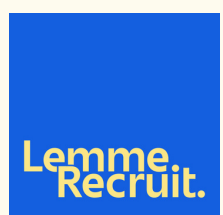


Jul 26
for Apr 26-Jun26

In the Loop with
LemmeRecruit.

a quarterly guide to the **Australian** data & AI market you can leverage.



Snapshot

#1 hiring blocker

is C-level sign-off at many organisations; roles are sitting open for months waiting on approval, not candidates

87% of job briefs

reference AI requirements, whether the role actually needs it or not

contract

is starting to pick back up, as organisations supplement permanent headcount with gap-fillers as they confirm their strategy

sydney

is significantly busier than Melbourne this quarter, partly a flow-on from return-to-office requirements narrowing the remote hiring pool

SKILL	DEMAND	SUPPLY	WHY
Analytics Engineering (DBT + Snowflake)	HIGH	TIGHT	The most consistently requested stack this quarter. Insurtech, health & SaaS, and retail are all chasing the same talent pool at once, meaning competition is high and people need to move quick if they like people. \$\$ is going up incrementally as a result.
AI/ML Engineering (end-to-end delivery)	HIGH	TIGHT	Naturally, the AI Engineering world is booming. What's also increasing is the need for end-to-end delivery, not just technical ability - which narrows the realistic candidate pool considerably, especially given how immature the space still is.
Senior Data Leadership	MEDIUM	HIGH	An unprecedented number of senior leaders are active in market right now, a mix of voluntary and involuntary moves. Demand hasn't kept pace though, slowed by C-level and board level sign-off requirements and blanket freezes at the top end. Alongside an incredibly competitive talent pool.

From the founders

This was our busiest quarter yet, and it landed right in the middle of some big milestones. We kicked it off with a trip to Melbourne, hit our first 12 months in business, and closed out the quarter with our first full financial year in the books.

None of it would have happened without you in our network. To everyone we've placed, everyone we've had the chance to recruit alongside, and everyone who's simply been in our corner cheering us on - thank you. It's the support and relationships that have carried us here.

Year one taught us what LemmeRecruit is actually built on. In year two, we're bringing that same energy but with more intent: people first, clear on what we believe in, and just as deliberate about who we partner with.

Here's to year two!!



A Cautious Market. Budget Gridlock, AI Noise, and the Return of Fundamentals.

Budget Approvals: The New Blocker

C-level sign-off is now required for recruitment at most organisations - which is creating lag and friction between getting work done and hiring the right people. Roles are sitting open for months while waiting on approval rather than waiting on candidates.

The EOFY Crunch

End of financial year is creating a bottleneck. Roles are drip-feeding through, and some organisations are pausing entirely until new FY budget clarity lands.

Contract Outpacing Perm

Contract roles are filling quickly while permanent approvals stay slow and drawn out. Insurtech, health & fitness/SaaS, and entertainment are moving fastest on contract analytics and AI/ML engineering briefs to build products.

Senior Leaders Flooding the Market

An unprecedented number of senior data leaders are active right now - a mix of voluntary and involuntary departures. Many are staying close to the market while AI uncertainty settles.

This quarter we noticed these technologies, capabilities and role types come up consistently. Mostly across small-to -medium sized businesses.

Sydney Outpacing Melbourne

Sydney is significantly busier. Melbourne's activity looks subdued, partly attributed to return-to-office requirements reducing the remote hiring pool.

AI Noise vs. AI Discipline

87% of briefs reference AI, but the response on the ground is uneven - some executives are paralysed by information overload, others are rushing to build agents without foundations in place. It's opened a genuine lane for AI governance and orchestration specialists, with regulated industries (healthcare, insurance, finance, defence)

Fundamentals Over Polish

AI tools are eroding foundational skills. Employers are now doubling down on prioritising demonstrable fundamentals over AI-polished CVs - strong technical candidates are failing at final interview because they can't articulate their own work.

IN-DEMAND COMBINATION	WHY IT MATTERS
DBT + Snowflake	The most consistently requested stack across analytics roles
Python + React	Non-negotiable for product-facing AI/ML roles
End-to-end delivery capability	Clients want requirements-to-implementation, not just modelling
ML software engineering	Growing as orgs shift from data science to operationalising models
Soft skills + pre-sales aptitude	Increasingly valued, harder to demonstrate, more important than ever

IN MY OPINION

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"I've been internally impacted many times. I've been moved to different teams over the last three years. I've had three different managers leave the business. My morale is quite down. It's just not the best place to be right now."

- Senior Analyst, Australia

"I'm noticing that everyone's struggling, and I'm a bit mindful that maybe this is a good opportunity to think about doing something a bit different"

- Senior Data Analyst, Australia

"Everyone talks about all these secret words that you must put in white text in your CV that the AI picks up, but nobody else can see. It just feels like it's cheating the system. You're not just being yourself anymore."

- Lead Analyst, Australia

"If you're a really good recruiter, it doesn't take three weeks to get a shortlist over."

- Head of Talent, Australia

'IN MY OPINION'

This segment is posted on our LinkedIn company page every week.

These are not made up quotes.

They're straight from people in the Australian and NZ data & AI market so that you can get a sense for what's going on out there.

Some of it's hilarious, some informative and some simply reassuring.



Final recommendations

Recommendations for Clients

- Streamline internal sign-off - if C-level approval is now required, get roles pre-approved in principle before opening a search, or you'll lose candidates to faster-moving processes.
- Use contract to bridge budget gridlock - where perm approval is stuck, a contractor keeps delivery moving without waiting on FY budget clarity.
- Back the senior talent in market now - with more experienced leaders available than usual, this is a window to secure calibre you wouldn't normally reach.
- Look past legacy signals - candidates coming out of large-company redundancies are often dismissed as “legacy.” Test actual capability rather than assuming it from company brand.
- Build in an in-person touchpoint - virtual-only processes have burned hiring managers this quarter; add at least one face-to-face stage before an offer.

Recommendations for Candidates

- Lead with fundamentals, not AI buzzwords - employers are actively screening for genuine skill behind AI-polished CVs. Be ready to explain your own work in detail and demonstrate how you solve a problem in the moment.
- Be realistic about timelines - unicorn searches and C-level approval chains are dragging some processes up to five months. Factor that into how you manage your job search.
- Don't overplay multiple offers - hiring managers are noticing candidates shifting goalposts mid-process, and it's costing trust, not adding leverage.
- Consider AI governance as a growth path - depth in a regulated industry plus AI compliance knowledge is a genuine emerging lane, not just a buzzword.

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