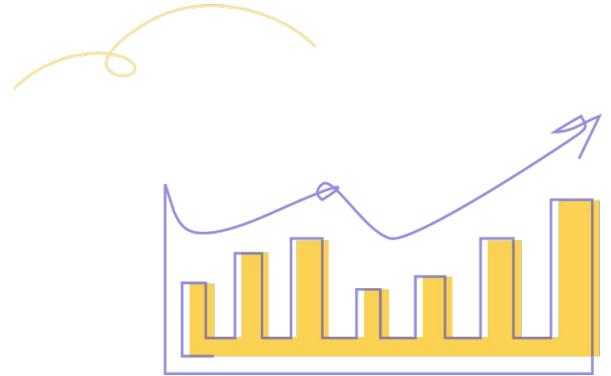


**datapeople**

# Minding the **Confidence Gap**: Case Studies in Tech Recruiting

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Head of R&D, Datapeople





# Hi, I'm Maryam!

**Talent Anthropologist at Datapeople**



Jobseekers make decisions about jobs  
Organizations decide talent strategy

Reverse engineering systems 🪑 🎂 🍸

# The rules of dating should apply to hiring...



Candidate  
screens  
organization



Organization  
screens  
candidate



Mutual  
evaluation  
(interviews)



# Don't lead with your red flags

## Software Engineer

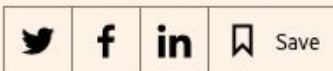
Hooli - New York City

Hooli has in place processes in order to avoid nepotism.

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## Hooli embroiled in internship row



Jim Pickard, Political Correspondent MAY 26 2011



Hooli has been accused of nepotism after its legal department implied it offered work experience only to the sons and daughters of its own executives.

# Don't lead with your red flags

Where there's smoke...

## Software Engineer

Hooli - New York City

Hooli has in place processes in order to avoid nepotism.

3.0 ★★★★★ ✓

Current Contractor

### Nepotism and pay secrecy

Jan 23, 2019 - Anonymous Contractor

✗ Recommend ✓ CEO Approval — Business Outlook

#### Pros

Work-life balance

Facilities

Building (except lifts situation)

#### Cons

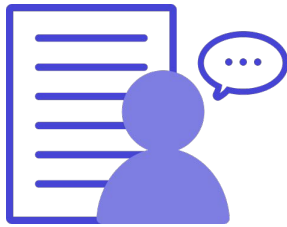
Many managers recruit ex-colleagues from other organisations, or recruit in their image

Inconsistencies in contract-to-perm terms. Minorities encouraged to interview for their role while those with class or race advantage are made permanent without an interview.

Recruiters do not disclose range or what a role can pay, leading to stark disparities between colleagues in the same position as well as between people from different walks of life, based on their connections or their knowledge of market rates.

# The rules of dating should apply to hiring...

Each stage builds one the other and has a specific role



Candidate  
screens  
organization



Organization  
screens  
candidate



Mutual  
evaluation  
(interviews)



Depth of conversation  
Level of commitment





# What is the Confidence Gap?

Why does it matter  
in tech recruiting?



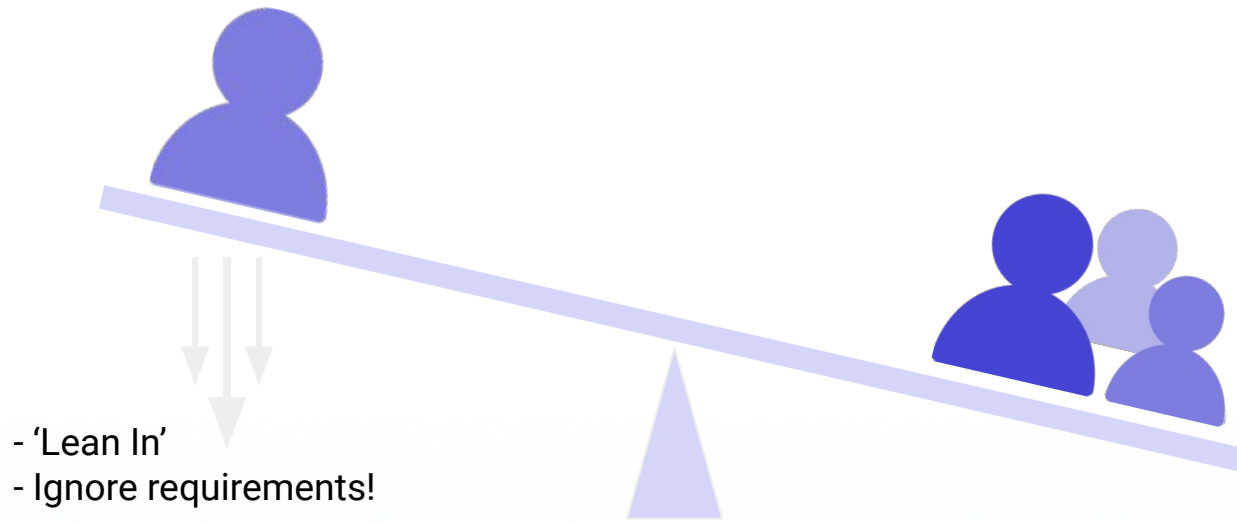
## THE CONFIDENCE GAP

**Men** will apply to jobs when they meet **60 percent** of the requirements while **women** only apply when they meet **100 percent** of the requirements.

Katty Kay and Claire Shipman, "The Confidence Gap", *The Atlantic* 2014.



# Solutions to the Confidence Gap have focused on **individual** coaching



We think **systematic** problems need **systems-level** solutions



# Minding the (Confidence) Gap



**Do preferred requirements trigger the confidence gap?**



**Does title inflation trigger the confidence gap?**

# Preferred qualifications can take many forms

## Software Engineer - Hooli Marketplace

Hooli - Brooklyn, NY

### Nice-to-haves

- PhD in the broader field of automated reasoning.
- Publication record in conferences like POPL, CAV, TACAS, FMCAD, FM, etc.

### You will:

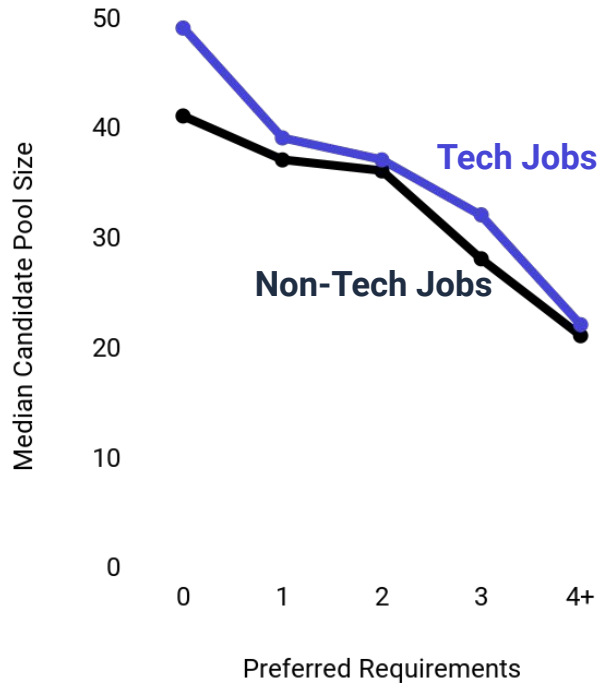
- [Redacted]
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### Qualifications

- Experience in RDBMS like DB2
- Knowledge of NoSQL databases like Cassandra is preferred.

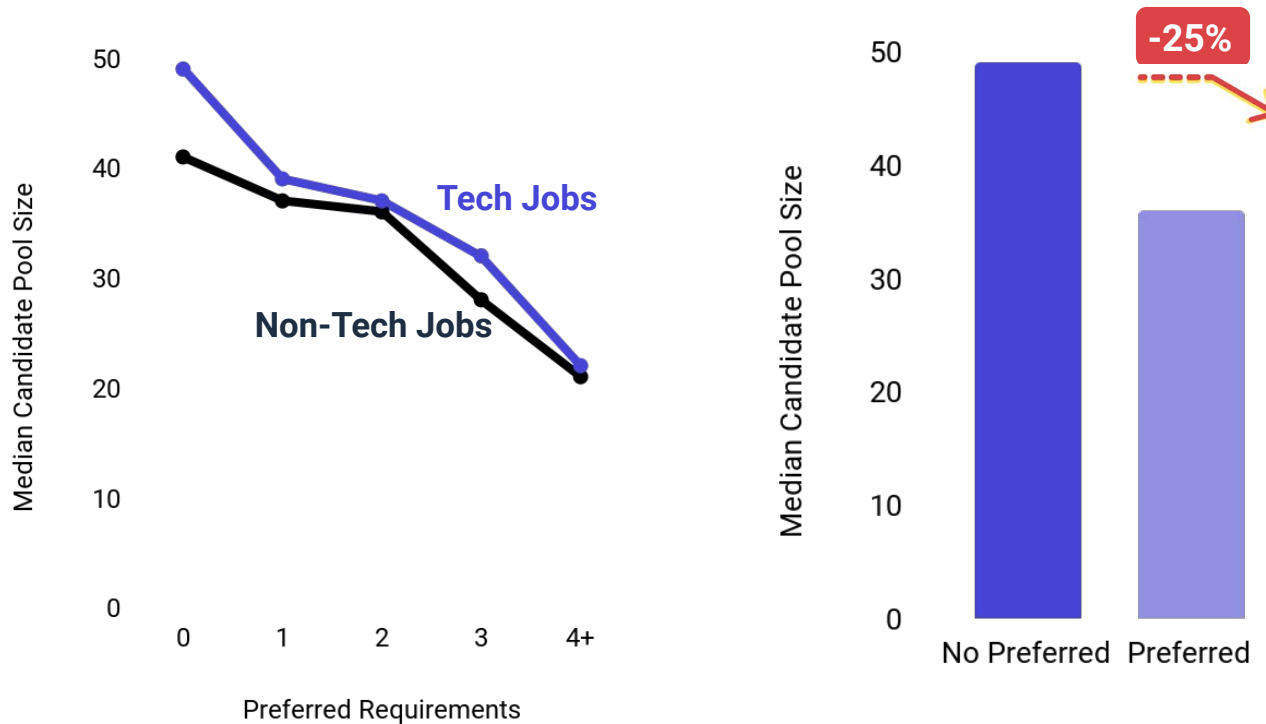
# More is less for preferred requirements

Jobs with more preferred requirements are less attractive to jobseekers



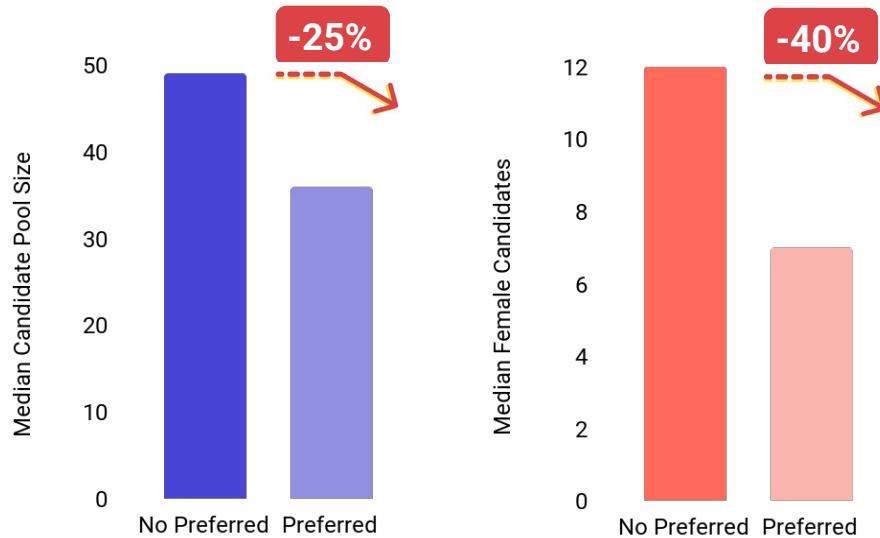
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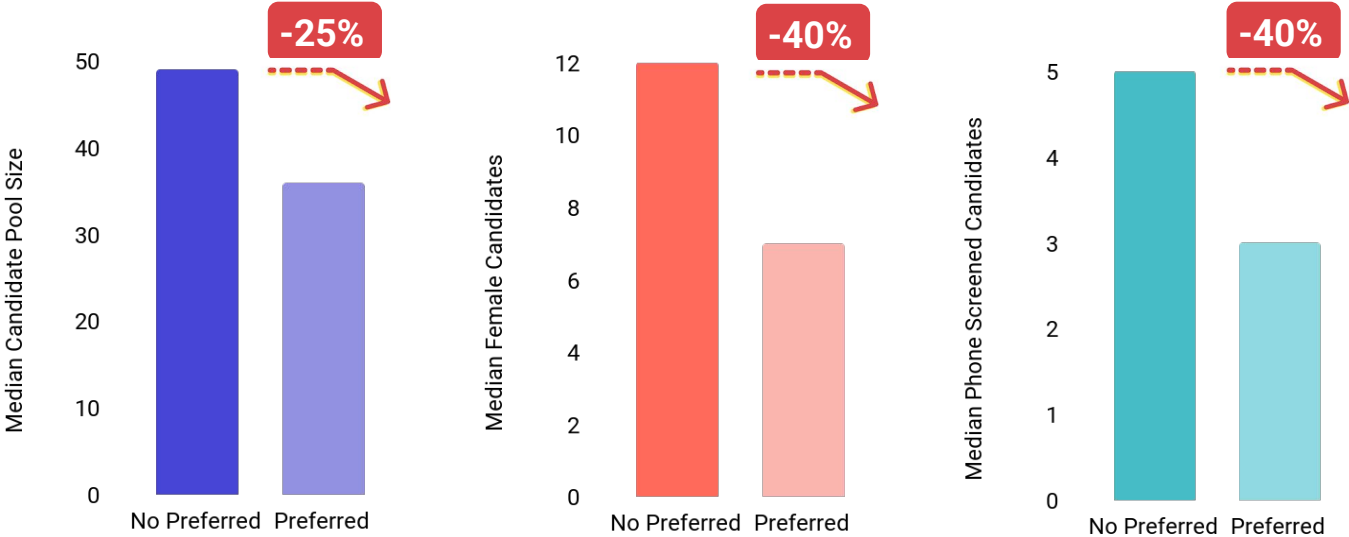
# Nice-to-haves are not nice-to-have

Preferred requirements disproportionately reduce **female representation** in tech candidate pools



# Nice-to-haves are not nice-to-have

Preferred requirements do not attract more **qualified candidates**





# Minding the (Confidence) Gap



## Less is More

- Be intentional about a job's **core** vs **preferred** requirements.
- Requirements have a significant impact on candidate **quality** and **diversity**.



Does title inflation trigger the confidence gap?



# What's an inflated job title?



**Tracy Chou** 🌻🔵  
@triketora



honestly how did engineering titles get so inflated that people with 2 years of experience are “senior engineers”

5:37 PM · Jan 19, 2023 · **1.2M** Views

**300** Retweets   **166** Quote Tweets   **6,182** Likes

# What's an inflated job title?



Correctly calibrated

**Software Engineer**

Requirements:

- **2+ years** of experience



Inflated job title

**Senior Software Engineer**

Requirements:

- **2+ years** of experience

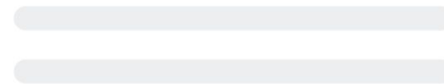


Deflated job title

**+ Software Engineer**

Requirements:

- **10+ years** of experience



# Job title inflation is a growing problem

There's been growth in job posts with inflated job titles with the tightness of the labor market

## Entry-Level roles

^ 25%

25% increase in the number of job titles that included the word "Senior."

🔍 Senior



There was a decrease in the prevalence of the words "Junior" and "Associate" in job titles.

🔍 Junior

🔍 Associate

## Mid-Level roles

Staff  
Engineer

^ 42%

Principal  
Engineer

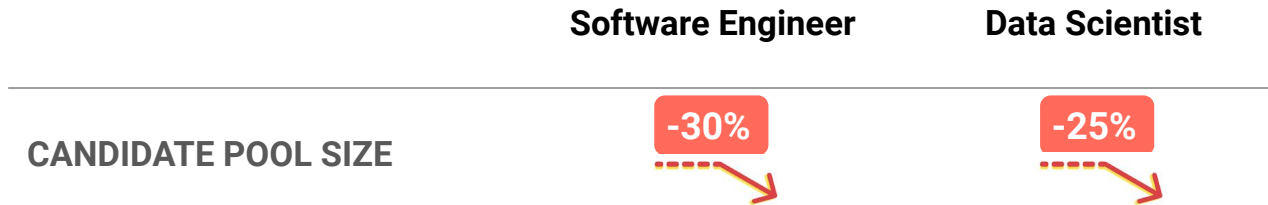
^ 6.6%

Distinguished  
Engineer

^ 11%

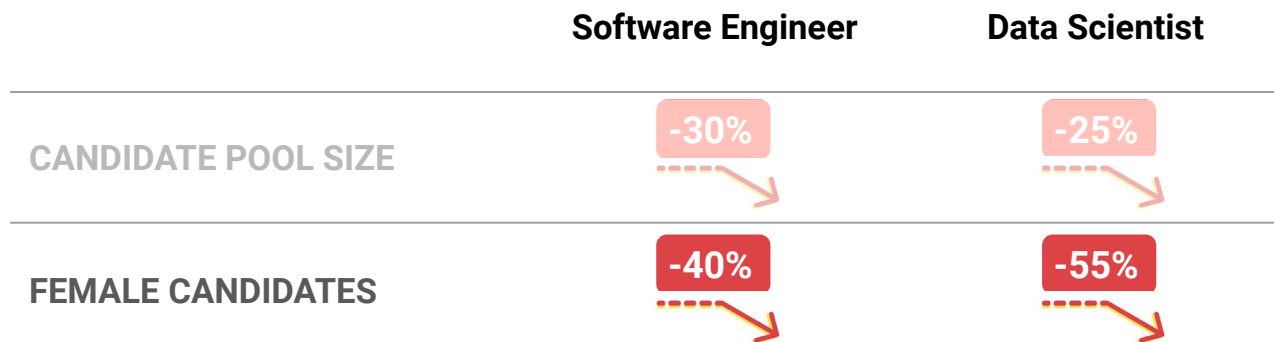
# Do inflated job titles trigger the confidence gap?

Jobs with inflated titles attract smaller candidate pools



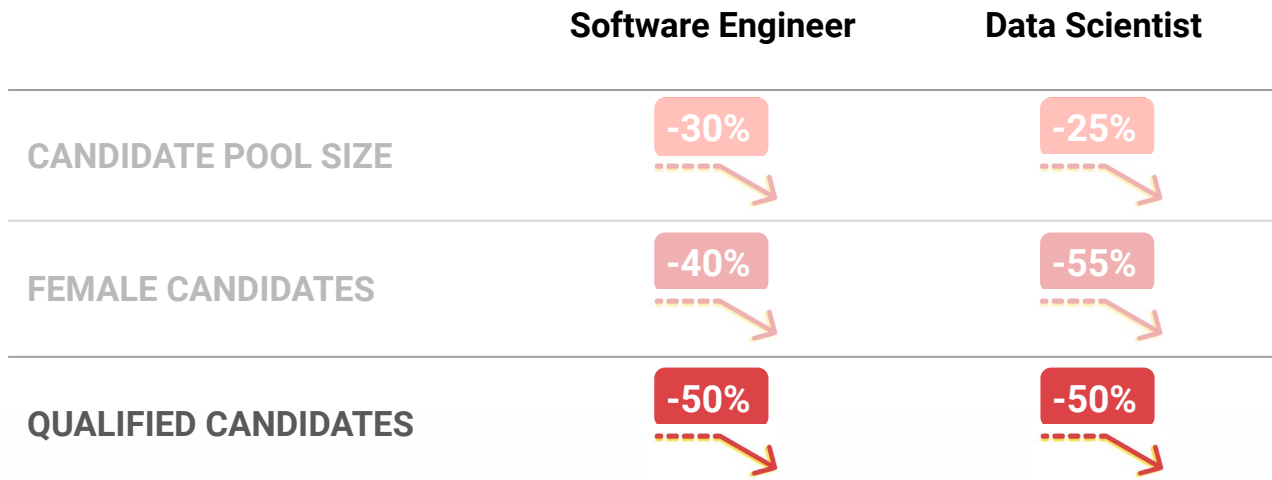
# Inflated titles have dramatic impacts on candidates

Title inflation has a **disproportionate impact** on female candidates



# Inflated titles have dramatic impacts on candidates

Jobs with title inflation **don't** attract more qualified candidates



# Minding the (Confidence) Gap



## Less is More

- Be intentional about a job's **core** vs **preferred** requirements.
- Requirements have a significant impact on candidate **quality** and **diversity**.



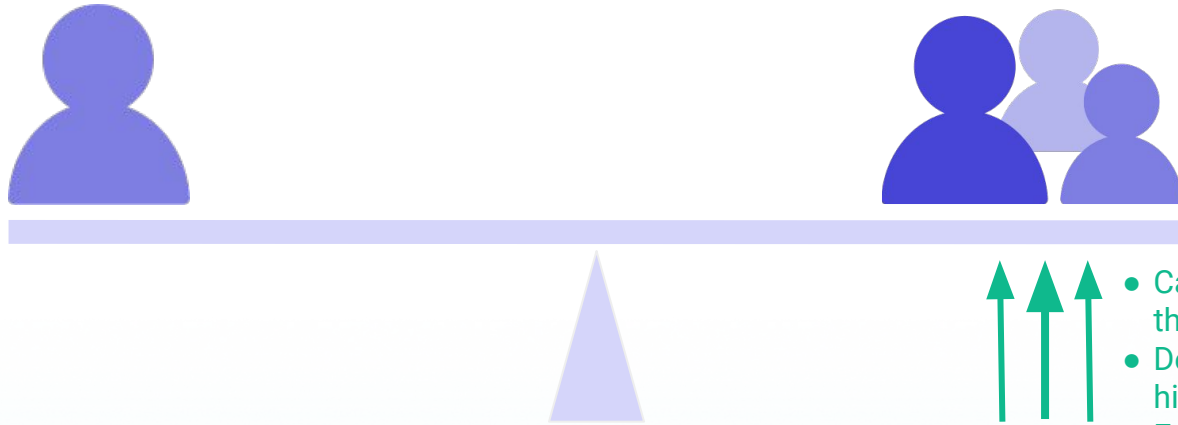
## All types of inflation cost

- Make your job titles *work for you*, **not against you**.
- Make sure the **job title** is calibrated with the **job post**.





# We think **systematic** problems need **systems-level** solutions



- Calibrating job posts to the market
- Developing thoughtful hiring rubrics
- Enacting structured hiring processes

# The Confidence Gap affects all people processes



# Thank you LeadDev NY 2023!

If you want to read more about the confidence gap, title inflation  
or trends in tech jobs, scan or use the link below



[hero.page/maryamj/leaddev-ny](https://hero.page/maryamj/leaddev-ny)