



PURSUIT

Sales & GTM Talent Index

H1 2026

Time to hire improved this half, but the real story is what it took to get there.

Data from 659 searches and 265 placements, H1 2026.

Every open seat is a moving target.

3 months ago we told you speed and quality aren't at odds. You just have to set the search up right from the start. Halfway through the year, the data backs that up, but not in a straight line: median time to hire peaked at 61 days in February, dropped to a low of 41 in April, and landed at 46 days for H1 overall.

We also got a clearer read on what it actually takes to get to one hire: how many candidates enter a pipeline, how many make it to a client's inbox, and how many of those become an offer. And on the risk that follows even after an offer is accepted.

In H1 2026, Pursuit ran 659 searches and made 265 placements across B2B, tech, and medical verticals. This index breaks down what actually moved the needle, and what it means for your next search.

Carter Hopkins

Founder & CEO, Pursuit Sales Solutions

H1 2026 BY THE NUMBERS

659 Searches in H1 across B2B, tech, and medical	22,998 Candidates Sourced by our recruiters in H1	46 days Median Time to Hire from search open to offer accepted
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Why these numbers matter to you:

We're sharing this because 659 searches gives us a real-time read on the talent market you can't get from a job post. We see what candidates are accepting, what's stalling searches, and what's closing them, across every major sales vertical. That's the lens this index is written through.

HOW LONG DO SEARCHES TAKE?

Every role type has a realistic timeline. Here's what we saw across H1. Use this to plan your search before urgency sets in.

ROLE TYPE	MEDIAN DAYS TO HIRE	WHAT TO KNOW
Tech – Construction	25 days	Fast-moving searches. Clear profile, quick close.
B2B – Staffing	26 days	Well-defined roles close fast.
Medical – Diagnostics	40 days	Urgent need, clear profile. Move quickly.
Tech – AI	41 days	Specialized skill sets. Give it a few weeks.
B2B – Commercial	55 days	Our highest-volume vertical. Competitive for talent, start early.
B2B – Construction	58 days	Growing fast. Budget 2–3 months.
Medical – Device	73 days	Takes time to find the right fit. Plan ahead.

H1 GTM RECRUITING TRENDS

01	<i>Time to hire is speeding up, but it still averages 46 days.</i>
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Median time to hire didn't drop in a straight line, but the direction is clear. It peaked at 61 days in February, then fell to a low of 41 days in April, settling at 46 days for H1 overall.

MONTH	MEDIAN DAYS TO FILL
January	56 days
February	61 days
March	50 days
April	41 days
May	42 days
June	46 days

46 days is faster than where H1 started, but it's not a straight downward line, and it's not fast in an absolute sense. A seat open for 46 days is still a seat that's costing you pipeline for a month and a half. The improvement is a trend in the right direction. The urgency should still be too.

What this means for you:

Plan for 6-7 weeks from the day a search opens to an accepted offer, even in a good month. If your timeline is tighter than that, the search needs to open before the need becomes urgent, not after.

02

77% of the candidates we've placed this year never applied to the role.

Think about your top performer. Are they scrolling LinkedIn all day? Probably not.

The people applying to job postings are the people who are actively looking for a new role. That group is skewed. Good performers change jobs for good reasons, but it's a small and unrepresentative slice of who's actually out there.

77% of the candidates we placed in H1 came through direct outreach, not applications. We found them, reached out, and started a conversation before they had a reason to look.

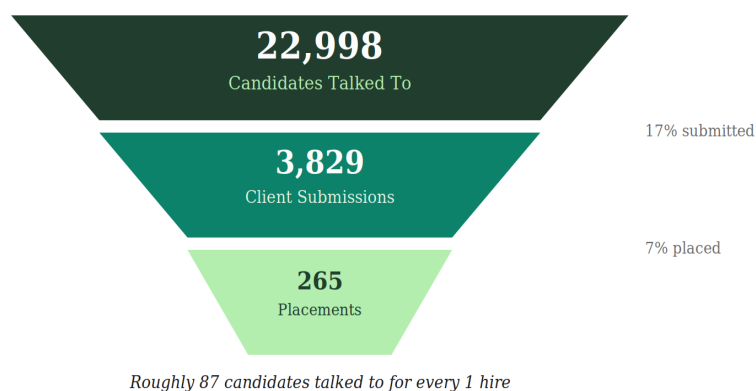
What this means for you:

Posting a job and waiting is like only calling the leads that come inbound. You'll get some wins, but you're leaving most of the market on the table.

03

87 candidates were sourced per hire.

Here's Pursuit's full funnel from H1: **22,998 candidates sourced, 3,829 submitted to clients, 265 placements**. That's roughly **87 candidates for every 1 hire**, and countless conversations per candidate.



That ratio is the narrowing necessary to filter out the C-Players. The 86 who didn't make the cut aren't wasted effort. Each conversation gets closer to the person that would actually be a fit for the role.

What this means for you:

A search can feel slow when time is being spent filtering through hundreds of resumes or applicants. But each conversation is necessary to narrow down who and what is necessary for the role.

Roughly 1 in 15 accepted offers in H1 fell through before day one, the candidate said yes, then didn't show up. Almost always, it's because their current employer came back with more money, a promotion, or both once they went to resign.

This isn't a sign the candidate wasn't serious or that the offer was wrong. It's what happens when you try to hire someone who's actually good at their job. Their current company doesn't want to lose them either.

What this means for you:

Build the counter-offer conversation into your process before you extend an offer, not after. Ask candidates directly what it would take for their current company to keep them, and have an answer ready if it comes up.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The open seat is already costing you. Every week it sits empty is pipeline not being built, deals not being worked, and momentum not being created. The urgency to fill it is real.

But a bad hire costs more than an open seat. A salesperson who doesn't ramp, doesn't perform, or leaves in 90 days doesn't just set you back to square one. You've lost the time, the opportunity cost, and now you're hiring again with less runway than before.

H1 showed us that speed is improving, but it's not free. It comes from talking to a lot of candidates, filtering hard, and staying ahead of counter-offers before they happen. The searches that won weren't the ones that skipped steps. They were the ones that ran the process well and still moved with urgency.

There's a difference between filling a seat and making the right, long-term hire.