

# Rising automation cools demand for once-hot technology skills

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**D**emand for junior- and mid-level software testing, data science, and JAVA professionals, and technical writers fell 30% since January, following the slowdown in hiring by IT services firms and startups, said industry experts.

“Software testing, technical writing, spring and hibernate, are some tech skill sets that saw 30% drop in demand over two to three quarters,” said Aditya Narayan Mishra, chief executive, CIEL HR Services. About a year ago, candidates with these profiles were getting recruited

with a 100% hike, and even in June -July at 54%, which has petered down to 33% now, he added.

“In fact, besides large firms even medium tech firms and startups have also stopped hiring these candidates, adding to the decline in demand.”

That said, senior and experienced professionals with such skill sets, especially those who are in leadership roles, as team leads or overseeing customer-facing functions, continued to be in demand. For junior and mid-level professionals the trend is expected to continue for two quarters, said a senior recruiter, seeking anonymity. Testing professionals verify softwares for glitches besides

checking if the product is performing all the required tasks. While Java programmers were always in high demand for the high level of skills required for coding, demand for such professionals have also tapered off in recent times. Professionals who draft technical communications on software and hardware are also not in demand. Spring and hibernate are used in enterprise applications.

“We have moved to artificial intelligence, machine learning (AI-ML), and software as a service (SaaS), besides high-level programming languages that go beyond coding. Now, there is less requirement for basic programmers with increased automation. From hereon, we



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will see more and more cases, wherein code will be designed and auto-generated,” technology policy consultant Prasanto K. Roy said.

These skill sets may not be in focus in one sector but may crop in others as companies continue to digitize, he added. While Indian firms were on a

post-covid hiring frenzy for almost a year to digitize their businesses across sectors it has ebbed since the slowdown in global economy and a looming recession in US and other geo-political tensions such as the Russia-Ukraine war. That apart, the funding winter in the startup ecosystem, as well as the reversal in trend to turn cost-efficient and become profitable instead of burning investor money, led to massive layoffs of 17,000-20,000 since the beginning of the 2022.

“Recruitment is cyclical and those who were in software testing and certain JAVA skills will see lower demand as IT services are optimizing on talent. However, cloud-based skills and fullstack will continue to be in demand due to a supply crunch for the skillsets,” said Kamal Karanth, co-founder of Xpheno, which specializes in tech and startup hiring.

## PARADIGM SHIFT

**THE** post-covid hiring frenzy to digitize businesses has ebbed with slump in global economy

**THE** funding winter in startup sector and reversal in trend to turn cost-efficient is leading to layoffs

Last week, *Mint* reported that hiring by IT outsourcing firms dipped 45% from the corresponding period of 2019 and by

55% from the year earlier. Candidates who are willing to shift jobs are asking for a 40-45% hike since they are “hedging their risks, in case their job remains unstable for the coming quarters”, Karanth added.

Besides, certain skillsets in IT-IT-enabled services have few takers. “A few quarters ago there were hundreds of mandates for professionals with sales-enablement skills, wherein the person were required to be aware of the software solutions and IT products and sell it to customers. Such roles, which offered ₹3-12 lakh have taken a backseat,” said Saran Balasundaram, founder, HanDigital, a tech recruitment company.