



**Jan 26**  
(Oct25-Dec25)

In the Loop with  
**LemmeRecruit.**

a quarterly guide to the **Australian** data & AI market you can leverage.

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# Snapshot

**71%**  
of data, AI or software roles now list cross-disciplinary skills

**governance concerns**  
are more consistent within teams and causing questions around around quality and maintainability

**graduates**  
are a strong strategy to rebuild the gap in the work force at mid-level, for consultancies

**64%**  
of teams leveraging AI have reported that delivery and outcomes have been more on time than ever before

**time to hire**  
is being blown out by slick CVs, but a lack of performance in interviews to back it up

SKILL	DEMAND	SUPPLY	WHY
Data Engineers (Microsoft stack)	HIGH	TIGHT	Fabric is becoming more of a requirement when hiring for Data Engineers. The technology hasn't been around long enough to warrant significant commercial experience.
Analytics Engineer & Data Scientist (Hybrid)	HIGH	MEDIUM	Org structures are flattening; these hybrids translate complex analysis into business decisions.
BI & Decision Support (augmented)	MEDIUM	HIGH	Dashboarding is evolving - not disappearing.

## From the founders

Over six months on from launch, building LemmeRecruit independently has been energising, deeply rewarding, and definitely demanding. Partnering closely with clients to shape data and tech teams that genuinely fit their needs, and supporting candidates through considered career moves, has reinforced why we do what we do. A particular highlight has been getting into our LemmeRecruit t-shirts and celebrating in them with our clients and candidates.

As we move into the new year, momentum is returning with more intent. Organisations are re engaging in growth and workforce planning conversations, particularly across data, AI, and technology, but with sharper focus on capability, risk, and long term value. Demand is building steadily rather than reactively, with teams spending more time clarifying where they need breadth, where they need depth, and how roles should evolve as tooling and AI accelerate delivery.

The outlook is positive but there is a feeling of the unknown. Hiring is becoming more deliberate, consultancies are seeing pipelines strengthen, and conversations are shifting from experimentation to execution. We're entering this next phase with strong relationships, clear market signals, and a grounded view of what's ahead.



# Capability is broadening, expectations are rising, and only well-designed teams are keeping up with quality and pace.

## The rise of the hybrid technologist and the cost of being everything

Traditional role boundaries are blurring. Software engineers are increasingly expected to understand data, cloud, and AI systems, while data professionals are being pulled closer to engineering and product. The market is rewarding people who can operate across disciplines, but this comes with a trade off. Breadth is accelerating, while vertical depth is becoming harder to maintain.

## Specialists still win when the problem is clear

Despite the push toward jack of all trades profiles, highly specialised skill sets remain in demand, particularly where risk, regulation, or scale is involved. Data architecture, security, platform engineering, and advanced AI remain areas where shallow capability is quickly exposed. The difference moving into 2026 is that specialists are most successful when they can clearly articulate impact, not just expertise.

## Speed of output is up, quality is down

Advances in tooling and AI are dramatically increasing how quickly work can be produced. Prototypes, models, and code are being delivered faster than ever. At the same time, organisations are grappling with how to validate quality, security, and long term maintainability. Speed has become easier to buy. Confidence in outcomes has not. This tension is reshaping how teams assess value and performance.

## Consultancies regaining momentum with a reshaped workforce

Consultancies across Australia are seeing a more stable pipeline of work return, particularly in transformation, AI enablement, and remediation programs. Hiring remains challenging at the mid level. Many firms are leaning more heavily on graduate intakes to rebuild capability from the ground up, accepting longer ramp up times in exchange for cost control and future retention.

## Agentic AI moves from theory to execution

Agentic AI is shifting from experimentation to practical implementation. Organisations are no longer just exploring models, but designing systems that act, decide, and integrate across workflows. This marks a move from transformation programs toward operational change. The implications for governance, accountability, and workforce design are significant and not yet fully solved.

## Soft skills are now a hiring differentiator, not a bonus

Communication, stakeholder management, and the ability to operate in ambiguity are increasingly decisive in hiring outcomes. As technical skills become more accessible, the ability to translate complexity, influence decisions, and work across teams is separating candidates who progress from those who stall. This is particularly evident in senior and customer facing roles.

## Security and risk teams under pressure from pace

Security, risk, and governance teams are feeling the strain of accelerated delivery cycles. The pace of AI adoption is forcing organisations to constantly balance innovation with control. In many cases, frameworks are being built while systems are already live. The market is actively negotiating where acceptable risk now sits and that line is moving.

## AI's impact on recruitment is real and messy

The same AI tools reshaping delivery are also reshaping recruitment. CVs are more polished, application volumes are higher, and signal is harder to extract. Interview processes are taking longer as hiring managers work harder to validate genuine capability and fit. The result is slower time to hire and increased pressure on assessment quality.

## IN MY OPINION - CHAPTER 21

"I've pretty much been interviewing ChatGPT. It's not going well"

"We need a specialist recruiter. We've been searching for 3 months now"

"We had approvals but we now need more - bear with us"

"Is anyone actually as skilled as me at my level?"

## 'IN MY OPINION'

This segment is posted on our LinkedIn company page every Thursday.

These are not made up quotes. They're straight from people in the Australian and NZ data & AI market so that you can get a sense for what's going on out there.

Some of it's hilarious, some informative and some simply reassuring.



# Final Thoughts

## Final recommendations for hiring managers

- Be precise about capability needs. Decide where you truly need breadth versus deep specialisation and hire accordingly. Overloading roles is diluting outcomes.
- Design for pace with guardrails. Faster delivery is possible, but clarity around quality, security, and ownership is essential to avoid downstream risk.
- Hire for influence, not just output. Soft skills are now a differentiator. Candidates who can communicate, navigate ambiguity, and drive alignment deliver more value over time.

## Final recommendations for candidates

- Balance breadth with a clear edge. General capability opens doors, but a defined area of depth is what secures opportunities and long-term relevance.
- Demonstrate impact, not activity. Employers are looking past polished CVs to evidence of real outcomes, decision making, and accountability.
- Lean into human skills. Communication, stakeholder trust, and judgment are increasingly what separate strong candidates in a crowded market.



We both hope you had a good festive period, got some rest, ate some good food and spent time with people you loved.

We're looking forward to seeing you all as we get back into the swing of things in Australia.

Emily & Laura