



yello

2025

# State of Campus Recruiting Report

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# Introduction

## Investing in Campus Recruiting to Secure Your Company's Future

Campus recruiting isn't just about filling entry-level positions, it's about securing the long-term success of your organization. The companies that build strong early career programs today will develop the next generation of leaders who drive innovation, shape company culture, and ensure continuity in critical roles. With 71% of employers saying the competition for early career talent is very or extremely intense, recruiters must think beyond short-term hiring needs and focus on building sustainable talent pipelines.

Employers continue to feel the squeeze from all sides. 49% of respondents said offering competitive salaries and benefits was their biggest challenge in standing out against other employers. At the same time, another 49% pointed to company culture and values as their strongest competitive advantage. Navigating these competitive challenges while drawing in top talent requires a thoughtful and strategic approach.

To gain an edge, 23% of employers invested in new tools to improve how they attract and engage candidates this year. When it comes to evaluating success, 56% of employers rely on feedback from their campus recruiting teams to assess their tech stack's effectiveness, while 26% use recruiting outcomes and ROI as key metrics. This highlights the varying approaches organizations take to measure impact and optimize their tech stack.

## Balancing Budgets and Focusing on ROI

Budgets remained somewhat steady last year, with 54% of employers reporting no change from 2023, but 25% experienced a decrease. While the pressure to prove return on investment (ROI) is still a factor, 55% of employers reported feeling added pressure from leadership to demonstrate the return on their efforts to keep their budget, a slight decline from 61% last year. Still, this pressure is shaping how recruiting teams operate, forcing them to refine strategies and justify every dollar spent.

Despite these constraints, employers are finding ways to work smarter. Many are prioritizing tools and tactics that offer the most value, ensuring that their recruiting efforts remain effective even with limited resources. The role of technology in campus recruiting continues to grow, with organizations investing in platforms that help accelerate operations, improve candidate engagement, and increase efficiency.

At the same time, the demand for data-driven decision-making is rising. With leadership closely monitoring hiring outcomes, recruiters must connect their strategies to measurable success. This means accurately measuring analytics and KPIs, optimizing recruiting workflows, and continuously refining engagement methods to secure the best candidates before competitors do.





## Optimizing Your Campus Recruiting Tech Stack

Technology plays a critical role in helping campus recruiters stay competitive. With 56% of employers relying on direct feedback from their recruiting teams to evaluate their tech stack, the user experience and functionality matter most. In contrast, only 26% of employers measure the success of their tech stack through recruiting outcomes and ROI, indicating an opportunity for teams to take a more data-driven approach.

## Gaining an Edge in Early Career Hiring

With 71% of employers citing intense competition for early career talent, standing out requires more than just a presence on campus. 49% of employers cite offering a competitive salary and benefits as their biggest challenge. On the flip side, 49% also pointed to company culture and values as their strongest differentiator from other employers. To remain competitive, companies must focus on employer branding, candidate experience, and building relationships beyond the hiring cycle.

## Staying Ahead in a Competitive Market

This year's State of Campus Recruiting Report dives into the biggest challenges and opportunities shaping early career hiring today.

From crafting a strategic plan, securing budget, and measuring ROI to keeping up with competitors and building a strong tech stack, this report provides data-driven insights to help you make informed decisions and refine your approach for the year ahead.

Investing in early career recruiting is a long-term strategy that helps companies develop future leaders who understand the business, uphold company values, and contribute to sustained success. Many hiring managers and executives today once started as entry-level hires through early career and internship programs, reinforcing the value of a strong early talent pipeline.

Whether your goal is to improve your competitive advantage, improve efficiency, or build a brand that resonates with early career candidates, the findings in this report will help you stay ahead. By understanding the latest trends and campus recruiting strategies, you can position your team for success and create an early career program that thrives in a competitive market.

Now more than ever, investing in campus recruiting is investing in the future of your company. The organizations that build strong early career pipelines today will be the ones leading their industries tomorrow.

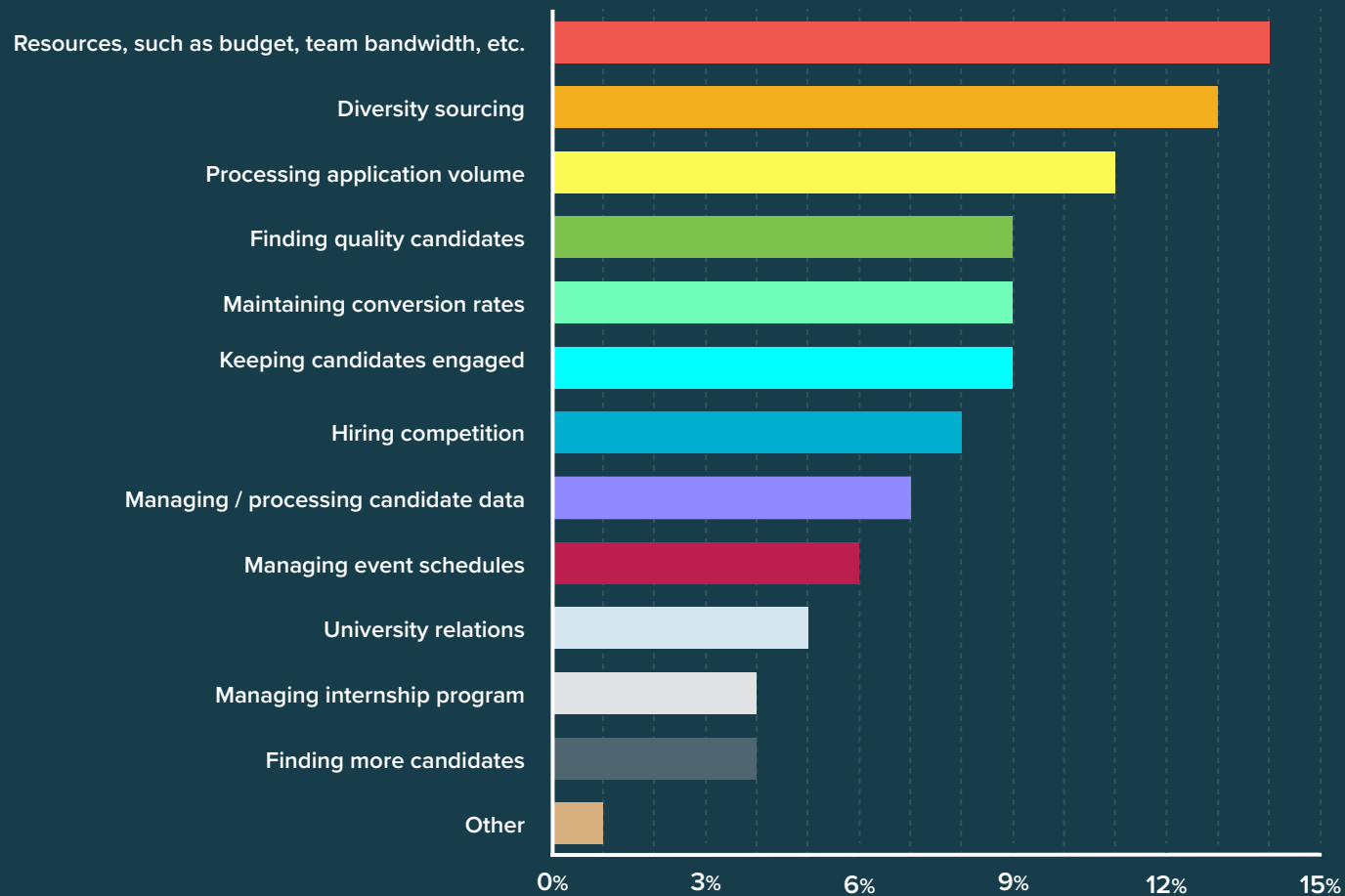


Chapter 1

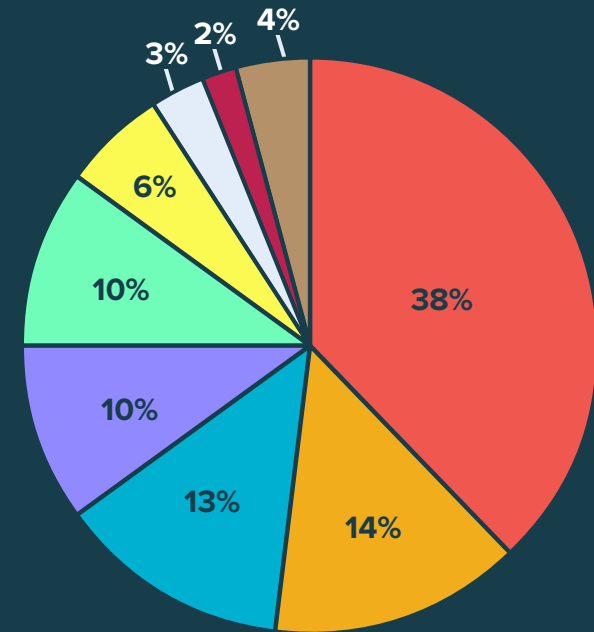
# Campus Recruiting Challenges



# What are your biggest campus recruiting challenges?

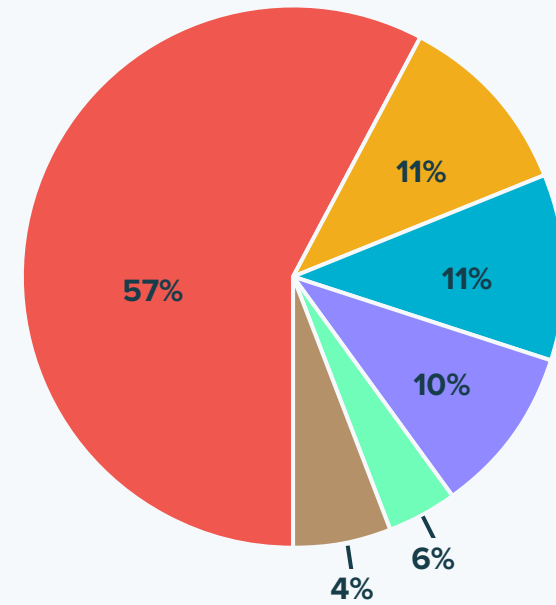


# What is your biggest challenge when planning and preparing for the busy season?



- Waiting on internal teams to define hiring needs
- Finding time to plan and prepare
- Determining which events to participate in / which schools to visit
- Budgeting
- Waiting on leadership to define goals
- Event logistics
- Internal training
- Lack of historical recruiting data
- Other entries

# How have you adjusted your strategy to address these challenges?



- Modified campus recruiting tactics
- Added resources or budget to support campus recruiting efforts
- Hired additional team members
- Redefined how we measure success
- Increased internal training
- Other

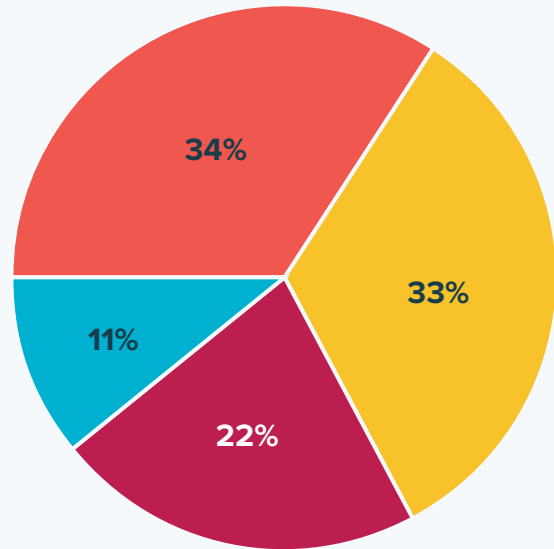
Chapter 2

# Campus Recruiting Strategy

(Planning, Goals, and  
Operations)

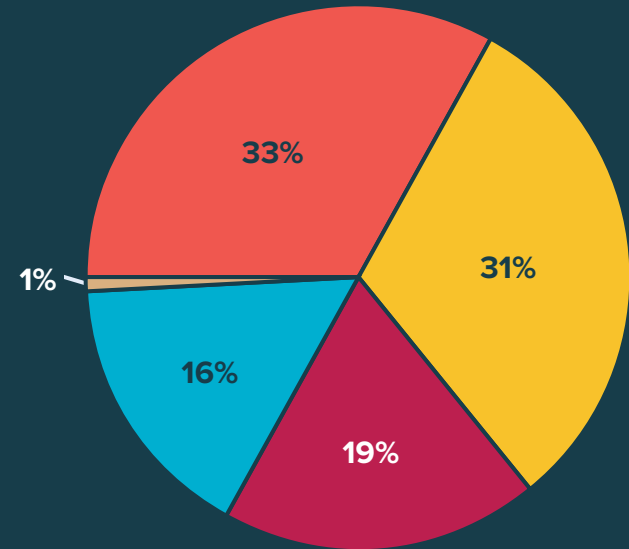


## How do you align your campus recruiting goals with broader organizational talent goals?



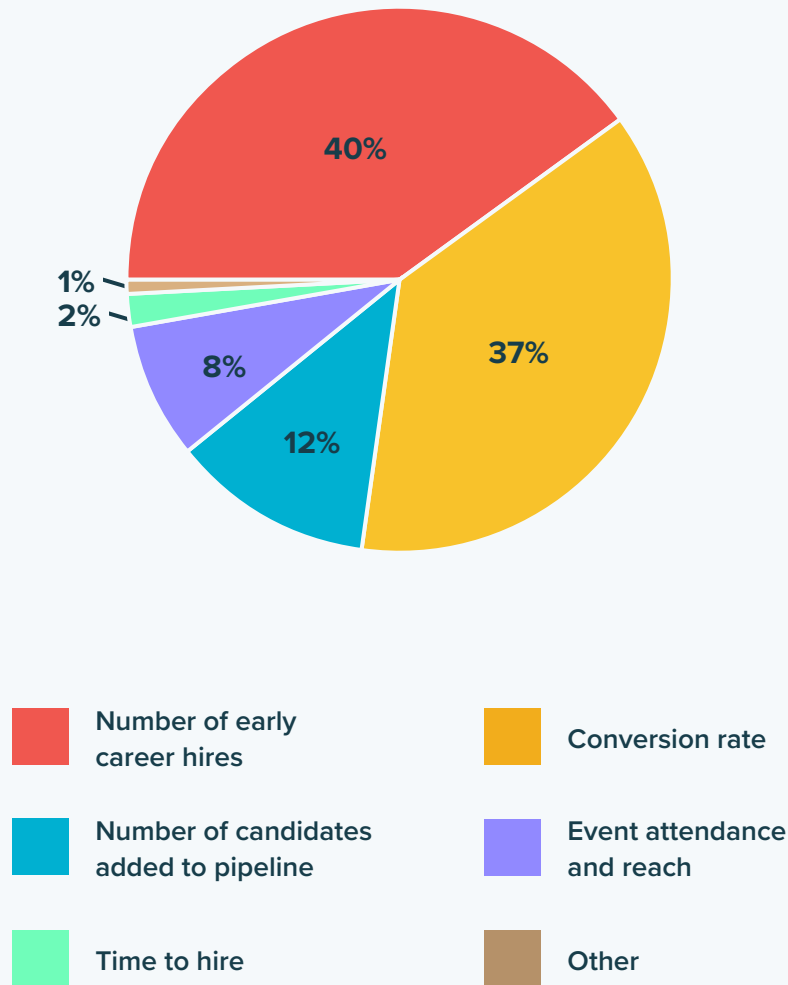
- Recruiting goals are somewhat aligned but not fully integrated
- Recruiting goals are aligned with talent management and workforce planning
- Recruiting goals are directly tied to organizational long-term strategy
- Recruiting goals are independently set

## How do you plan to anticipate early talent needs for the next year, and how often do you revise these projections?

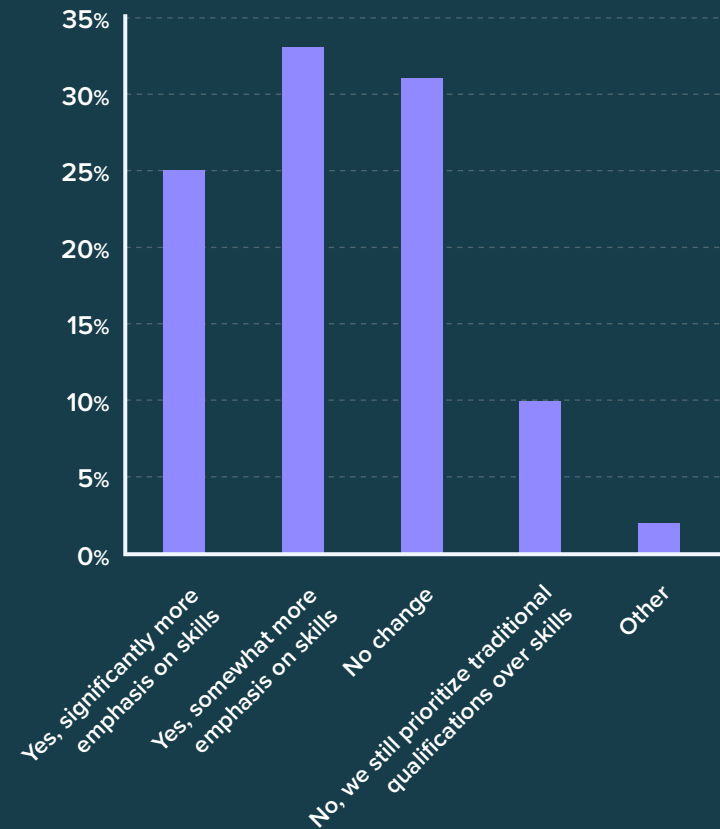


- We forecast yearly and update quarterly as needed
- We forecast yearly, but rarely revise
- We forecast based on real-time data and update frequently
- We don't forecast early talent needs
- Other

### How do you primarily measure the success of your campus recruiting strategy?



### Did your team place more emphasis on hiring candidates based on skills over traditional qualifications (e.g. degree, GPA)?

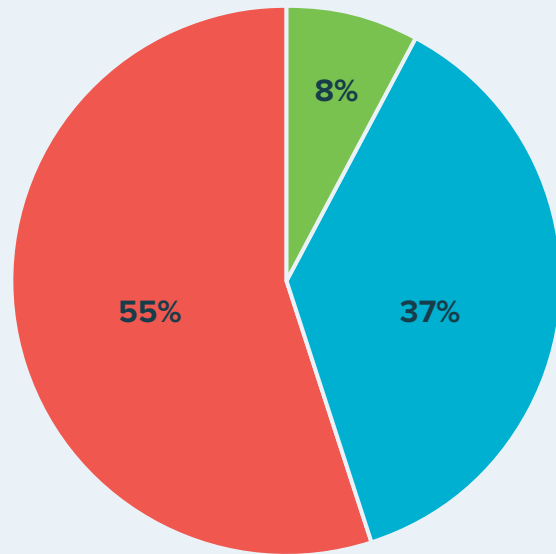


Chapter 3

# Recruiting Budget, Outcomes, and Return on Investment

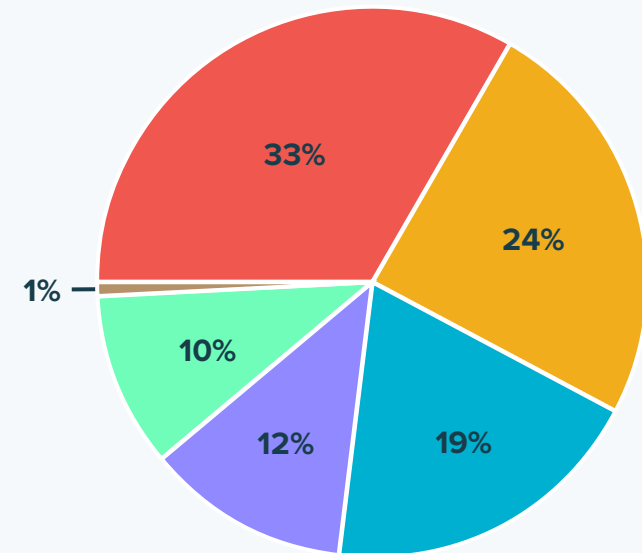


Did you feel more pressure from leadership this year to demonstrate the ROI of your campus recruiting efforts in order to keep your hiring budget?



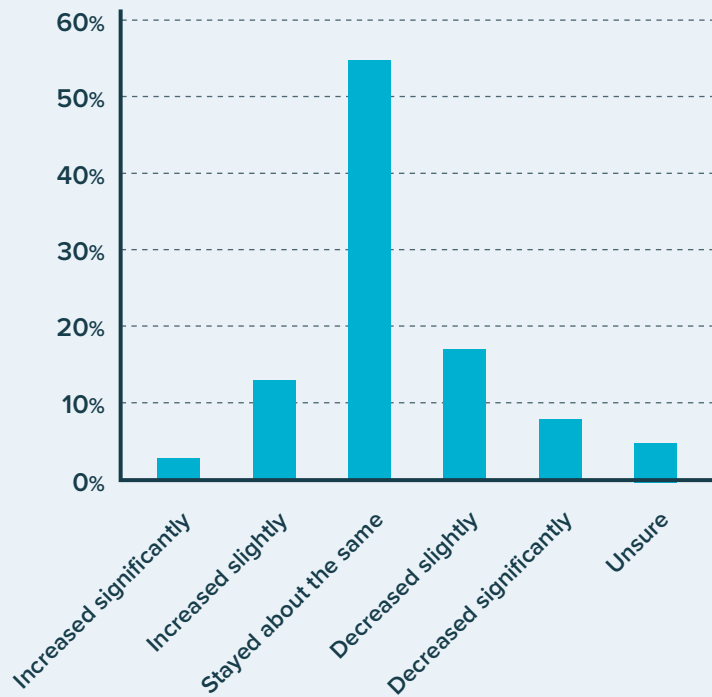
■ Yes   
 ■ No   
 ■ Unsure

What primary metrics does your team use to measure the ROI of campus recruiting efforts?

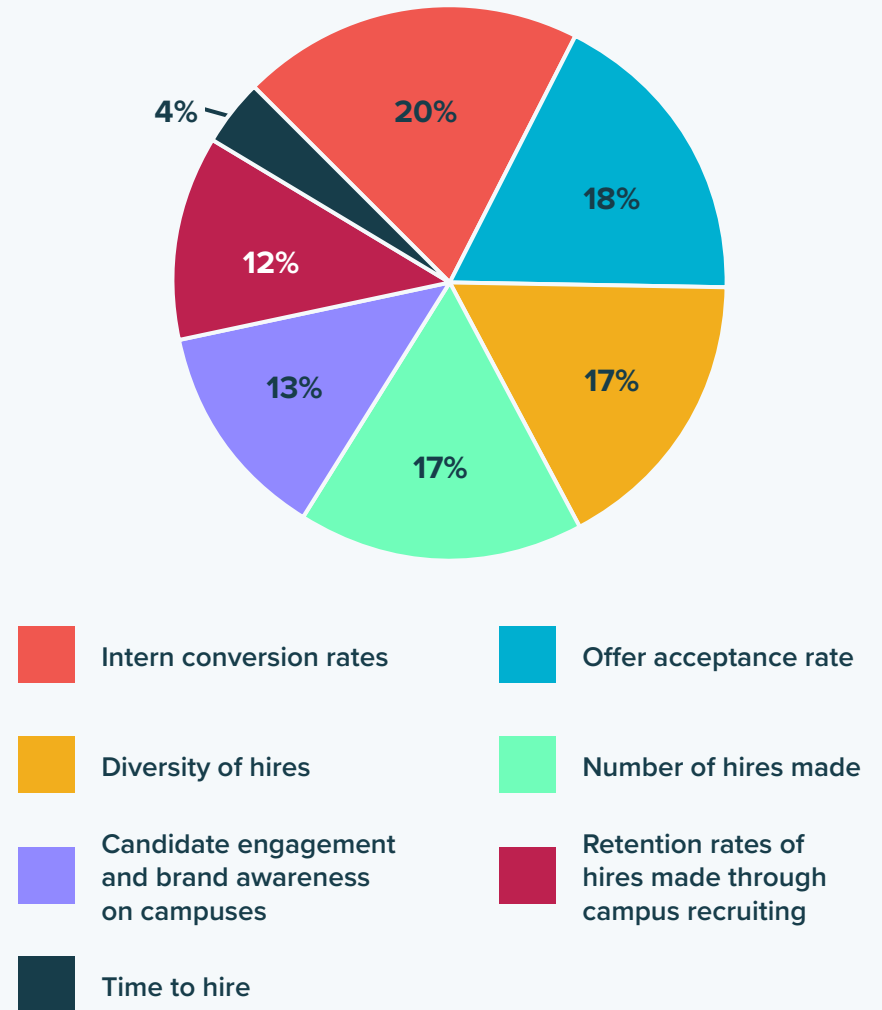


<span style="color: red;">■</span> Conversion rate	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Retention and performance of hires sourced from campus recruiting
<span style="color: cyan;">■</span> Increase in brand recognition and engagement on target campuses	<span style="color: purple;">■</span> Cost per hire specifically for campus recruiting
<span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> We do not currently track specific ROI metrics for campus recruiting	<span style="color: brown;">■</span> Other

### How has your budget for recruiting changed compared to last year?



### What recruiting outcomes are most important to your team's success in campus recruiting?



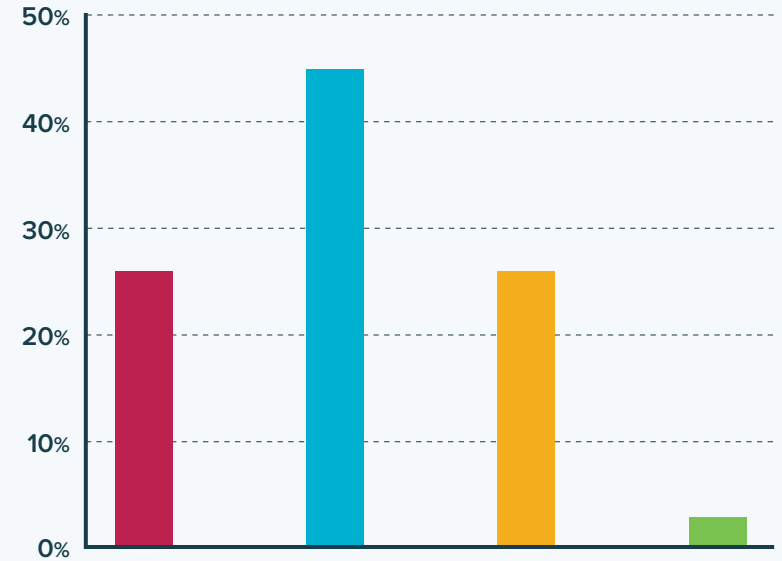
Chapter 4





# Beating the Competition



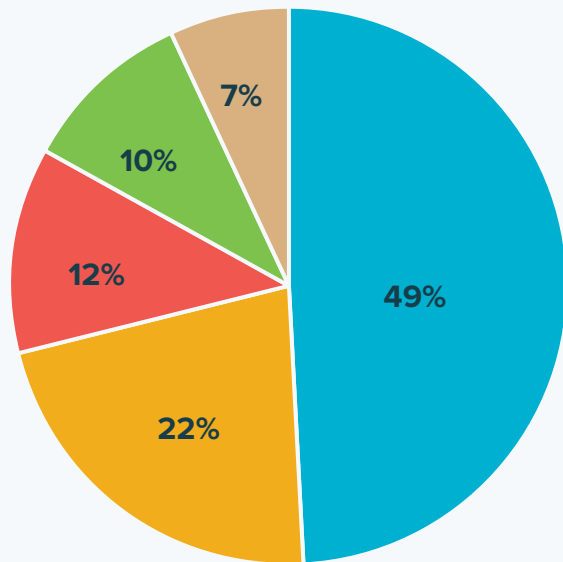


## How intense would you say the competition is for early talent in your industry right now?



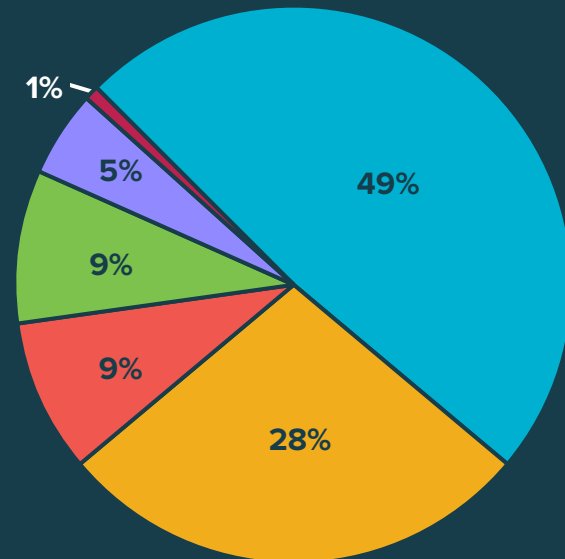
-  Extremely intense – candidates have multiple offers and high demands
-  Very intense – competing with several companies for the same talent
-  Moderate – some competition, but manageable
-  Low – relatively easy to attract early talent in our field

For your organization, what is the biggest obstacle you face when competing for top early talent?



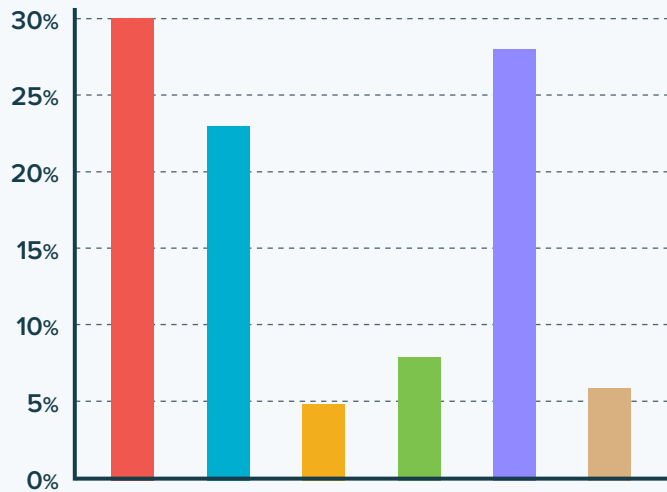
- Offering competitive salaries and benefits
- Differentiating our brand from other employers
- Time to hire
- Your company size / industry
- Other

On the flip side, what differentiators do you believe give your organization the biggest edge over competitors in attracting early talent?



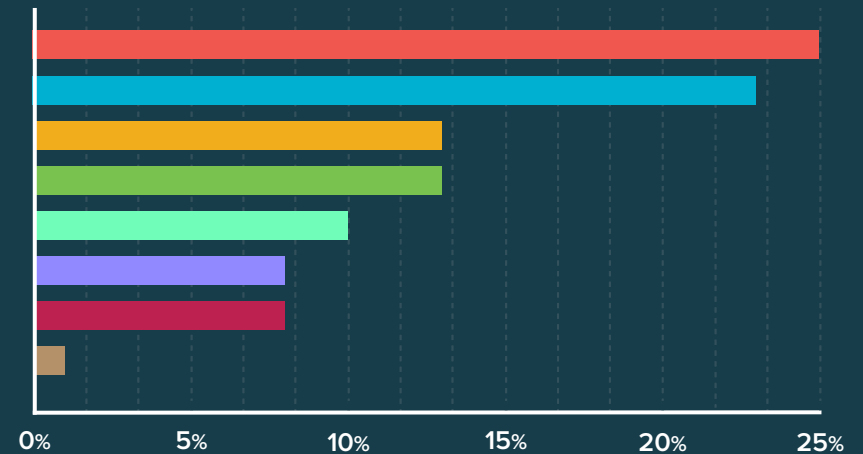
- Strong company culture and values
- Opportunities for career growth and development
- Employer brand recognition
- Positive candidate experiences / fast hiring process
- Competitive compensation and benefits
- Commitment to diversity and inclusion

## Have you made any changes to your recruiting strategy in response to increasing competition?



- Yes, we've expanded our recruiting reach (going to new schools, virtual sourcing, moving to a school-agnostic approach, etc.)
- Yes, we've added tools to better attract and engage candidates
- Yes, we've increased our budget to enhance our campus presence
- No, but we plan to adjust our strategy soon
- No, our strategy remains largely the same
- Unsure / competition was not increased

## What tactics has your team used to beat out hiring competition?



- Efforts to improve the candidate experience
- Building stronger / additional university partnerships and campus presence
- Added emphasis on candidate marketing and engagement
- Efforts to reduce time to hire
- Increasing salary and benefits offerings
- Offering unique perks
- Early ID programs
- Other

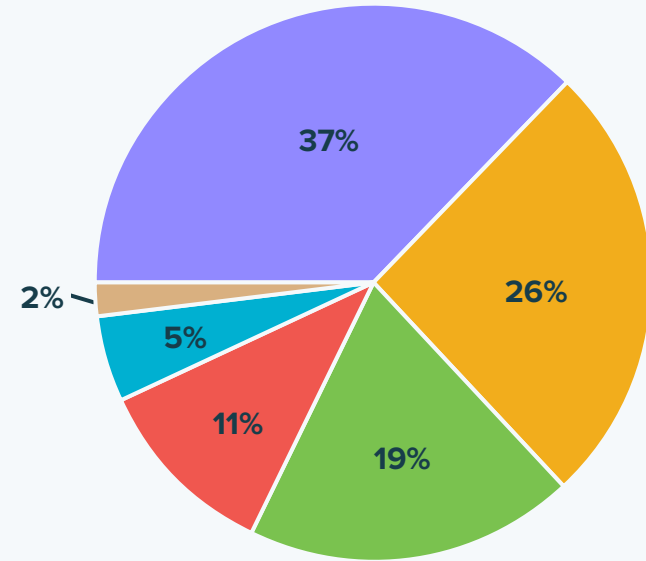
Chapter 5

# Campus Recruiting Tech Stack



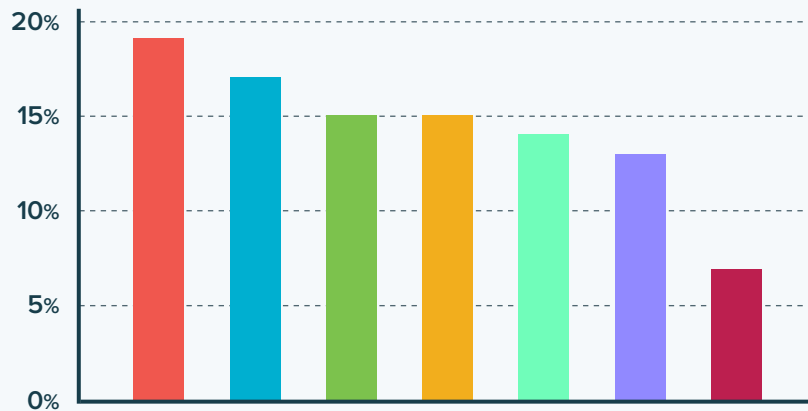


### How do you primarily assess the effectiveness of your current campus recruiting technology?



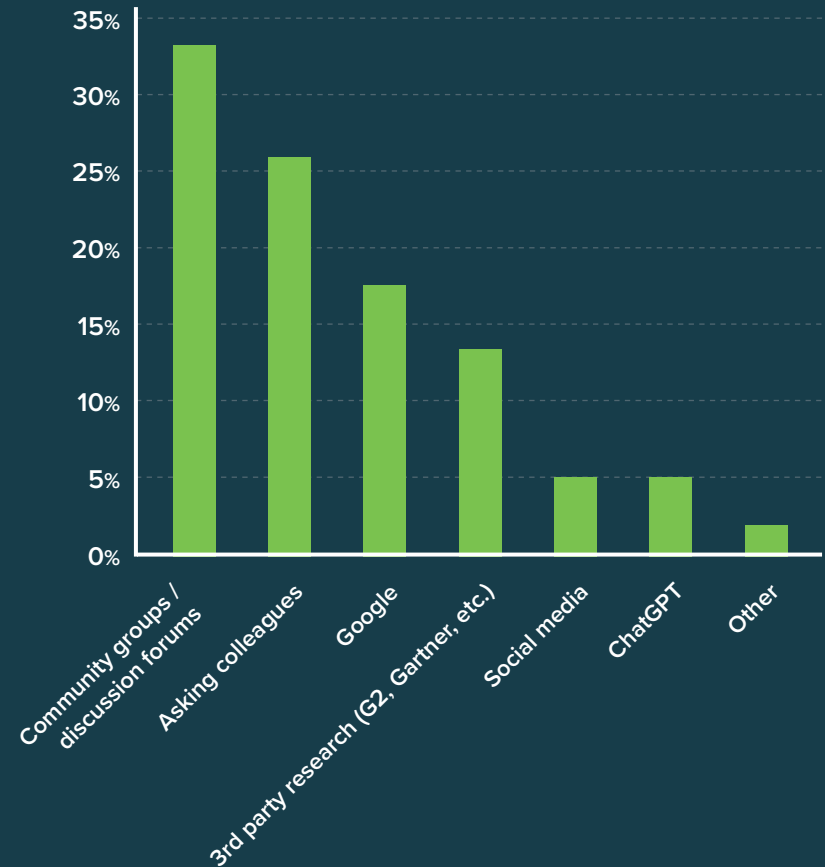
- Regular feedback from recruiting team members
- Effect on recruiting outcomes and return on investment
- Direct feedback from campus recruiting team
- Direct feedback from candidates
- Comparisons with competitor tools
- Other

## What criteria are most important to you when purchasing recruiting technology?



- Impact on recruiting team (improved efficiency, reducing manual work, etc)
- Cost/Return on investment
- Impact on recruiting outcomes (diversity sourcing, time-to-hire, conversion rate, etc.)
- Impact on candidate experience
- Analytics and reporting capabilities
- Integration with existing systems
- Support and training offered by the provider

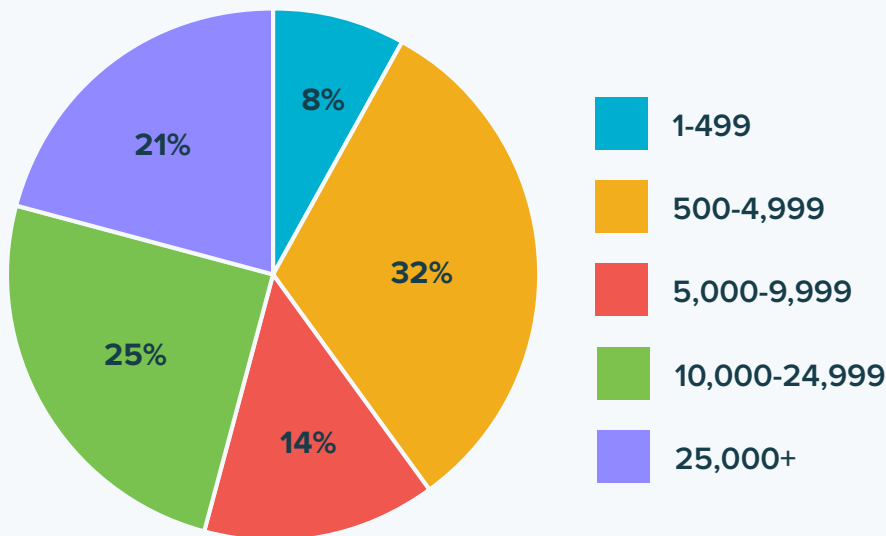
## Where do you best like to research new technology options for campus recruiting?



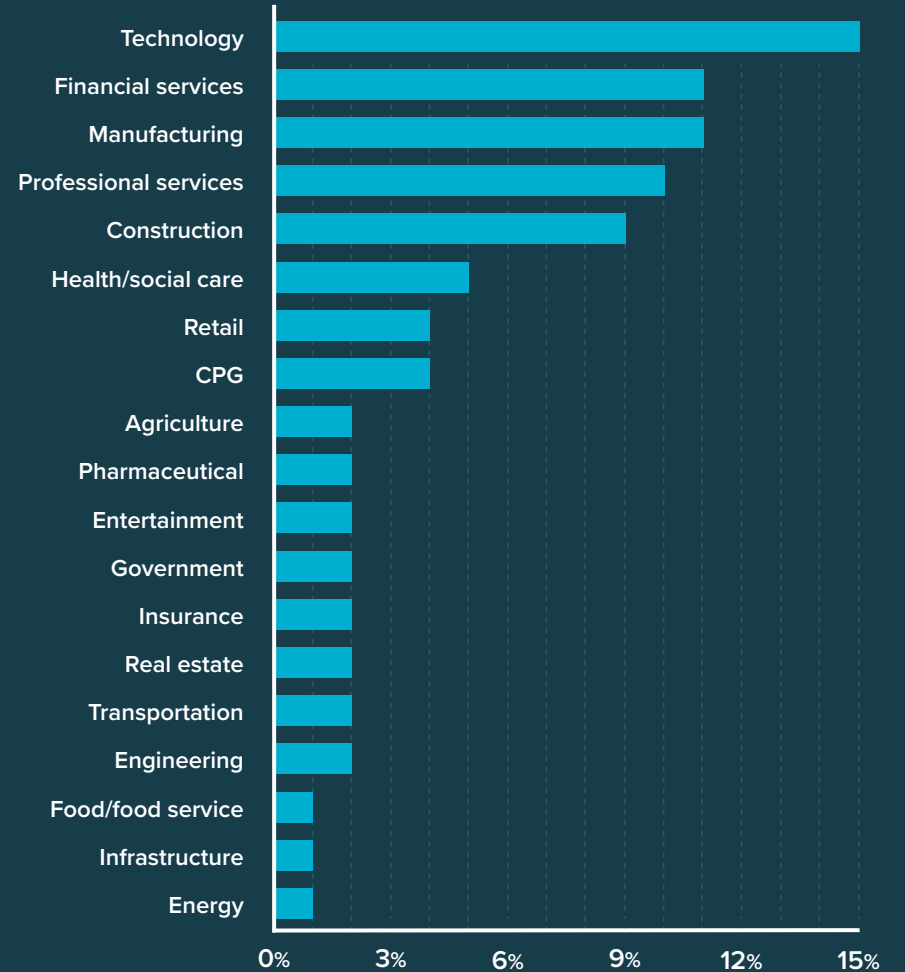
# Methodology

The data in this report was collected during Yello’s annual State of Campus Recruiting Survey. This year, hundreds of campus recruiters and early talent leaders completed the survey from November 2024 to January 2025.

Company size



Company industries



# About Yello

Driving campus recruiting success comes down to several factors, including nailing your strategy, processes, employer brand, and tech stack. Yello provides solutions to help hundreds of teams like yours attract, engage, and hire top early career talent with [event management](#), [candidate relationship management](#), [sourcing](#), [data and reporting](#), and more. By leveraging technology, your team can operate more efficiently and have time to focus on what matters most: engaging and building relationships with candidates.

If this report was helpful, [visit our website for more relevant campus recruiting resources](#).

For more information about Yello, contact us at [hello@yello.co](mailto:hello@yello.co).

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The Yello logo is written in a light blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters are slightly slanted to the right, giving it a dynamic feel.