



# Global Insights on Leadership Talent

Spotlight on Americas: Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, and the U.S.

Across the Americas, leadership hiring is entering a renewed growth phase, driven by shifting economic conditions, nearshoring, digital transformation, and organizational redesign. The region's leadership recruitment activity points to strong momentum in Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico, each showing distinct dynamics shaped by sector priorities, governance imperatives, and cross-border leadership demands.

These insights draw on Pedersen & Partners' in-country leadership hiring experience, highlighting where executive hiring is accelerating, which functions are in demand, and key recommendations for companies aiming to attract and retain top leaders in these critical markets.

# BRAZIL



## Key Market Trends

### 1. Leadership Recruitment Momentum Is Accelerating in 2026

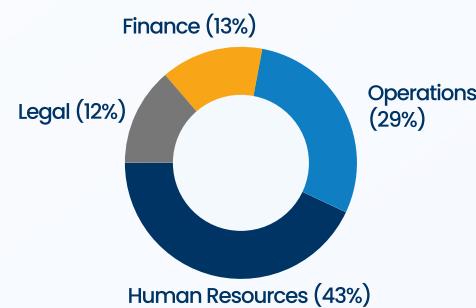
- Year-over-year data shows an increase in leadership hiring activity, with investments rising across industrial and technology

#### • Industrial and Technology Sectors Lead the Charge

The Industrial sector leads leadership hires, highlighting Brazil's manufacturing strength, while Technology & Digital shows strong growth driven by demand for IT, legal, and digital transformation leaders.

### 2. Most Sought-After Roles

- Blend of strategic and operational leadership needs
- Demand for leaders who scale teams, manage complexity, and drive growth
- Finance and Legal show highest YoY growth
- Continued focus on governance and regional oversight
- Rise in Leadership Assessment projects
- Companies proactively evaluating internal talent before key appointments



### Market Leader Perspective

Leonardo de Souza – Client Partner, Country Manager for Brazil and Americas Mining Industry Leader

### Shifts in Leadership Demand in 2026

HR and Finance leadership roles have been the most in demand in Brazil, and demand for these functions is expected to remain strong in 2026. This is driven by companies pursuing optimization initiatives, cost reductions, and leaner organizational structures, initiatives often led by Finance and HR, in response to the challenging economic environment.

Operations executives in manufacturing and supply chain functions are also increasingly sought after, as organizations need leaders capable of improving efficiency without requiring major capital investments.

### Talent Attraction & Retention Challenges

Maintaining a stable and healthy employee experience amid market pressures is the primary challenge in retaining top talent. High-performing leaders continue to be in demand regardless of external conditions, making active investments in employee engagement and company culture essential. A compelling employee value proposition remains one of the most critical factors in attracting and retaining leadership talent in Brazil.

### Growth in Mining

The mining sector in Brazil is experiencing renewed attractiveness on the global stage – firmly established as one of the world's largest producers of iron ore, playing a fundamental role in supplying international industrial and steel value chains. In addition, Brazil holds one of the largest reserves of rare earth minerals, which are critical inputs for the energy transition, electrification, and advanced technologies. Another key highlight is Brazil's global leadership in niobium production, with the country accounting for a significant share of global supply; this mineral is essential for applications in high-strength steel, aerospace, and the automotive sectors. In recent years, there has also been a growing presence of international companies exploring and operating mining projects in Brazil, a trend that has stimulated investment, technology transfer, local partnerships, and leadership hiring.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP HIRING IN BRAZIL

- **Reframe Finance, HR, and Operations roles:** Focus on transformation, efficiency, and agility; leaders now drive change, digital adoption, and workforce resilience.
- **Differentiate through a purpose-led EVP:** Retain top talent through culture, authenticity, and growth – not salary alone.

# COLOMBIA



## Key Market Trends

### 1. Multi-Country Roles Are Gaining Traction

Leadership positions such as Head of Business Unit for Colombia & USA and Commercial Director for Colombia & Mexico are increasingly common. Regional coverage, bilingualism, and cross-cultural fluency are now essential leadership traits.

### 2. Industrial Leads the Charge

- The Industrial sector accounts for over the majority of leadership hires.
- Technology & Digital roles, especially in HR and Commercial Leadership, represent the majority of combined hiring activity, underscoring the digital transformation wave.

### 3. Function-Level Insights

- General Management and Sales & Marketing functions account for the bulk of leadership hires.
- HR leadership roles remained stable year-over-year, signaling continued investment in organizational design and people strategy.



### Market Leader Perspective

Fernanda Garcia – Client Partner, Head of Andean Region and Country Manager for Colombia

## Shifts in Leadership Demand in 2026

GM and Sales & Marketing leadership roles were the most in demand in Colombia 2025, and demand into 2026 is evolving toward regional and cross-functional leadership. Roles such as Product, Engineering, Digital Transformation, and Chief Information Security Officer positions are expected to gain prominence.

ESG and Corporate Affairs leadership roles are also projected to rise, particularly in Energy, Agribusiness, and Manufacturing. As local talent in Digital Transformation, AI, and ESG is still developing, companies may need to consider cross-border or external talent solutions.

## Talent Attraction & Retention Challenges

Colombia is experiencing significant outflow of executive and high-potential talent due to political uncertainty, economic volatility, and social challenges. This trend affects attraction and retention of senior professionals, many of whom relocate to more stable markets such as the U.S., Mexico, or Europe. Inclusive, purpose-driven company cultures are increasingly critical, and organizations that fail to provide these experiences face challenges in retaining their best leaders.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP HIRING IN COLOMBIA

- **Expand the talent lens:** Build regional and cross-border pipelines by sourcing from markets such as Mexico, Brazil, and across Latin America. Invest in succession planning and leadership development to strengthen local talent in under-supplied areas like Product, Engineering, and ESG.
- **Lead with purpose, stability, and inclusion:** Address talent flight by emphasizing meaning, security, and belonging. Reinforce the Employee Value Proposition around stability and purpose, highlight contributions to national resilience and sustainability, and provide leaders with clear regional or global career paths.

# MEXICO



## Key Market Trends

### 1. Operations Leadership Remains the Core Driver

- The majority of leadership roles in 2025 in Mexico were tied to Operations, including Strategic Purchasing Leaders, Technical Directors, Logistics Director, and Construction Directors with demand continuing into 2026. The Industrial sector dominated leadership hires, fueled by manufacturing expansion, North American supply-chain diversification, and infrastructure investments driving large-scale EPC projects.

### 2. General Management in High Demand Across Sectors

- Life Sciences & Healthcare (notably EU-based company expansions)
- Consumer & Retail (regional growth)
- Professional & Financial Services (multi-asset platforms)

### 3. Technology & Digital Gaining Ground

Though still smaller in volume, FinTech, Data Science, and Digital Operations leadership roles are expanding, often aligned with global transformation initiatives from parent companies in the U.S., EU, and Asia.

## Market Leaders Perspective



**Chris Barrett**, Client Partner  
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### Shifts in Leadership Demand in 2026

Operations roles have been the most in demand in Mexico 2025, and demand is expected to continue to increase in 2026. Growth in Nearshoring and manufacturing expansion, particularly in automotive, aerospace, and electronics, will drive this demand. The profile of Operations and Supply Chain leaders is evolving as companies now seek bilingual, regionally experienced executives capable of managing cross-border complexity, tariff uncertainty, security, energy and water reliability, and digital performance tools. Chief Strategy Officer and cybersecurity leadership roles continue to present opportunities across Mexico and LATAM.

### Talent Attraction & Retention Challenges

Compensation pressures are rising due to expat relocations and a shortage of experienced candidates. Rising costs of living in key markets, such as Mexico City, affects retention, and non-competition agreements in some sectors drive talent searches outside of core markets. Higher salaries and competitive benefits are crucial for attracting talent, especially for companies establishing operations in Mexico. Talent challenges include bilingual executive shortages, compensation misalignment, hybrid/remote work preferences, relocation reluctance, and gaps in workforce leadership readiness.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP HIRING IN MEXICO

- Prioritize bilingual, regionally agile Operations leaders:** As nearshoring accelerates and Mexico solidifies its manufacturing hub status, focus on bilingual leaders with U.S.- Mexico - LATAM experience who can manage cross-border complexity, logistics, and regulatory challenges.
- Broaden the talent pool strategically:** Look beyond traditional industrial hubs to include returning expats and border-region executives, prioritizing those with resilience, systems thinking, and experience in both multinational and local environments.



## Key Market Trends

### 1. Strong Demand Across Operations, Sales, and Technology

Companies are making significant leadership investments across three functional areas. Operations roles—ranging from Vice Presidents of Operations to Quality Directors and Project Leaders—remain active as organizations scale and refine execution. Commercial leadership continues to be prioritized as well, with strong demand for General Managers, Sales and Commercial Executives, and Business Development Directors. In parallel, Technology hiring is accelerating, with a noticeable uptick in IT executive recruitment spanning Chief Technology Officer roles, DevOps, BI Development, and Infrastructure leadership.

### 2. Industry Hotspots: Industrial, Life Sciences & Healthcare, Consumer

- Industrial remains the clear frontrunner, a signal that U.S.-based manufacturing, suppliers, and engineering groups are expanding or refreshing talent.
- Life Sciences & Healthcare roles grew in 2025, including GM and Operations roles, indicating increased organizational investment in U.S.-based pharma and med-tech sites.
- Consumer & Retail roles including General Managers and Vice Presidents of Sales, often with global remits.

### 3. Global Companies Are Driving U.S. Hiring

In 2025, a meaningful share of leadership hiring activity was driven by companies headquartered outside the United States—particularly those based in Spain, France, India, and the United Kingdom. These organizations are investing in U.S. leadership to accelerate growth and strengthen market execution, with a concentration in General Management, Operations, and Commercial roles and we expect to see demand for these roles into 2026.

## Market Leaders Perspective



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### Leadership Hiring in 2026

Entering 2026, many companies are resuming previously delayed leadership searches following economic caution late in 2025. Yet the timing places them directly in the most competitive hiring window of the year, as Q1 traditionally sees heightened leadership movement after bonus payouts and increased market liquidity. Organizations returning to market in 2026 may encounter intensified competition for top candidates, higher compensation expectations, and fewer exceptional leaders available than anticipated. For many, the perceived budget savings of delaying into 2026 may ultimately translate into higher strategic and financial costs.

### Leadership Pipelines and Talent Development

Companies are highlighting the importance of workforce planning and succession planning for critical leadership roles in 2026. Relative to early career talent, we're seeing a re-emergence of talent development programs that were previously put on hold in 2020 for early career talent, signaling that companies anticipate leadership shortages in the next 3–10 years, their desire to strengthen succession planning, and the importance of cultivating talent with institutional knowledge and loyalty.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP HIRING IN USA

- Align leadership hiring with growth in Operations, Sales, and Technology:** Momentum in these functions reflects investment in scalable execution and digital transformation.
  - Prioritize cross-functional leaders who combine operational, commercial, and technology insights, e.g., Operations leaders who interpret commercial data or Sales leaders aware of supply chain impacts.
- Leverage the U.S. as a strategic hub for global and regional talent:** With a significant portion of leadership roles tied to non-U.S.-headquartered companies, the U.S. remains central for cross-border operations and commercial expansion.