



July Snapshot | Mid-Year Hiring Report 2026

What I'm Seeing Across B2B Financial Technology

As we reach the halfway point of 2026, I've taken time to reflect on the conversations I've had with founders, CEOs, CROs, sales leaders and candidates across the Financial Technology market.

The picture isn't one of boom or bust. Instead, it's a market that has become more selective, more disciplined and increasingly focused on hiring people who can deliver measurable commercial outcomes.

One thing is also clear: proof is beating pedigree. More than ever, businesses want evidence of repeatable impact, not just strong logos on a CV.



Here are six themes that have stood out over the first half of the year.

1. Hiring Hasn't Stopped – It's Become More Targeted

Companies are still investing in growth, but hiring plans are more deliberate than they were 18 months ago. Rather than building large commercial teams, businesses are looking for individuals who can make an immediate impact.

The question isn't, "Can they do the job?"

It's more often:

"Have they already solved the exact challenge we're facing?"

Experience selling into the same buyers, understanding complex buying cycles and demonstrating consistent execution has become significantly more valuable than broad sales experience.

In many cases, that is also showing up in compensation expectations. Candidates with proven sector expertise, consistent quota attainment and strong network access know their value, and employers are having to be clearer about the opportunity they are offering.

2. Domain Expertise Is Winning

Across Private Markets, Corporate Banking, Capital Markets, Regs, Payments and Financial Crime, specialist knowledge continues to command a premium.

Customers expect commercial teams to understand regulation, workflows, market structure and operational challenges before discussing products.

The strongest candidates combine technical understanding with commercial credibility, allowing them to become trusted advisers rather than simply software salespeople.

That depth of expertise is increasingly visible in hiring decisions, especially where businesses are selling into complex, relationship-led markets.

3. The Best Sales Leaders Are Still Player-Coaches

One trend continues to appear across growing fintechs.

Businesses aren't simply looking for managers.

They're looking for leaders who are prepared to lead from the front, build pipeline, support complex opportunities and coach teams while remaining commercially active.

This combination is proving particularly valuable within earlier-stage and private equity-backed businesses.

It also reflects a broader shift in hiring discipline: leadership is being judged less on theory and more on visible commercial contribution.

4. AI Is Changing How Sales Teams Work

Artificial Intelligence has quickly become another tool within the commercial toolkit.

The best teams are using AI to research prospects, personalise outreach, prepare for meetings and reduce administrative tasks.

What hasn't changed is the importance of relationships.

Trust, curiosity, listening skills and commercial judgement remain the qualities that consistently separate top performers.

AI is improving productivity – not replacing high-quality enterprise salespeople.

The real risk for teams now is not that AI removes the need for people, but that it widens the gap between the teams that use it well and those that don't.

5. Quality Candidates Are Still Difficult to Attract

Despite wider economic uncertainty, exceptional commercial talent remains in demand.

The strongest candidates are rarely applying for jobs.

They're succeeding where they are and will only move for a genuinely compelling opportunity, whether that's a stronger product, a larger market opportunity, better leadership or long-term equity potential. For employers, speed and clarity throughout the recruitment process continue to make a significant difference.

Lengthy processes, vague scorecards and slow decision-making are still costing businesses the candidates they most want to hire.

There is also a growing emphasis on retention and internal mobility. In some businesses, keeping and developing top performers is becoming just as important as hiring externally.

6. Optimism Is Returning

Perhaps the biggest change I've noticed over recent months is confidence. The conversations have become more positive.

Businesses are planning ahead, investment discussions have become more active and many leadership teams are beginning to think beyond cost control towards sustainable growth.

The market isn't behaving like 2021, and that's probably no bad thing.

Growth today is more measured, more commercial and ultimately more sustainable.

There is a sense of selective optimism: not blind confidence, but a clearer willingness to invest where there is real conviction.

What I'm Watching for the Second Half of 2026

- Continued investment and spend across Private Markets Tech and Capital Markets Tech (CapTech)
- Increasing adoption of AI throughout commercial organisations
- Greater demand for Customer Success leaders who can drive expansion as well as retention
- Continued hiring of experienced enterprise sales professionals with deep sector expertise
- More international expansion into North America and the Middle East
- Increased focus on profitability and efficient revenue growth rather than growth at any cost

Final Thoughts

One thing has become increasingly clear over the first six months of the year.

Technology remains important, but people continue to be the real competitive advantage.

The businesses making the greatest progress aren't necessarily those with the biggest budgets. They're the organisations hiring people with the right experience, market knowledge and commercial mindset to execute consistently.

If there's a single theme running through the market right now, it's this: disciplined growth is replacing noisy growth.

As always, I'm fortunate to spend my time speaking with some of the most interesting companies and professionals across B2B Financial Technology. Those conversations provide a fascinating perspective on where our industry is heading, and I look forward to seeing what the second half of 2026 brings.

Best wishes,

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