



2025 Talent Sentiment Report

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About the Report

The business world is changing every day — new trends gaining prominence, unexpected shifts taking root, previously unshakeable facts being turned on their heads.

At Creative Circle, it's our job to stay on top of how all these developments affect the market for creative and marketing talent. Because while stock price fluctuations and technological advancements may be unpredictable, one thing never changes — the need for outstanding human talent to power business growth.

Welcome to our 2025 Talent Sentiment Survey. More than 2,000 of our candidates weighed in on some of the hot button issues affecting hiring managers and jobseekers, from AI and DEI to what they're looking for in a prospective employer and how they feel about the job market right now. Some of the results were quite revealing, even for us!

We hope you enjoy the report and take away a few pearls of wisdom for your 2025 people strategy. As always, let us know if you'd like to discuss a custom-built, flexible talent solution for your business — or if you just need to find a quick contractor. We're here to help!

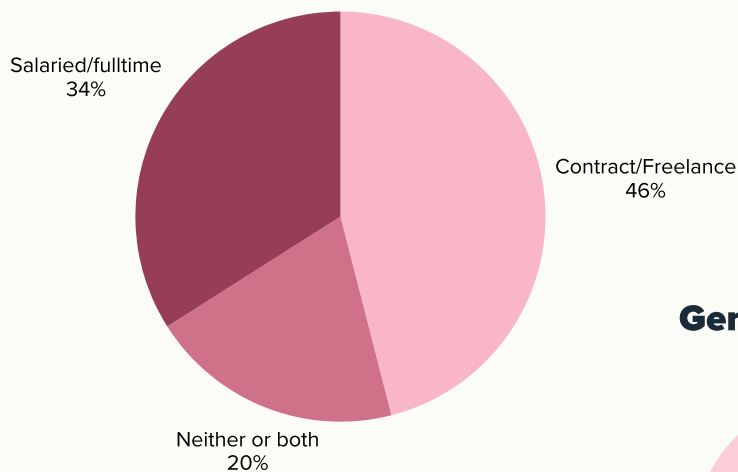
—Katherine Forbes, SVP, Marketing

Respondent Demographics

We surveyed 2,348 Creative Circle candidates from March 18 to 26, 2025. With around 1 million professionals in Creative Circle's talent community overall, our large sample size gives us a 95% confidence level that results are within just a 2% margin of error. Here is how our respondents identified themselves:

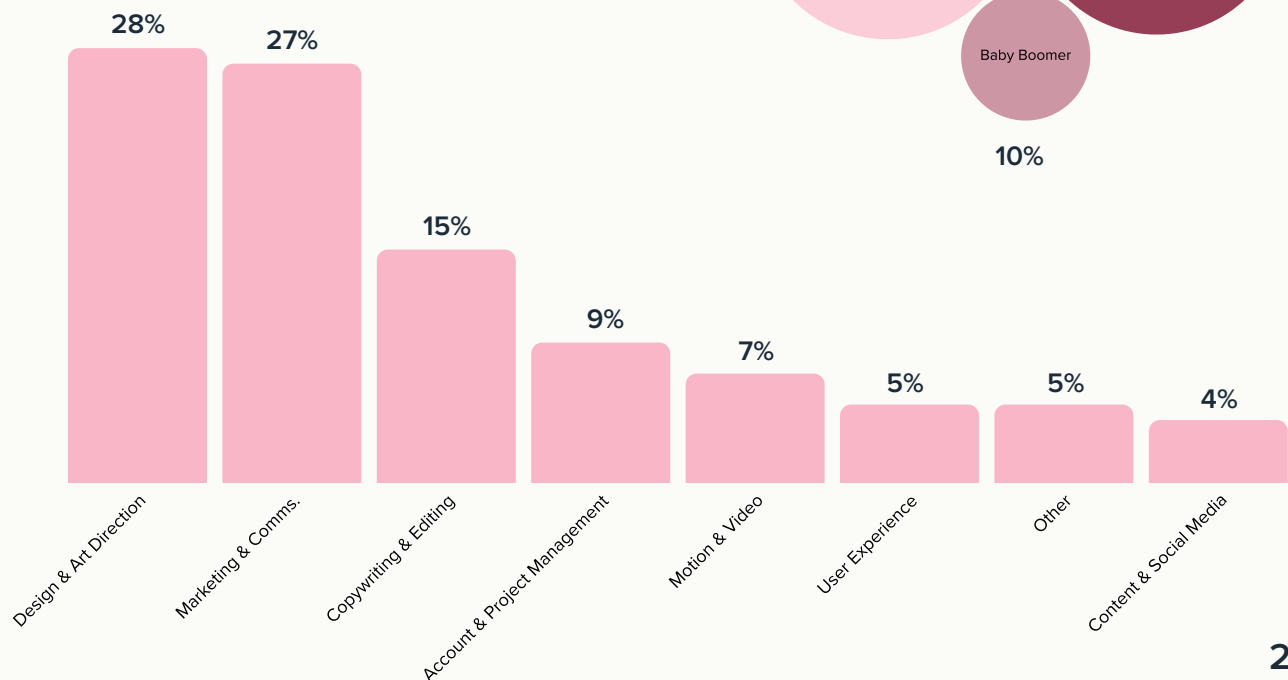
Type of Worker

Which category do you most closely identify with?

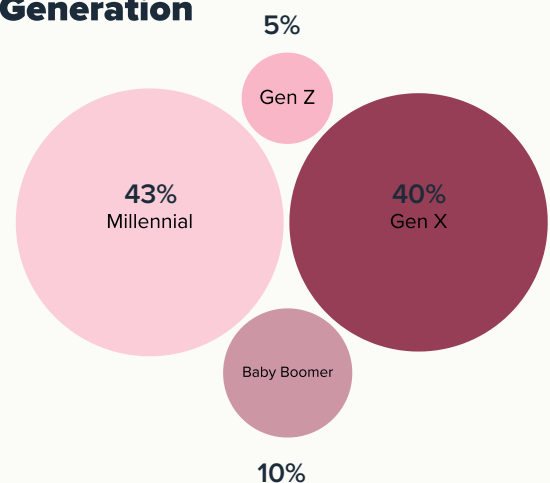


Job Category

Which category does your profession most closely align with?



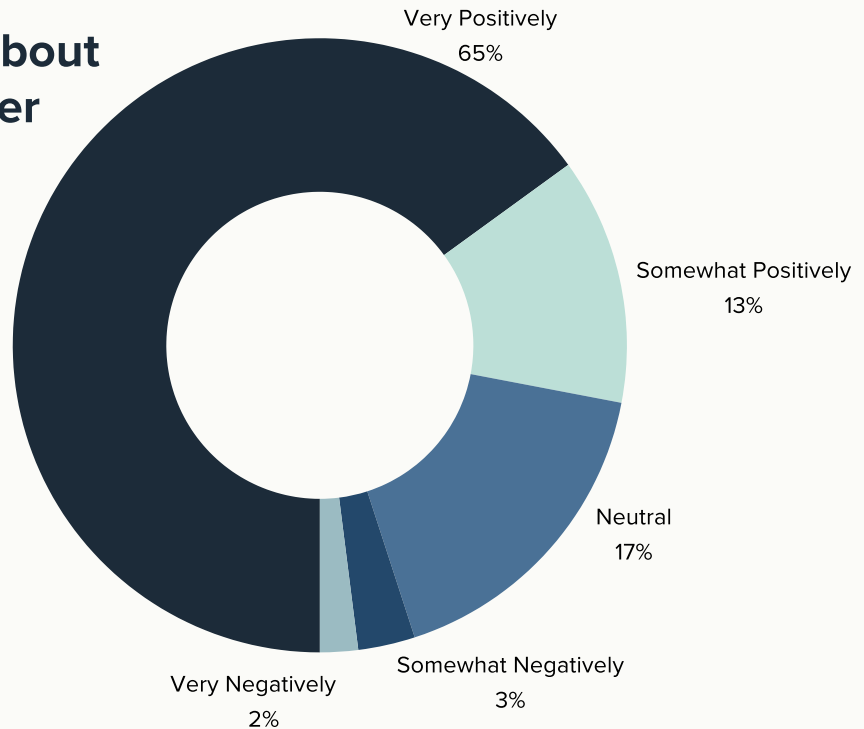
Generation



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

How would you feel about a prospective employer being committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion?

DEI continues to be overwhelmingly popular among Creative Circle's talent community. Respondents indicated that a commitment to DEI aligns with their personal values, and they also feel that it benefits the bottom line.



"It's important to involve different perspectives and varied cultures into a business because it can only make it better through collaboration, fresh ideas, and creativity."

"If an employer supports DEI, then I know they value their employees as professionals and people."

"I think a diverse workforce in a safe workplace creates a well-rounded pool of knowledge and perspectives that lead to much more inclusive client experiences."

"You gain a more realistic and effective solution for the problem or project you're addressing, leading to the best possible outcome and voice for the company."

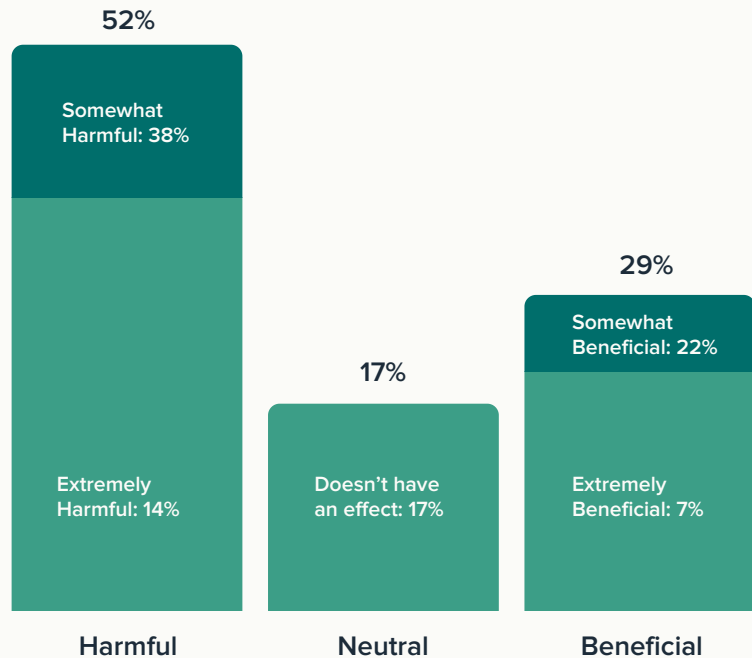
Data from survey of 2,348 Creative Circle candidates conducted March 18–26, 2025.

Artificial Intelligence

How do you feel that artificial intelligence is impacting your job prospects and earnings potential?

Candidate sentiment on artificial intelligence is a mixed bag. Overall, jobseekers feel that AI is somewhat more harmful than beneficial to their career prospects and earnings potential.

Employers can differentiate themselves by clearly articulating how AI does and does not fit into their business plan and people strategy. Offering training and upskilling opportunities is a great way to harness AI's potential while assuaging many of the concerns that employees may have.



"I've personally experienced utilizing this technology in a way that lessens the time and effort spent on menial parts of the task process, and frees up both time and energy for the parts of the work I can add the highest and most unique value."

"It's a perspective thing. Yes, AI can take over many aspects of my job altogether, but it can also help optimize many parts of my job. If I learn to use it properly it can be a great asset; if I don't keep up with the technology, I will feel obsolete and discouraged in my profession."

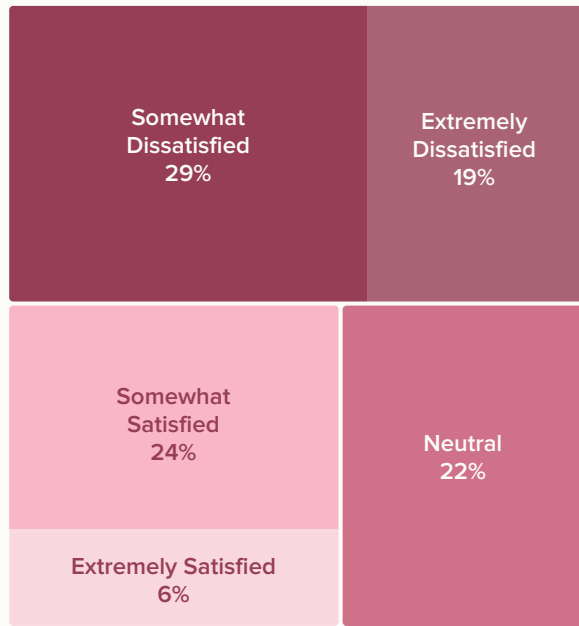
"Short term? It's convinced employers that you need fewer people, sometimes eliminating entire departments. The long term? I'm concerned about human creativity and the value of things made by a person."

"AI is a powerful tool that enhances efficiency, productivity, and innovation. I see it as a complement rather than a replacement — while AI streamlines processes, human expertise, creativity, and decision-making remain essential to achieving the best outcomes."

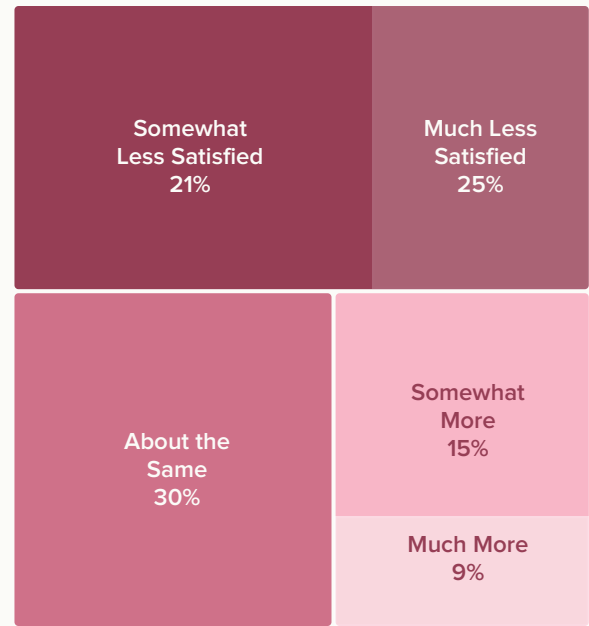
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Pay Satisfaction

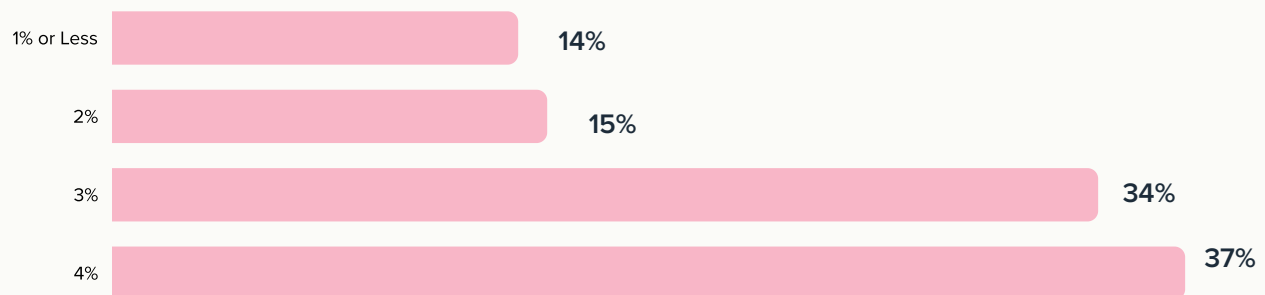
How satisfied are you with your current level of pay?



How does this compare to your pay satisfaction three years ago?



What percent pay increase do you expect each year, on average?



Professionals feel fairly neutral about their pay currently, with a slight tilt toward dissatisfied. This is less satisfied than they were a year ago.

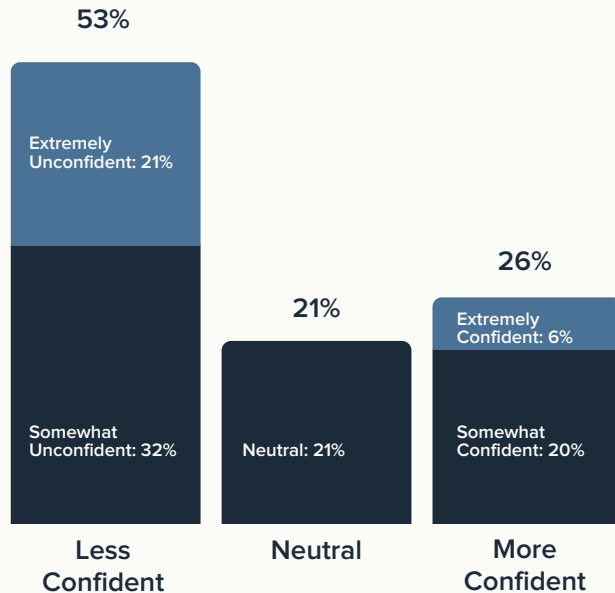
Workers overwhelmingly expect pay increases of 3% or more each year. Especially given the effects of recent inflation, employers will need to regularly assess the pay they're offering for new hires and existing contributors to keep up.

"Rate increases have also not moved as fast as cost of living, which is rising at a rate that causes workers to require sometimes multiple jobs to afford to live."

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Job Market Sentiment

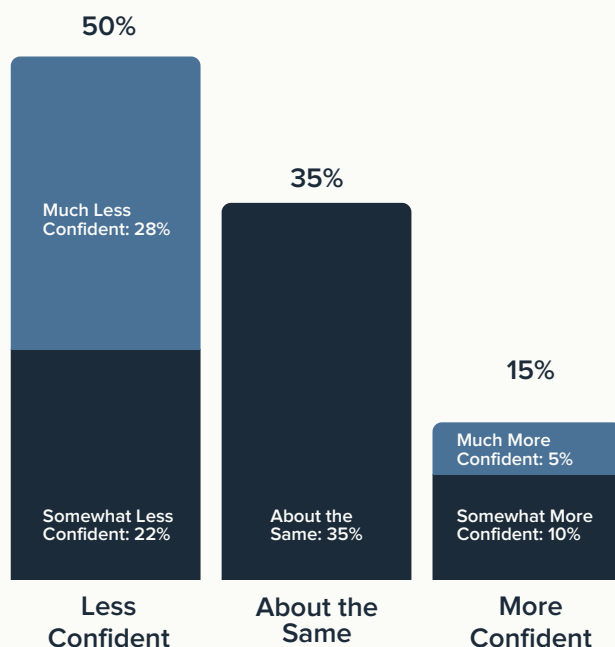
How confident do you feel in your job prospects for the next 12 months?



Our respondents overall feel somewhat pessimistic about their job prospects for the next 12 months. That's a significantly worse outlook than they had last year at this time.

With economic fluctuations, intense competition for roles, the emergence of artificial intelligence, and more, employers that can promise reliable hours and job security will attract top applicants.

How does this compare to how you felt 12 months ago?



"Company hiring freezes, budget cuts, reductions in force, government instability, AI outsourcing and takeovers, increasing costs, companies fighting just to keep their current staff, foreign employees doing work for pennies on dollar"

"Current political climate leaves lots of uncertainty about how companies are spending and investing in qualified talent."

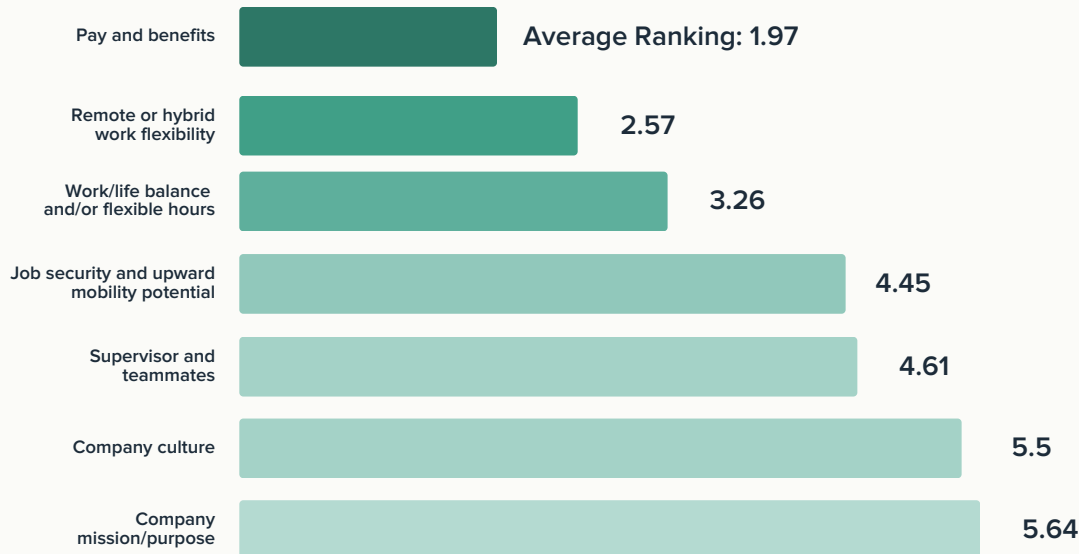
"It feels like there's demand, but decision-making is slower, and competition is high."

"Being a freelancer is all about ebbs and flows. It may be slower now, but it always comes back."

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Priorities in Job Opportunities

Rank what is most important to you when considering job opportunities:



There's nothing too surprising here — pay/benefits remains the #1 consideration for jobseekers. If you want the best talent, you'll need to pay for it!

Of course, budgets for roles and projects are often set in stone. Luckily, there are plenty of other ways that you can get your dream candidate to say “yes” or your top contributor to stick around for good.

Remote/hybrid work flexibility, flexible hours or work/life balance, and job security/upward mobility are the next top things that applicants are looking for. If you can offer these, make sure to highlight them in job postings and emphasize them in interviews with your dream candidates.

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Creative Circle uses our network of talented marketers and creatives to solve problems, tackle challenges, and elevate output for our clients.

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