
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance
GIS	Geographic Information System
HY	Half-Year
IT	Information Technology
Jr.	Junior
LLM	Large Language Model
ML	Machine Learning
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
Phygital	Physical + Digital
Tech	Technology
VLSI	Very Large-Scale Integration
vs.	Versus

Percentages indicate the related intent to hire for the role

Freshers, & Degree Apprenticeship: Sample Size

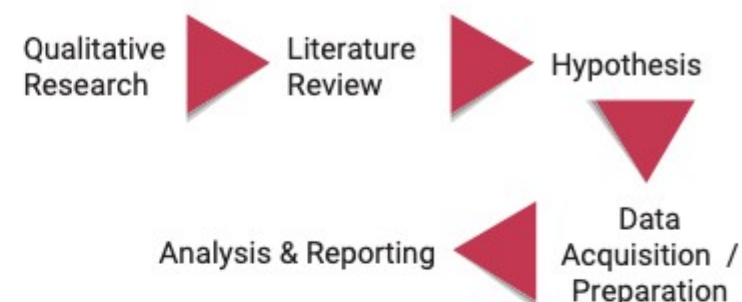
Survey to estimate Intent to Hire Freshers:

Total sample size: 1,097

1. 832 employers intend to hire freshers (within which 27 also intend to hire degree apprentices).
2. 236 employers intend to hire degree apprentices (within which 27 also intend to hire freshers).

The survey was carried out between May, 2026 - July, 2026.

Methodology



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