



SEPTEMBER 2026 HIRING SNAPSHOT

REAL ESTATE & CONSTRUCTION

PLANNING AHEAD FOR Q4 HIRING

Q4 is approaching, and businesses with projects ramping up in late 2026 and early 2027 are already thinking about workforce requirements. Here's where employers need to get ahead.

Q4 PIPELINE OUTLOOK

Hiring demand is starting well before projects break ground

Hiring demand remains active heading into Q4, particularly for projects expected to break ground in early 2027.

Businesses are looking to secure project management professionals ahead of these starts, giving new hires time to understand the project and team before delivery begins.

As the holiday period approaches, hiring for Superintendents and Field Engineers is likely to slow, making early Q4 an important window for employers looking to build teams ahead of 2027.

WHERE TALENT IS TIGHTEST

Specialist experience remains difficult to secure

Senior and Chief Estimators are among the hardest professionals to secure. The limited talent pool, combined with aggressive compensation from competing employers, means experienced Estimators can be difficult both to attract and retain. Demand also remains high for affordable housing professionals with specialist HUD, PACT and NYCHA expertise, where available talent continues to fall short of employer demand.

Professionals in highest demand:

- Senior and Chief Estimators
- Affordable housing professionals with HUD, PACT and NYCHA expertise
- Licensed DOB Superintendents

The strongest specialist professionals have options. Employers relying on salary alone risk being outbid by competitors.

HIRING AHEAD OF PROJECT DEMAND

The strongest employers are recruiting before the need becomes urgent

For project management hires, businesses are typically looking to have professionals in place 60–90 days before a project breaks ground.

Field teams operate on a much shorter timeline, with hiring often taking place around two weeks ahead of project starts.

This makes forward workforce planning increasingly important. Waiting for a project to be fully underway before recruiting can leave employers competing for a limited talent pool at exactly the point demand increases.

RETENTION RISK

Pipeline gaps can quickly become a talent risk

Retention pressure is particularly evident among Estimators and Licensed DOB Superintendents. Estimators remain vulnerable to above-market competitor offers, while project delays and pipeline gaps make highly paid Superintendents difficult to retain without active work. Their specialist credentials also make them attractive to businesses with immediate project needs.

Transparency is therefore critical, with employees increasingly seeking clarity on upcoming projects, locations and career progression beyond their current assignment.

WHAT TALENT IS LOOKING FOR

While compensation remains important, businesses need to give experienced professionals confidence in the wider opportunity.

The conversations taking place across the market increasingly center around:

- Visibility of the future project pipeline
- Clear career progression
- Competitive benefits and healthcare
- Consistent project opportunities
- Transparency around project locations and staffing
- Efficient, well-communicated hiring processes

A strong reputation also carries significant weight. How businesses treat existing employees directly influences their ability to attract future hires through industry word of mouth.

"The strongest Q4 hiring strategies start well before the pressure hits. Businesses that plan ahead, understand their upcoming pipeline, and engage specialist talent early are putting themselves in the best position to secure top people. In a market where experienced candidates have choices, speed, transparency, reputation, and a clear vision of what's ahead can make all the difference."

MIRANDA MARS, SENIOR DIRECTOR
REAL ESTATE & CONSTRUCTION

Three ways to prepare for Q4

Plan against the pipeline

Map upcoming project starts against workforce requirements now. Project management hires need to be ahead of breaking ground.

Protect the talent you already have

Use reviews and workforce conversations to give employees greater visibility around future projects, progression and benefits.

Keep hiring processes moving

Time kills deals. Aim for no more than two interview rounds, maintain clear communication and provide feedback quickly.

The bottom line

Competition remains high and specialist candidate availability is limited. Businesses entering Q4 with a clear workforce plan will be better positioned to secure the people they need before project demand intensifies.

That means engaging specialist talent early, protecting existing employees and presenting a credible story around pipeline, progression and culture.