# CONEXUS

# The 2026 Talent Outlook:

## What's Next for SAP Teams?

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# Introduction:
## The Year SAP and Wider Digital Transformation was Tested

2025 was a turning point for organisations driving digital transformation. SAP, Salesforce, and wider enterprise deployments gained momentum, yet securing the specialist talent to deliver them remained a key barrier, particularly as programmes became more complex.

Projects stalled less due to poor planning and more because critical skills were unavailable when needed. Organisations that invested early in workforce planning, candidate engagement, and agile hiring scaled faster, reduced risk, and kept transformation programmes on track.

At Conexus, we have seen that speed, clarity, and sector expertise now separate high-performing teams from those facing delays. With the 2027 SAP ECC deadline approaching and demand for skilled professionals rising, organisations must be proactive in 2026, building talent pipelines early and aligning hiring with long-term business goals.

# The State of the Market:
## Where We Are Now

The SAP and wider digital transformation recruitment market is competitive and highly specialised. SAP, Salesforce, cloud infrastructure, and data roles continue to be in high demand globally, yet candidate availability is consistently limited.

2025 trends included:

**15%**

This is the increase in demand for SAP specialists across Finance, HR, and Procurement modules

**76%**

76% of businesses struggle to find high-quality, available talent when recruiting

**10%**

The increase in project delays directly linked to unfilled wider DX and SAP roles

Employers who partnered with recruitment specialists like Conexus saw higher placement success rates, faster time-to-hire, and better candidate retention across critical transformation programmes.

# Emerging Talent Trends for 2026

The coming year will continue to reward organisations who align strategy, tech, and people:

## 01. Workforce Planning is Non-Negotiable

Digital transformation and SAP initiatives often fail when talent isn't considered early. Proactive workforce planning, including pipelining SAP consultants, developers, and transformation managers, is now a must–have for global projects.

## 02. Candidate Experience Drives Engagement

Specialist talent has options. Slow processes, unclear role scope, or poor communication can cause the loss of highly skilled SAP or cloud candidates to competitors. Engaging candidates quickly and consistently is key.

## 03. Data-Driven Talent Decisions

Organisations are increasingly leveraging analytics to understand skill gaps, forecast hiring needs, and benchmark competition against market rates. Those using data strategically can reduce project delays and optimise team composition.

## 04. Candidate Behaviour

Fewer people expect to move in 2026, citing economic uncertainty, meaning hiring will get tougher. Whilst salary remains a key driver for moving, job security, culture, and hybrid arrangements continue to grow in importance.
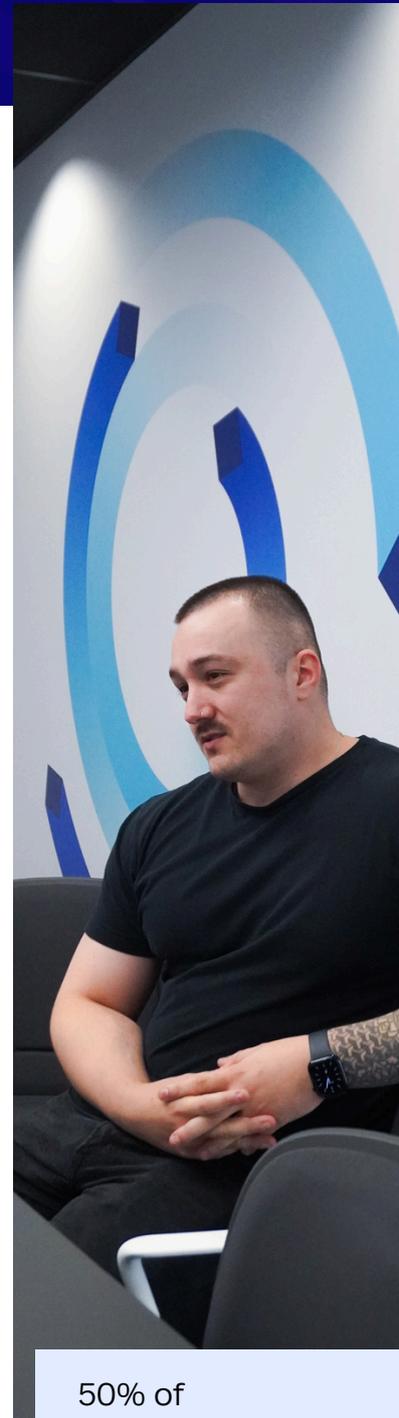
50% of candidates admitted to walking away from a hiring process that took too long

# Sector Spotlight:
## High-Demand Digital Roles

The team at Conexus have identified the following key growth areas for 2026:

## SAP Specialists

FICO, S/4HANA, SuccessFactors, and Business Technology Platform roles remain critical.
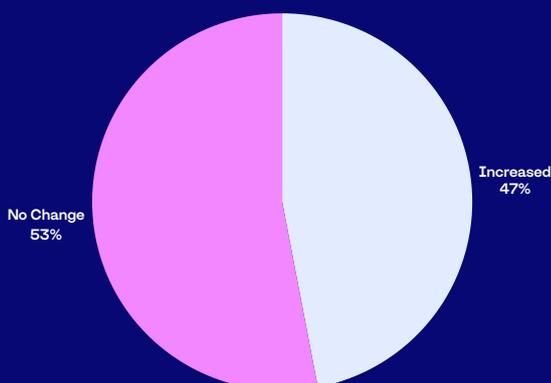
## Digital Transformation Roles

Cloud architects, business analysts, and change managers supporting enterprise–wide programmes.

## Data & Analytics

Data engineers, solution architects, and AI specialists who can translate insights into operational advantage.

These roles are mission–critical: delays or mis–hires directly impact project delivery, revenue, and organisational competitiveness.

# SAP Investment Remains on the Rise

Increased
47%

No Change
53%

Nearly half of all enterprises increased their SAP–specific budgets in 2025, reflecting a continued shift toward modernising core systems and accelerating digital transformation. This rise in investment signals a competitive year ahead, where securing specialised SAP talent early will be essential for keeping projects on track.

# What Employers Can Do Now

**01.** **Map Talent to Project Milestones**

Like hiring timelines to project plans, by understanding upcoming SAP upgrades or digital transformations, you can ensure roles are filled before projects stall.

**02.** **Communicate the Impact**

Top digital professionals are motivated by challenge and outcomes. Make your EVP compelling by showing how their contribution drives transformation across the organisation.

**03.** **Partner with Specialists**

For niche digital and SAP roles, working with a recruitment partner like Conexus ensures access to passive talent, market insights, and global candidate pools that internal teams rarely reach.

**04.** **Employee Value Proposition**

Clearly defined company values, purpose and culture, training and personal development, flexible working opportunities, and employee wellbeing are all becoming core expectations for today's job seeker.

**60%**

In 2025, around 60% of companies implementing ERP upgrades opted for cloud-based or modular ERP systems, supporting agility and future-proofing.

# Conexus' Take on 2026

Digital transformation will continue to accelerate through 2026, driven by AI adoption, cloud modernisation, and the urgent need to simplify complex legacy estates. The organisations that stay ahead will be the ones who plan early, move decisively, and align their talent strategy to long-term business outcomes.

With demand rising across SAP, cloud, and wider transformation roles, the gap between proactive teams and reactive hiring approaches will only grow. The 2027 SAP ECC end-of-life deadline will sharpen this divide even further, increasing competition for specialist talent and placing pressure on programme timelines.

At Conexus, we combine sector expertise, specialist insight, and global reach to help organisations build high-performing teams capable of delivering transformation at pace. Our consultants understand the realities of SAP modernisation, multi-cloud integration, and change-heavy environments, ensuring you secure people who can execute and sustain delivery. By reducing hiring risk, strengthening capability early, and preparing teams ahead of the 2027 deadline, we help organisations keep transformation programmes on track and set up for success in 2026 and beyond.

# Get Ahead:

## Your 2026 SAP & Digital Transformation Talent Report

Requesting a bespoke talent report gives organisations a precise, data-led view of SAP and wider digital transformation talent availability for 2026. Each report is fully tailored, with our team working closely with you to provide the exact insight you need, from salary benchmarks to emerging skill gaps and active candidate pools across the UK, Europe, and the USA.

With demand set to rise next year, this intelligence ensures your workforce planning is based on evidence rather than assumptions. It also highlights potential hiring challenges early, allowing you to adjust timelines, refine role requirements, and stay ahead of the competition as major SAP and transformation programmes gain pace.

### Request your Free Talent Report

Simply let us know the area of expertise and geography you want to focus on.

info@conexusdx.com

# Ready to make smarter hiring decisions in 2026?

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## Wider Digital Transformation

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Data & AI

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Software Engineering

Executive Leadership