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# Technology & Consulting

## Segment Burst

Spring 2024

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# Turning tech roles into strategic business advantages

Technology companies increasingly leverage contingent workers, a strategic shift driven by several key factors that underscore the industry's forward-thinking approach to workforce management. This trend is a response to evolving market demands and a deliberate move to harness flexibility, innovation, and expertise in a rapidly changing technological landscape.

The decision to integrate more contingent workers into their operations is underpinned by compelling data, including a [notable decline in negative attrition rates](#) within this labour segment in tech firms, signalling a successful alignment of company needs with workforce capabilities and expectations.

According to Pontoon's MSP programme data for technology clients, we saw a noteworthy decline in negative attrition rates—from 7.8% in the second quarter to 4.1% by the third quarter of 2023. This trend emphasises the industry's commitment to hiring contingent workers and investing in their development and integration into the core operational fabric.

Despite these positive developments, businesses must maintain a vigilant, strategic oversight of their contingent workforce strategies. Regular reviews ensure alignment with overarching business goals and cost-effectiveness, safeguarding against any misalignment that could dilute the benefits of this adaptive approach.

To truly leverage the potential of contingent labour, tech companies must adopt a holistic contingent talent management strategy to include:

- **Flexibility and scalability:** In an industry characterised by swift technological advancements and fluctuating project demands, the ability to scale the workforce up or down quickly is invaluable. Contingent workers offer tech companies the ability to respond to market changes without the long-term commitments associated with permanent hires.
- **Access to specialised skills:** The tech sector's relentless pace of innovation requires specialised skills that are often unavailable in-house. Contingent workers provide access to a global talent pool with the specific expertise needed for short-term projects or to fill skill gaps. This is particularly important for emerging technologies where the demand for skilled professionals outstrips supply.

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**66 million people** or 21.6% of the US population speak a language other than English at home. [Lingoda](#)

## Overcoming language barriers

According to an April 2024 report by [CompTIA](#), the demand for tech roles in the US has surged to its highest since August 2023. In March alone, there were 191,000 new tech job postings, marking an increase of 8,000 from February. This uptick underscores the growing need for firms to source tech talent strategically and highlights the robust opportunities available for bi-lingual professionals in the sector.

It's important to note that [over half of the current US labour market's expansion](#) can be credited to the contributions of foreign-born and refugee workers. Furthermore, statistics show that [66 million people](#), or 21.6% of the US population, speak a language other than English at home.

The data, alongside rising tech job opportunities, underscores the critical need for tech companies to actively break down linguistic and

communication barriers that come with a diverse workforce. By focusing on developing comprehensive strategies, businesses can effectively leverage this diversity, ensuring clear communication and encouraging an inclusive environment that drives value and results for all stakeholders.

Employers can harness AI technology, including real-time translation tools and AI-driven chatbots, to significantly improve communication across diverse linguistic teams. This not only enhances efficiency but also nurtures a supportive atmosphere.

Adopting a consultative, problem-solving approach rooted in strategic thinking and data-driven insights can further help break down language barriers. This approach involves actively listening to the needs of a diverse workforce, understanding the specific challenges they face, and developing tailored strategies to address these issues.



# Tech leaders not ready for AI disruption?

To harness AI's transformative power, leaders must first grasp its challenges and opportunities to craft a strategic approach. However, a significant challenge within the C-suite has emerged.

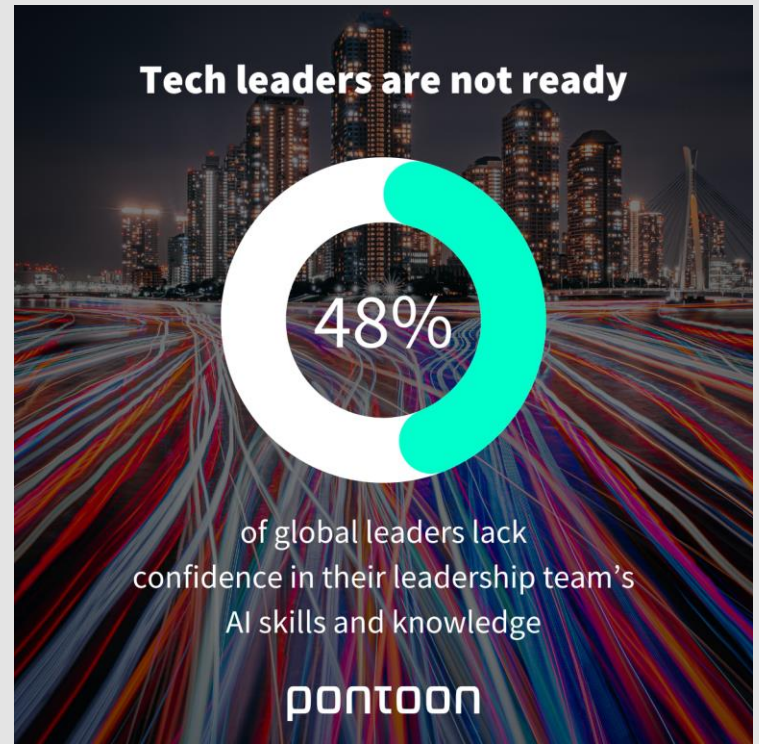
In their latest talent report, "Leading Through the Great Disruption," the Adecco Group surveyed 2,000 top executives across six important sectors, including technology. They focused on understanding these leaders' hurdles with digital change, especially in managing and implementing AI.

The findings reveal a significant insight: while a vast majority ([82%](#)) of global tech firm leaders recognise the crucial role of GenAI in enhancing skills and development within their organisations, less than half ([48%](#)) are confident in their leadership team's ability to grasp AI's potential risks and opportunities fully. This highlights a pressing need for strategic development in AI competencies among leadership to navigate the future confidently.

This shortfall directly affects the broader workforce's preparedness to embrace AI-driven changes. Therefore, leaders must cultivate an adaptive mindset that can swiftly respond to the evolving landscape of AI, ensuring their organisations remain at the forefront of innovation and competitive advantage.

Tech organisations need to take decisive steps towards comprehensive education on AI for everyone, including those in leadership roles. Understanding AI's impact, relevance, and the vast opportunities it presents is fundamental. Equally important is providing thorough training and guidance to further responsible AI usage throughout the company.

It's time for leaders to tackle AI disruption head-on, moving swiftly beyond experimenting with AI to creating real business value. This requires a proactive approach to learning, with leaders continually updating their AI knowledge to stay ahead of rapid technological advancements. Cultivating an adaptive mindset is critical; regular coaching can help leaders navigate the complexities of change and uncertainty confidently.



"The nature of work will change with AI, and leaders must adapt with a more holistic and skills-based approach. It's time to redefine leadership, focusing on critical thinking and creativity—skills that are most in deficit for leaders today."



– Valerie Beaulieu-James, President, Pontoon at [Davos 2024](#)