



Canary Wharf, London. Home to 41% of the UK's tech and product leaders

UK TECH AND PRODUCT LEADERSHIP REPORT 2026

48,197 tech and product leaders. Almost none of their next jobs will be advertised.

A look at the UK's CTOs, CPOs and the leaders one step below them: where they are, who employs them, which skills boards now expect, and why the best leadership hires rarely start with a job ad.

48.2K

tech and product leaders in the UK

533

live job posts for all of them

27

advertised CTO, CPO and CDO roles

3.1 yrs

median tenure in role

01 / AT A GLANCE

A big leadership bench, and a market that almost entirely happens off the job boards

The UK has more than 48,000 people leading technology, product and data teams, from Directors and Heads of department up to the C-suite. LinkedIn rates hiring demand for them as very high, yet there are barely 500 live job posts across the whole group, so the vast majority of leadership moves happen through networks, referrals and search rather than adverts.

48,197

tech, product and data leaders in the UK, up 3% on last year

5,435

changed jobs in the past 12 months, around 11% of the pool

533

live leadership job posts, about 1 for every 90 leaders

10K+

open to new opportunities, roughly 21% of the pool

4.2K+

open to contract or interim work, about 9% of the pool

17 / 83

female to male split across UK tech leadership

Six things every board and CEO should know

- 01 The leadership market is hidden.** There are 14,731 CTOs in the UK and just 24 advertised CTO roles.
- 02 AI is now a leadership requirement.** It's in 34% of leadership job posts but on only 10% of leaders' profiles.
- 03 The Gulf is still pulling UK leaders away, despite the current situation.** London lost 65 tech leaders to the UAE last year and gained just 23 back.
- 04 The talent is fragmented.** The 80 biggest employers hold only 10% of UK tech leaders; the rest are spread across thousands of scale-ups and mid-sized firms.
- 05 Banks lead the leadership league table.** JPMorganChase, Barclays and Citi employ more tech leaders than any other organisation.
- 06 Big Tech is thinning its UK leadership.** Microsoft, Google and Amazon all have fewer tech leaders than a year ago.

02 / LOCATION

London leads, and leadership talent is spread far wider than the job ads suggest

Four in ten UK tech leaders are based in London, and the capital accounts for almost half of advertised leadership roles. But there are substantial leadership benches across the country, and some of the smaller hubs are growing their senior talent faster than London is.

Top 10 UK locations for tech and product leaders

Leaders, with live job posts on the right

London		19,935 257 posts
Manchester		1,728 24 posts
Leeds		1,055 10 posts
Bristol		839 14 posts
Edinburgh		838 6 posts
Glasgow		813 17 posts
Oxford		808 5 posts
Cambridge		797 10 posts
Reading		560 6 posts
Sheffield		430 0 posts

THE LONDON PICTURE

41%

of UK tech and product leaders are in London

48%

of advertised leadership roles are in London

1.3

job posts per 100 leaders in London, and fewer than 1 in Leeds, Edinburgh and Oxford

FASTEST-GROWING LEADERSHIP HUBS

London's leadership pool grew 3% last year. These three cities grew faster, while LinkedIn's hidden gems for leadership talent, where supply is high relative to demand, are Leeds, Bristol and Edinburgh.



Coventry

+13%

growth, to 339 leaders



Southampton

+7%

growth, to 313 leaders



Sheffield

+5%

growth, to 430 leaders

03 / EMPLOYERS AND INDUSTRIES

Banks top the table, but most leaders work for smaller firms

Global banks dominate the list of the largest employers of tech and product leaders, with JPMorganChase, Barclays and Citi all growing their leadership benches by around 10% a year. Yet even the 80 biggest employers combined hold only one in ten UK tech leaders, so the real talent pool sits across thousands of scale-ups and mid-sized businesses.

Top 10 UK employers of tech and product leaders

Leaders and one-year growth

EMPLOYER	LEADERS	1Y
JPMorganChase	279	+10%
Barclays	217	+11%
Citi	194	+10%
Mastercard	148	+2%
HSBC	138	+5%
Lloyds Banking Group	137	+4%
BAE Systems	120	-3%
American Express	117	+4%
J.P. Morgan	114	0%
BlackRock	111	+17%

Eight of the top 10 are banks or payments companies, and a ninth is BlackRock. BNY has the most live leadership roles (9).

Top industries for tech and product leaders

Leaders by employer industry

Software Development	7,917
IT Services & Consulting	5,241
Tech, Info & Media	3,222
Financial Services	2,610
Business Consulting	1,549
Banking	1,335
Telecommunications	1,182
Information Services	1,115
Investment Management	1,058

Where the growth is: Banking (+8%), Tech, Info and Media (+7%), Business Consulting (+7%), Investment Management (+6%) and Cyber Security (+6%) are adding leaders faster than software companies (+3%).



numicon, our events series for product and technology leaders

A FRAGMENTED MARKET

10%

of UK tech and product leaders work for the 80 largest employers. The other 90% are spread across thousands of companies, which is why mapping the market matters more than a job ad.

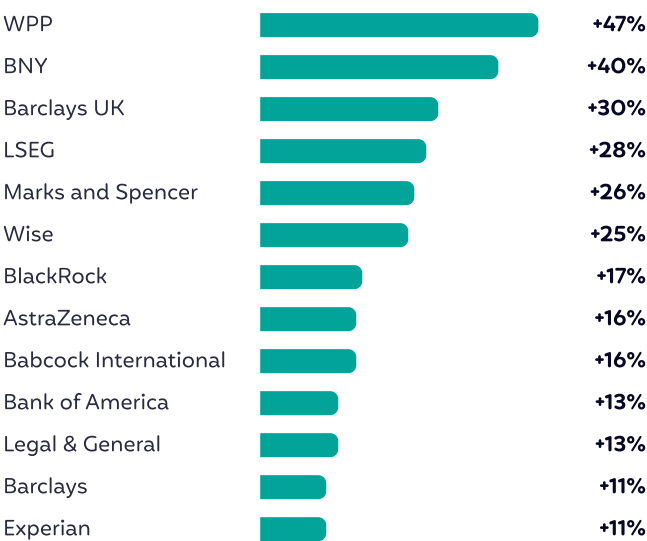
04 / MOMENTUM

Financial services is building leadership benches. Big Tech is thinning them.

The fastest-growing leadership teams belong to financial institutions, retailers and agencies investing in technology, while several of the best-known names in tech have fewer UK leaders than a year ago. Meanwhile, the Gulf has become the single biggest destination for London's tech leaders.

Fastest-growing leadership teams

One-year growth in tech and product leaders, employers with 40+



Shrinking leadership teams

One-year change in tech and product leaders, with annual attrition

EMPLOYER	CHANGE	ATTRITION
Microsoft	-16%	19%
NHS England	-14%	20%
Moody's Analytics	-13%	16%
Goldman Sachs	-12%	13%
Google	-11%	23%
Amazon	-11%	24%
Capgemini	-11%	7%
Ocado Group	-10%	27%
Sky	-8%	11%

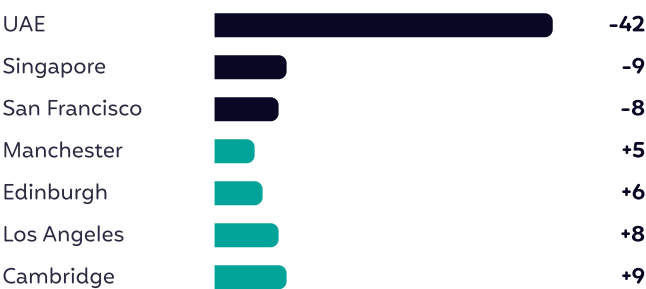
For context, leadership attrition at American Express, BlackRock and Arm is just 3%.

WHAT THIS MEANS

- Experienced leaders from Microsoft, Google and Amazon are available, many with global-scale experience.
- Banks and asset managers are competing hard for the same senior engineering and product people.
- If your leader has Gulf experience or connections, expect them to be approached.

London's leadership flows, last 12 months

Net change in leaders moving between London and other markets



London lost 502 tech leaders and gained 463, a net loss of 39, driven by moves to the UAE.

05 / ROLES AND ROUTES IN

The more senior the role, the less likely it is ever to be advertised

Heads of Engineering and VPs are still hired through job posts often enough to show up in the data. At C-suite level, adverts all but disappear: there are 18,168 CTOs, CPOs and Chief Data Officers in the UK and just 27 live roles between them.

Leadership titles

Leaders, with one-year growth on the right

CTO		14,731 +2%
Head of Product		7,063 +4%
Head of Engineering		6,953 +4%
Director of Product Mgmt		5,075 +3%
Director of Engineering		5,027 +4%
CPO		2,685 +3%
VP of Products		1,490 +6%
VP of Engineering		1,156 +3%
VP of Technology		847 +6%
Chief Data Officer		752 +3%

Job posts per 100 leaders, by title

How often each role is advertised. Dark bars are C-suite.

Assoc. Director Engineering		12.7
Senior Director Product Mg...		3.4
VP of Engineering		2.9
Head of Engineering		2.7
Director of Engineering		1.9
VP of Products		1.7
VP of Technology		1.2
Head of Product		1.1
CTO		0.16
Director of Product Mgmt		0.16
CPO		0.11
Chief Data Officer		0.00

0.15

job posts per 100 C-suite leaders

2.7

per 100 Heads of Engineering, 18 times more often advertised

31%

of the pool are CTOs, the single biggest leadership title

Highest degree held

All leaders Recent graduates

Bachelor's		47%
		17%
Master's		32%
		42%
MBA		10%
		28%
PhD		9%
		12%

Recent graduates in this group are nearly three times as likely to hold an MBA (28%).

Top fields of study

Tech and product leaders

Computer Science		6,145
Computational Science		4,953
Mathematics		2,774
Electronic Engineering		2,711
Information Technology		2,329
Business Administration		2,272
Physics		2,264
Mechanical Engineering		2,174

06 / SKILLS

Boards want AI-literate leaders, and most don't have it on their CV yet

34%

of UK tech and product leadership roles ask for AI, but only **10%** of leaders list it on their profile. It's the clearest gap at the top of the market, echoing the 41% of AI demand we've seen in product and software engineering roles.

+48%

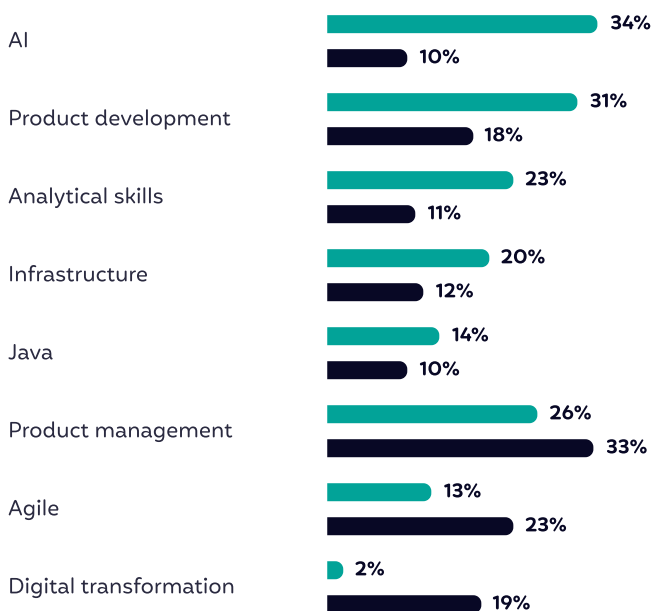
growth in leaders listing AI skills in a year

+50%

growth in operational efficiency, the fastest-rising leadership skill

What employers ask for vs what leaders have

■ % of job posts ■ % of profiles



Fastest-growing leadership skills

One-year growth in leaders listing the skill



The shape of the modern tech leader: AI-literate, commercially sharp and focused on efficiency. Digital transformation is on one in five leaders' profiles but in just 2% of job posts, so the old transformation story no longer sets a candidate apart.

07 / WHAT IT MEANS

Hiring your next technology leader in 2026

How mobile is this talent?

3.1 yrs

median tenure, the longest of any group we've looked at

11%

changed jobs in the past year

21%

open to new opportunities

9%

open to contract or interim roles

Five moves for boards and CEOs

- **Don't wait for applicants.** At C-suite level, almost no one is found through a job ad.
- **Map the whole market.** 90% of leaders sit outside the 80 biggest employers.
- **Test for AI fluency.** It's what boards are asking for, and still rare among leaders.
- **Protect your leaders.** The Gulf and global financial firms are actively recruiting UK talent.
- **Use the interim bench.** More than 4,000 leaders are open to interim or contract roles.



ABOUT NUMI

numi finds product, engineering and technology leaders for ambitious companies. We also run numicon, our events series for founders and product and technology leaders. If you're thinking about your next CTO, CPO or leadership hire, we'd love to talk it through.

100%

offer acceptance

99.8%

retention at 12 months

21 days

average time to hire

1,500+

engineering and product leaders in our community

Let's talk about your next leadership hire.

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