



粵港澳大灣區企業人才現狀與發展趨勢：2025  
The Current Situation and Development Trends of  
Enterprise Talent in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao  
Greater Bay Area (GBA): 2025





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中山大学粤港澳发展研究院

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## Abstract

The *Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area* issued in 2019 explicitly proposes building the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) into an international innovation and technology hub with global influence, and establishing it as a high ground for education and talent. As the primary resource, talent is not only the core driving force for GBA to fully implement national strategies and achieve high-quality development, but also a decisive factor in building differentiated advantages in global competition.

To gain a deeper understanding of the structural characteristics and development trends of the corporate talent market in the GBA, clarify the talent supply-demand structure, mobility patterns, cultivation systems, and policy needs faced by enterprises in the AI era, and identify key obstacles to cross-border talent collaboration, the Institute of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Development Studies, Sun Yat-sen University, in collaboration with KOS International Talent Group Limited, conducted a special survey on the current status and development trends of talent among enterprises in the '9+2' city cluster of the GBA from April to December 2025. This survey targeted core enterprises in key industrial chains such as traditional manufacturing, advanced manufacturing, modern services, new energy, and the digital economy. During the survey period, the research team visited over 70 representative and influential enterprises, conducting in-depth interviews averaging over 120 minutes each with their Human Resources Directors or core management personnel. Discussions focused on corporate talent structures, recruitment and retention strategies, challenges in cross-border employment, and the impact of institutional environments. Complementing the interviews, the research team also collected and compiled 116 valid structured questionnaires to ensure data accuracy and comparability. The key findings of this survey are as follows:

1. **Enterprises in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) are adopting a cautious approach to future talent recruitment, with 'small, steady steps' emerging as the mainstream strategy.** The survey reveals that over 70% of companies plan to hire no more than 30 new employees over the next 3-5 years. Leading enterprises account for nearly 90% of the job openings, while small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) generally lack strong motivation and sufficient resources for recruitment.
2. **Talent demand among GBA enterprises is undergoing a structural shift.** 'Technology + Management' hybrid talents are in the greatest shortage. R&D and sales positions are becoming the core future demand, whereas demand for traditional management roles is relatively lower. There remains significant room for improvement in the level of talent internationalization in some cities.
3. **The current state of talent mobility and retention in the GBA warrants attention.** The average annual employee turnover rate for enterprises within the area is 11.7%, having surpassed the 10% threshold overall, with notable divergence among cities: turnover rates in Shenzhen and Jiangmen enterprises exceed 15%, while rates in cities like Guangzhou and Foshan are comparatively lower. The lack of competitive compensation and benefits, coupled with limited career development opportunities, are the core factors driving talent attrition.
4. **GBA enterprises express relatively high overall satisfaction with the government's talent policy system.** Overall enterprise satisfaction with the talent policies of various local governments in the Bay Area has reached a 'relatively satisfied' level, indicating that the government's policy framework is largely established and gaining recognition, with policy effectiveness gradually becoming apparent. As the alignment of rules among Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao deepens, policy dividends are expected to be further released, benefiting a broader range of enterprises. However, 'limited policy coverage', 'inadequate policy communication', and 'lengthy policy fulfillment cycles remain the three major pain points requiring urgent improvement.



## Background

Amidst the accelerating evolution of a new global technological revolution superimposed upon profound changes unseen in a century, talent, as the core element driving innovation-driven development strategies, has become a central focus of competition among major powers. Within this macro-historical context, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), as a pioneering region in the nation's major strategic layout, has seen its talent development elevated from a regional development concern to a strategic national level crucial for achieving high-level technological self-reliance and strength.

*The Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area* issued in 2019 established the ambitious goal of building the GBA into an 'International Talent Hub'. The construction of this talent hub is fundamentally rooted in the essential position of 'talent' as a core element within the nation's fundamental strategic framework. The state of talent development will become the primary factor influencing GBA's future trajectory.

To gain a deeper understanding of the structural characteristics and development trends of the corporate talent market in the GBA, to clarify the talent supply-demand structure, mobility patterns, cultivation systems, and policy needs faced by GBA enterprises in the AI era, and to provide empirical evidence and decision-making support for the government to optimize talent policies, for enterprises to enhance talent management, and to advance the construction of the GBA as an international talent hub, a joint research team from the Institute of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao Development Studies, Sun Yat-sen University and KOS International Talent Group Limited conducted enterprise questionnaire surveys and in-depth interviews across the GBA from April to December 2025. The research focused on four major areas: the current state of enterprise talent management, talent mobility, perceptions and evaluations of talent policies, and the application of artificial intelligence.

Regarding the questionnaire survey, as of December 31, 2025, a total of 116 valid questionnaires were received, covering the '9+2' city cluster of the GBA. For the in-depth interviews, a total of 71 enterprises were interviewed, accumulating over 4,000 minutes of interview time and generating more than 300,000 words of interview transcripts. The interviewed enterprises spanned six core and key nodal cities within the GBA: Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Foshan, Dongguan, Hong Kong, and Macao. The industries covered were closely aligned with manufacturing and cutting-edge technological innovation fields. The enterprise size distribution was balanced, encompassing different stages of development.



## Contributions

With the implementation of the *Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area* (GBA) and the advancement of talent policies, many institutions and researchers have conducted preliminary studies on the distribution and mobility of enterprise talent within the GBA. These studies have already identified that GBA is forming a certain degree of talent agglomeration effect, that industry-academia-research collaboration is gradually deepening, that major innovation platforms have achieved significant progress, that mutual recognition of professional qualifications and facilitation of mobility between the Mainland, Hong Kong, and Macao are yielding visible results, and that international talent policies are beginning to show steady progress. Earlier research has also revealed issues such as uneven distribution of enterprise talent within the GBA, noticeable mobility barriers, and difficulties in the commercialization of innovation outcomes.

However, the foundational data for these prior studies primarily stem from publicly available government documents, industry and sector summary reports, case analyses of specific enterprises, and comparisons with other regions. While there exists some first-hand survey data targeting enterprises, it is largely confined to specific domains such as ‘technology talent’, with few studies directly based on systematically collected first-hand data from enterprises across the region. Building upon prior research, the contributions of this survey to the field of talent status and development trends in the GBA can be summarized in the following aspects:

Firstly, the data for this report is derived from questionnaire surveys of 116 enterprises and in-depth interviews with over 70 enterprises within the ‘9+2’ cities of the GBA. It systematically presents core findings such as the ‘high recruitment, high attrition’ dilemma faced by enterprises, the acute shortage of ‘technology + management’ hybrid talents, the future primary demand for ‘market & sales’ and R&D positions, and the restructuring of job responsibilities driven by AI application. This provides a solid empirical foundation for understanding regional talent development in the AI era.

Secondly, through comparative analysis of data obtained from large-scale research, this report explores and quantifies specific figures and trends, including the variance in talent attrition rates among the ‘9+2’ GBA cities, enterprise satisfaction evaluations of 11 categories of talent policies, and quantitative data on obstacles to cross-border talent mobility. These detailed data points can more accurately reflect regional disparities in the GBA talent development and the effectiveness of policy implementation.

Thirdly, this report employs a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative data. Through cross-analysis and mutual verification of questionnaire data and in-depth interview transcripts, it relatively scientifically identifies deeper-seated issues in the GBA talent development. This helps governments and enterprises understand the three major pain points of talent policies: ‘limited policy coverage’, ‘inadequate policy communication’, and ‘lengthy policy fulfillment cycles’. Simultaneously, it attempts to explore several primary drivers of enterprise talent attrition, aiding all sectors of society in re-evaluating the shortcomings of existing talent policies and corporate practices.



Fourthly, through in-depth interviews with enterprises of varying scales, a more nuanced understanding of the actual situation, strengths, and challenges in enterprise talent management is achieved. Amidst the AI wave, a large number of enterprises are facing significant impacts from technological revolution and talent structure transformation. However, the research found that only 15% of surveyed enterprises have established comprehensive talent cultivation systems, and these are concentrated in enterprises operating for over 10 years. Nearly half of the enterprises, despite applying AI technology, primarily use it for basic tasks rather than deep business integration. These findings help small and medium-sized enterprises understand the overall industry environment and further enhance their talent management capabilities.

Fifthly, this report proposes detailed countermeasures and recommendations for government management departments, enterprises, and talent groups respectively, which is also one of its significant values. The recommendations primarily focus on three areas: 'optimization of government talent policies', 'enhancement of enterprise talent management', and 'industry-academia-research collaborative innovation'. They include actionable suggestions such as building a 'digital hybrid' talent competency system, promoting the integration of cross-border rules and mechanisms, and advancing talent policies towards being more digitalized, precise, inclusive, and balanced.

Although the findings of this report are based on relatively thorough field research and data analysis, certain limitations remain regarding sample size and distribution. This report is the first installment in *The Current Situation and Development Trends of Enterprise Talent in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay* series. In the future, we will continue to monitor the dynamic changes in the GBA talent development and conduct more detailed and comprehensive research on key issues, providing ongoing valuable references for the high-quality development of talent in the GBA.



# Chapter 1

## Analysis of Enterprise Talent Demand in the GBA

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# Chapter 1 Analysis of Enterprise Talent Demand in the GBA

## 1.1 ANALYSIS OF FUTURE ENTERPRISE NEW POSITIONS AND RECRUITMENT VOLUMES

### ‘Small Step and Slow Walk’ Become the Mainstream Choice of Enterprises

According to statistics, the response rate for questions regarding enterprises planned future recruitment numbers in this survey ranged from 70% to 73%, while the response rate for questions concerning the planned number of new positions in the next 3–5 years was between 69% and 72%. The relevant survey and statistical results are presented in Tables 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, and 1-4.

**TABLE 1-1 STATISTICS OF NEW POSITIONS PLANNED BY ENTERPRISES IN THE NEXT 3–5 YEARS (N=76)**

| Statistical Item         | Value   |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Median                   | 12.5    |
| Mode                     | 10      |
| Mean                     | 330.3   |
| Standard Deviation       | 1,806.9 |
| Minimum                  | 0       |
| Maximum                  | 15,000  |
| First Quartile (Q1)      | 5       |
| Third Quartile (Q3)      | 44      |
| Interquartile Range      | 39      |
| Coefficient of Variation | 5.5     |
| Skewness Coefficient     | 7.4     |

**TABLE 1-2 STATISTICS OF ENTERPRISE RECRUITMENT PLAN FOR THE NEXT 3–5 YEARS (N=75)**

| Statistical Item         | Value   |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Median                   | 40      |
| Mode                     | 10      |
| Mean                     | 365     |
| Standard Deviation       | 1,773.6 |
| Minimum                  | 0       |
| Maximum                  | 15,000  |
| First Quartile (Q1)      | 10      |
| Third Quartile (Q3)      | 100     |
| Interquartile Range      | 90      |
| Coefficient of Variation | 4.9     |
| Skewness Coefficient     | 7.7     |

**TABLE 1-3 INTERVAL STATISTICS FOR PLANNED NEW POSITIONS IN ENTERPRISES FOR THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS (N=76)**

| Job Position<br>Count Interval | Number of<br>Enterprises | Percentage | Cumulative<br>Percentage |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| 0                              | 8                        | 10.5%      | 10.5%                    |
| 1-10                           | 30                       | 39.5%      | 50.0%                    |
| 11-30                          | 18                       | 23.7%      | 73.7%                    |
| 31-60                          | 6                        | 7.9%       | 81.6%                    |
| 61-300                         | 8                        | 10.5%      | 92.1%                    |
| 301 and above                  | 6                        | 7.9%       | 100.0%                   |

**TABLE 1-4 INTERVAL STATISTICS FOR PLANNED RECRUITMENT NUMBERS IN ENTERPRISES FOR THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS (N=75)**

| Recruitment<br>Count Interval | Number of<br>Enterprises | Percentage | Cumulative<br>Percentage |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| 0                             | 3                        | 4.0%       | 4.0%                     |
| 1-10                          | 17                       | 22.7%      | 26.7%                    |
| 11-30                         | 16                       | 21.3%      | 48.0%                    |
| 31-60                         | 14                       | 18.7%      | 66.7%                    |
| 61-100                        | 7                        | 9.3%       | 76.0%                    |
| 101-300                       | 9                        | 12.0%      | 88.0%                    |
| 301 and above                 | 9                        | 12.0%      | 100.0%                   |

The data indicates that over the next 3-5 years, the planned recruitment numbers of enterprises are concentrated in the '0-100 people' range, with a combined proportion exceeding 76.0%. Among these, enterprises in the '1-10 people' range account for 22.7%, followed by the '11-30 people' range at 21.3%. Enterprises with no recruitment plans make up 4.0%, while those planning to recruit over 300 people account for 12%. The increase in new positions is concentrated in the '0-30' range, with a combined proportion exceeding 73%. The '1-10' range has the highest proportion at 39.5%, followed by the '11-30' range at 23.7%. Enterprises with no new positions account for 10.5%, while those planning to add over 300 new positions represent 7.9%.



It is evident that over 70% of enterprises are adopting a cautious expansion approach over the next 3–5 years, with half of them planning to add no more than 10 new positions. This aligns closely with the macroeconomic environment characterized by economic downturn pressures, rising labor costs, and increased business uncertainties. It is worth noting that 10.5% of enterprises have not set any new positions. While this proportion is not particularly high, when considered alongside the issue of talent attrition, these enterprises are effectively in a state of passive downsizing – they are not replenishing their workforce and are relying on natural attrition to reduce their scale.

### Medium-sized enterprises face particularly prominent challenges in their future development

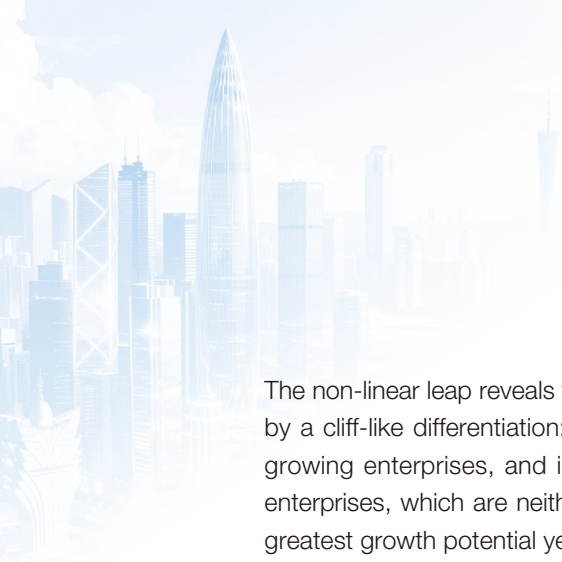
The data indicates that the planned new positions of super-large enterprises account for 89.4% of all new positions. Quartile analysis further reveals the stratification among enterprises (see Tables 1-5 and 1-6). Table 1-5 shows that the planned new positions increase by only 7.5 positions from Q1 (5 positions) to Q2 (12.5 positions), by 32 positions from Q2 to Q3 (44 positions), and surge 500-fold from Q3 to the extreme value (15,000 positions). This absorption effect of leading enterprises is particularly evident in the digital economy and platform economy sectors: industry leaders continue to expand through economies of scale, technological barriers, and capital advantages, while small and medium-sized enterprises, constrained by funding, brand influence, and risk resilience, can only maintain survival-level staffing.

**TABLE 1-5 PERCENTILE STATISTICS FOR PLANNED NEW POSITIONS IN ENTERPRISES FOR THE NEXT 3–5 YEARS (N=76)**

| Percentile   | Number of positions | Interpretation                                    |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| P10          | 0                   | 10% of enterprises have $\leq 1$ position         |
| P25 (Q1)     | 5                   | 25% of companies have $\leq 5$ positions          |
| P50 (median) | 12.5                | 50% of the companies have fewer than 15 positions |
| P75 (Q3)     | 44                  | 75% of companies have fewer than 50 positions     |
| P90          | 290                 | 90% of companies have fewer than 100 positions    |

**TABLE 1-6 PERCENTILE STATISTICS FOR PLANNED RECRUITMENT NUMBERS IN ENTERPRISES FOR THE NEXT 3–5 YEARS (N=75)**

| Percentile   | Number of hires | Interpretation                                 |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------|
| P10          | 5               | 10% of companies have $\leq 2$ employees       |
| P25 (Q1)     | 10              | 25% of companies have fewer than 10 employees  |
| P50 (median) | 40              | 50% of the companies have $\leq 50$ employees  |
| P75 (Q3)     | 100             | 75% of the companies have $\leq 100$ employees |
| P90          | 400             | 90% of companies have $\leq 300$ employees     |



The non-linear leap reveals that the transition between enterprises is not smooth but rather characterized by a cliff-like differentiation: there exists a significant, difficult-to-cross gap between micro-enterprises, growing enterprises, and industry giants. Insights from interview materials reveal that medium-sized enterprises, which are neither at the top nor the bottom of the spectrum, represent the group with the greatest growth potential yet also the highest vulnerability at present. They possess the desire to expand but simultaneously face a triple challenge: difficulties in financing, recruitment, and retention.

**The significant gap between the mean and median indicates that the recruitment demands of a few large enterprises have inflated the average**

Table 1-1, which reflects planned recruitment positions, shows that companies plan to create an average of 330.3 new positions, but the standard deviation is as high as 1,806.9, indicating significant data variation. The median is only 12.5, and the mode is 10.0, further reflecting that most companies create relatively small numbers of new positions. The interquartile range is 39.0, the coefficient of variation is 5.5, and the skewness coefficient is 7.4, indicating a highly right-skewed distribution. This means a few companies create far more new positions than the average, thereby pulling up the overall mean.

Table 1-2, which reflects planned recruitment numbers, shows a trend largely consistent with Table 1-1. The data indicates that the average planned recruitment figure for enterprises is 365.0, with a standard deviation of 1,773.0, reflecting significant data variation. The median is merely 40.0, while the mode is 10.0, suggesting that most companies have relatively small recruitment scales. The interquartile range (IQR) is 90.0, the coefficient of variation (CV) is 4.9, and the skewness coefficient (SK) is 7.7, indicating a highly right-skewed distribution. This means a small number of companies recruit far above the average, significantly inflating the overall mean.

Both datasets exhibit a highly right-skewed distribution. This implies that if the mean is used as a basis for policy formulation, it can be significantly inflated by a few extremely large-scale recruitment plans. This could lead to policy ineffectiveness in enterprise assessment, resulting in deviations in job supply evaluation, subsidy threshold setting, and resource allocation.





## 1.2 ANALYSIS OF ENTERPRISE TALENT SHORTAGES BY SPECIALIZATION AND SKILL

### Composite technical personnel are the most urgently needed talents in enterprises

The survey data shows that the respondents' response rate for the questions about the current demand of talents' specialty and skill is 94.8%~97.4%, as shown in Table 1-7 and Table 1-8.

**TABLE 1-7 PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND OF SHORTAGE TALENTS IN ENTERPRISES**  
(N=110)

| Professional category                                                              | Select times | Proportion |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Mechanical and Electronic Information Science                                      | 52           | 47.2%      |
| Other                                                                              | 46           | 41.8%      |
| Bioscience, Bioengineering, Chemical Engineering and<br>Pharmaceutical Engineering | 13           | 11.8%      |
| Instrumentation, Energy and Power                                                  | 12           | 10.9%      |
| Business Administration, Public Administration                                     | 10           | 9.1%       |
| Material Science, Light Industry and Textiles, Food                                | 9            | 8.2%       |
| Architectural Designer, Civil Engineering, and Transportation                      | 8            | 7.3%       |
| Environmental and Safety                                                           | 8            | 7.3%       |
| Mathematic Statistics                                                              | 7            | 6.4%       |
| Economics                                                                          | 7            | 6.4%       |
| Journalism and Communication                                                       | 6            | 5.5%       |
| Law                                                                                | 5            | 4.6%       |
| Art                                                                                | 3            | 2.7%       |
| Psychology                                                                         | 2            | 1.8%       |

**TABLE 1-8 JOB CATEGORY OF SHORTAGE TALENTS IN ENTERPRISES (N=113)**

| Job category                                      | Select times | Proportion |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Talents with both technical and managerial skills | 70           | 62.0%      |
| Professional technical talent                     | 67           | 59.3%      |
| Frontline professionals with specialized skills   | 49           | 43.4%      |
| Middle-level managers                             | 25           | 22.1%      |
| Senior management staff                           | 14           | 12.4%      |
| Other                                             | 10           | 8.9%       |
| Branch Manager                                    | 8            | 7.1%       |

The data indicates that current enterprise talent demand exhibits distinct characteristics dominated by STEM fields and a need for interdisciplinary competencies. At the professional demand level, Mechanical, Electronic, and Information Science majors rank first with a proportion of 47.2%, nearly five times that of the second category (excluding others). It is noteworthy that although majors such as Instrumentation, Energy and Power (10.9%), Biological Sciences and Chemical-Pharmaceutical (11.8%), and Materials Science (8.2%) account for relatively low proportions, they all belong to technology-intensive fields. Overall, the demand for STEM-related majors exceeds 80%, while traditional liberal arts majors such as Law (4.6%), Arts (2.7%), and Psychology (1.8%) show relatively limited demand. This data clearly reflects that enterprises are undergoing a deep transformation toward technology-intensive models.

In terms of job category demand, a comparison between Tables 1-7 and 1-8 reveals an important fact: technical talent is important, but what enterprises lack most is not purely technical talent. Among the talent in high demand, 'talent with both technical and managerial skills' ranks first with a proportion of 62%, even surpassing 'specialized technical talent' (59.3%). This phenomenon indicates that enterprises have realized that technical skills alone cannot translate into competitive advantages. What is truly scarce are interdisciplinary talents who understand both technology and management, can tackle technical challenges while leading teams, and possess both professional depth and business acumen.

The comparison between the two sets of data shows that, on one hand, enterprises have a high demand for STEM professionals such as Mechanical, Electronic, and Information Science majors. On the other hand, the scarcest talent is those with both technical and managerial skills (62%). This implies that having only a specialized technical background is no longer sufficient to meet enterprise needs. Technical talents must also possess managerial capabilities, business thinking, and cross-departmental collaboration skills. Additionally, the demand for 'frontline specialized technical talent' is as high as 43.4%, indicating that while enterprises pursue high-end talent, they still require a large number of practical talents capable of implementing technology. As for the demand for traditional managerial roles, the data shows that enterprises currently have relatively low demand for senior management personnel (12.3%), while the demand for middle managers is slightly higher but still only 22.1%. This aligns with the high demand for talent with both technical and managerial skills. Enterprises are in greater need of 'technical managers' who can translate technology into results at the project or team level, rather than traditional purely managerial positions.



### **R&D and sales positions are projected to be the most in-demand roles among enterprises in the GBA in the future**

The survey data shows that the analysis of future talent requirements for majors and skills is presented in Tables 1-9 and 1-10, with a 99.1% response rate for the relevant questions.

**TABLE 1-9 OVERALL FUTURE TALENT DEMAND OF ENTERPRISES: BY TALENT CATEGORY (N=115)**

| Class                                                                                         | Number of enterprises | Proportion |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Sales (e.g., Key Account Sales Manager, Channel Sales Representative, etc.)                   | 64                    | 55.7%      |
| R&D (e.g., Algorithm Engineer, Biopharmaceutical Researcher, etc.)                            | 59                    | 51.3%      |
| Technical Support (e.g., System Maintenance Engineer, Technical Support Consultant, etc.)     | 51                    | 44.4%      |
| Management (e.g., Department Director, Project Manager, etc.)                                 | 43                    | 37.4%      |
| Marketing (e.g., Brand Manager, Marketing Planning Specialist, etc.)                          | 39                    | 33.9%      |
| Operations (e.g., Supply Chain Operations Supervisor, E-commerce Operations Specialist, etc.) | 34                    | 29.6%      |
| Other                                                                                         | 18                    | 15.7%      |

**TABLE 1-10 FUTURE TALENT PRIORITIES FOR ENTERPRISES: BY TALENT CATEGORY (N=115)**

| First choice                                                                                  | Number of enterprises | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| R&D (e.g., Algorithm Engineer, Biopharmaceutical Researcher, etc.)                            | 52                    | 45.2%      |
| Sales (e.g., Key Account Sales Manager, Channel Sales Representative, etc.)                   | 26                    | 22.6%      |
| Management (e.g., Department Director, Project Manager, etc.)                                 | 13                    | 11.3%      |
| Other                                                                                         | 9                     | 7.9%       |
| Technical Support (e.g., System Maintenance Engineer, Technical Support Consultant, etc.)     | 8                     | 7.0%       |
| Marketing (e.g., Brand Manager, Marketing Planning Specialist, etc.)                          | 5                     | 4.4%       |
| Operations (e.g., Supply Chain Operations Supervisor, E-commerce Operations Specialist, etc.) | 2                     | 1.7%       |



The data shows that the overall future talent demand of enterprises is primarily concentrated in sales and research and development (R&D) categories. Specifically, 64 enterprises (55.7%) and 59 enterprises (51.3%) have expressed clear hiring needs for these roles, respectively. This is followed by technical support (44.4%) and management (37.4%), while demand for marketing, operations, and other categories accounts for 33.9%, 29.16%, and 15.7%, respectively.

In terms of 'most prominent demand' (see Table 1-10), R&D talent was ranked as the top priority by 52 enterprises, accounting for 45.2%, followed by sales talent at 22.6%. Management (11.3%), other categories (7.9%), and technical support (7.0%) ranked third to fifth, with marketing (4.4%) following closely. Only 2 enterprises listed operations roles as their most needed positions.

Overall, enterprises' future talent strategies are focused on two key areas: business expansion and core technology R&D. The demand for sales and frontline R&D roles not only accounts for a high proportion of overall demand but also leads significantly in priority rankings. This reflects the high importance placed by the surveyed enterprises on market expansion and technological innovation-driven growth. R&D prioritization emerges as the core characteristic of current enterprise talent strategies. 45.2% of enterprises rank R&D talent as their top priority, and 61.2% include R&D roles in their talent planning. This phenomenon reflects the profound strategic transformation underway among enterprises in the GBA. Nearly half of the enterprises regard innovation and R&D as their core strategy, marking a fundamental shift in their development model from 'Greater Bay Area manufacturing' to 'Greater Bay Area creation'. Against the backdrop of global industrial chain restructuring and intensifying technological competition, enterprises in the GBA have come to deeply realize that technological barriers are the key to building core competitiveness, and relying solely on scale advantages and cost control is insufficient to sustain long-term competitiveness.

Furthermore, high-end R&D talent such as algorithm engineers and biomedical researchers has become a strategic resource fiercely contested by enterprises. These professionals not only master cutting-edge technologies but also bring sustained innovation capabilities and technological breakthroughs to enterprises. The high emphasis placed on R&D talent by enterprises essentially reflects a competition for future development initiative.





## 1.3 ANALYSIS OF ENTERPRISE INTERNATIONAL TALENT DEMAND

### International Talent Demand Primarily Focuses on Technological Innovation and International Business Roles

Regarding cross-border talent recruitment for enterprises in the GBA, the response rate for relevant questions reached 94.8%, with results presented in Table 1-11. Data indicates that international talent demand for scientific and technological innovation (57.3%) and international business development (52.7%) each account for over half, forming the core components of cross-border talent needs. The second tier comprises cutting-edge research positions (23.6%), which serve as high-end extensions of technological innovation and are critical for leading enterprises to enhance their core competitiveness. In contrast, high-end education and training (14.6%) and cultural and creative industries (11.8%) account for relatively lower proportions.

**TABLE 1-11 DISTRIBUTION OF POSITIONS FOR RECRUITING INTERNATIONAL AND OVERSEAS TALENT BY ENTERPRISES (N=110)**

| Category                            | Total count | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Science, Technology, and Innovation | 63          | 57.27%     |
| International Business Development  | 58          | 52.73%     |
| Frontier Scientific Research        | 26          | 23.64%     |
| High-end Education and Training     | 16          | 14.55%     |
| Cultural and Creative Industries    | 13          | 11.82%     |

From the perspective of demand drivers, GBA positions technological innovation as its core development engine. The rapid advancement of strategic emerging industries – such as next-generation information technology, high-end equipment manufacturing, and biomedicine – has led to a growing reliance on overseas technological innovation talent with advanced technical expertise. Simultaneously, as a vital gateway for China’s opening-up, enterprises in the GBA are expanding cross-border trade and accelerating overseas market deployment. Talent with international perspectives, familiarity with overseas regulations, and access to high-quality business resources has become a key support for enterprises in expanding their international operations. These two core demands jointly shape the direction of cross-border talent recruitment. Additionally, key platforms within leading enterprises in the region – such as major laboratories and R&D centers – exhibit sustained demand for top-tier overseas frontier research talent. However, such positions impose extremely high requirements regarding professional qualifications and research achievements, resulting in relatively limited demand due to the elevated entry barriers.



# Chapter 2

## Current Status and Challenges of Talent Recruitment among Enterprises in the GBA

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## Chapter 2 Current Status and Challenges of Talent Recruitment among Enterprises in the GBA

### 2.1 ANALYSIS OF ENTERPRISE TALENT RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

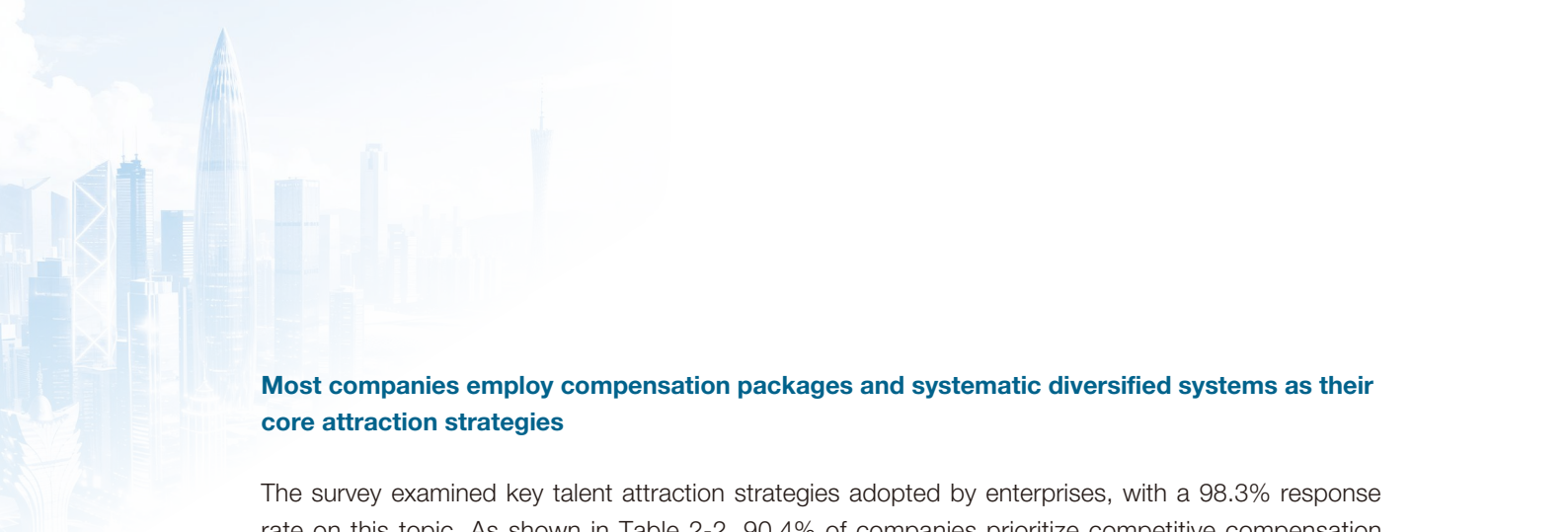
#### **‘Proactive Planning’ and ‘Reactive Response’ Coexist, with Room for Strategic Expansion**

The study investigated the primary motivations for corporate talent recruitment, with a 97.4% response rate. As shown in Table 2-1, the top three drivers were business expansion (77.0%), long-term strategic needs (62.8%), and staff turnover (60.2%), reflecting a strong expansion-oriented and strategic approach. Additionally, amid digital transformation and industrial upgrading, technological advancement (40.7%) also accounted for a significant proportion, while organizational restructuring (29.2%) was relatively low, indicating that daily operations remain stable with minimal changes.

**TABLE 2-1 BASIS FOR ANNUAL TALENT RECRUITMENT BY ENTERPRISES (N=113)**

| Category                                                           | Total count | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Business Expansion (e.g., new projects, new markets, new products) | 87          | 77.0%      |
| Long-term Strategic Development Needs                              | 71          | 62.8%      |
| Employee Turnover Replacement                                      | 68          | 60.2%      |
| Technology Upgrade or Transformation Needs                         | 46          | 40.7%      |
| Organizational Restructuring                                       | 33          | 29.2%      |

From an overall structural perspective, the current talent recruitment practices of companies exhibit a dual characteristic of ‘proactive planning’ and ‘reactive response’ coexisting. On one hand, forward-looking and growth-driven motivations – such as business expansion, strategic needs, and organizational adjustments – collectively account for a high proportion. This indicates that most companies have moved beyond the traditional model of ‘recruiting to fill vacancies’ and shifted toward a strategic mindset of ‘recruiting to fuel growth’. This trend aligns closely with the current backdrop of industrial upgrading and the vigorous development of the digital economy in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), reflecting companies’ proactive awareness of strategically positioning core talent in response to regional competition. On the other hand, employee turnover replacement still accounts for over 60%, suggesting that companies face shortcomings in talent retention and succession planning. Reactive recruitment remains a significant component of human resource management. Meanwhile, organizational restructuring represents the lowest proportion (29.2%), indicating that companies currently operate with relative stability and lack the impetus for large-scale transformations in the short term. Additionally, the relatively lower proportion of technology upgrade or transformation needs reveals a potential issue: some companies may not yet regard technical talent as a key element in building core competitiveness, or they may lack clear talent support strategies in their digital transformation pathways. This highlights a certain gap with GBA’s strategic goal of building an international center for technological innovation, which warrants focused attention in future development efforts.



### Most companies employ compensation packages and systematic diversified systems as their core attraction strategies

The survey examined key talent attraction strategies adopted by enterprises, with a 98.3% response rate on this topic. As shown in Table 2-2, 90.4% of companies prioritize competitive compensation packages as their primary recruitment strategy, demonstrating that salary remains the top priority. Other significant measures include offering career development training (69.3%), creating comfortable work environments (67.5%), and fostering a positive corporate culture (64.9%), all exceeding 60% adoption rates. Notably, 44.7% of enterprises implement all four strategies simultaneously, indicating that nearly half of the surveyed companies are adopting a comprehensive approach to systematically attract talent.

**TABLE 2-2 MEASURES TAKEN BY ENTERPRISES TO ATTRACT TALENTS (N=114)**

| Category                                       | Total count | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Offering Competitive Compensation and Benefits | 103         | 90.4%      |
| Providing Good Career Development and Training | 79          | 69.3%      |
| Providing a Comfortable Working Environment    | 77          | 67.5%      |
| Building a High-Quality Corporate Culture      | 74          | 64.9%      |
| Selecting All of the Above                     | 51          | 44.7%      |

From a strategic perspective, current corporate talent attraction measures exhibit three defining characteristics: compensation-driven approaches, multi-dimensional collaboration, and evolving systems. Amid intensifying regional talent competition, compensation and benefits remain the primary leverage for most enterprises as foundational safeguards. Meanwhile, the widespread adoption of ‘soft’ factors like career development, work environment, and corporate culture reflects a dual emphasis on growth experiences and value alignment. Notably, 44.7% of ‘all-selected’ enterprises further validate that talent attraction strategies have entered a systematic phase, with greater focus on long-term professional growth, job satisfaction, and organizational belonging.



## 2.2 ANALYSIS OF THE TALENT MARKET AND RECRUITMENT CHANNELS

### Insufficient Talent Supply Is the Primary Human Resource Challenge for Enterprises

Regarding the most pressing talent management challenges faced by enterprises today, the question received a 97.4% valid response rate. Table 2-3 data reveal that recruitment difficulties (40.7%) remain the primary pain point for most companies, highlighting their struggle to 'identify suitable candidates'. High training costs (33.6%) rank as the second most critical issue, while high turnover rates (13.3%) – though third in importance – still pose a significant challenge. International talent acquisition barriers account for only 5.3%, though they are predominantly observed in companies with Hong Kong/Macao or cross-border operations.

The challenges in corporate talent recruitment primarily stem from: insufficient supply of skilled professionals in high-demand sectors (particularly manufacturing, IT, new energy, and biopharmaceutical industries), labor demands concentrated in major cities or industrial clusters with fierce competition, rising compensation levels, limited recruitment channels, and employers' inadequate brand influence. This issue is particularly acute in manufacturing and high-tech industries. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) face heightened competitive pressures, struggling to match the compensation packages and platform advantages of larger corporations. High training costs may be attributed to: rapid technological iterations requiring frequent short-term training, substantial investments in talent development (equipment, curricula, instructors), and growing demand for customized training (especially in R&D and precision manufacturing). This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in industries like precision manufacturing, healthcare, and artificial intelligence, where high technical barriers exacerbate the challenge.

**TABLE 2-3 THE BIGGEST TALENT MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES FACING ENTERPRISES TODAY (N=113)**

| Class                                                 | Number of times | Proportion |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Recruitment Difficulties (Insufficient Talent Supply) | 46              | 40.7%      |
| High Cost of Talent Training                          | 38              | 33.6%      |
| High Talent Turnover Rate                             | 15              | 13.3%      |
| Obstacles in Recruiting International Talent          | 6               | 5.3%       |
| Other                                                 | 8               | 7.1%       |



### Comprehensive recruitment websites serve as the primary talent supply platform.

The research team conducted a survey on corporate talent recruitment channels, with a 97.4% response rate for this question. As shown in Table 2-4, current recruitment channels are predominantly primary with supplementary options. Comprehensive recruitment websites lead with 85.0% usage, followed by internal referrals (63.7%) and campus recruitment (52.2%) in the second tier, while emerging channels like social media account for only about 30%.

**TABLE 2-4 CORPORATE TALENT RECRUITMENT CHANNEL SELECTION (N=113)**

| Recruitment channels                            | Select times | Proportion |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Comprehensive recruitment website               | 96           | 85.0%      |
| Employee referrals within the organization      | 72           | 63.7%      |
| Campus recruitment                              | 59           | 52.2%      |
| Headhunting services                            | 53           | 46.9%      |
| Social media platforms                          | 34           | 30.1%      |
| Professional recruitment platform               | 32           | 28.3%      |
| Industry talent exchange conference or job fair | 29           | 25.7%      |
| Other                                           | 3            | 2.7%       |

Currently, enterprises' recruitment channel selection exhibits a pattern of 'one primary channel leading, multiple auxiliary channels synergizing, and combined efforts driving results'. This reflects a shift in recruitment channel strategy from reliance on a single source toward systematic integration, with over 70% of enterprises utilizing three or more channels for recruitment. Among these, comprehensive recruitment websites form the 'foundational base' of recruitment channels, serving as the primary tool for enterprises to achieve 'broad-coverage' talent searches. Internal referrals, leveraging trust networks within the organization, effectively enhance the cultural fit and retention rates of candidates. Campus recruitment, meanwhile, injects fresh talent into enterprises and serves as a critical pathway for building talent pipelines and ensuring long-term development. Notably, social media and other emerging channels account for only 30% usage, showing a disconnect with digital-native talent's information-seeking habits. This indicates some companies remain conservative in channel innovation, failing to fully leverage social platforms' algorithmic advantages for precise engagement with young professionals and tech innovators.



## 2.3 OBSTACLES IN CROSS-BORDER TALENT RECRUITMENT

### Expectation of Salary and Culture Adaptation Are the Main Difficulties in Cross-border Recruitment

The research team investigated the primary barriers to cross-border recruitment for enterprises in the GBA, with a 90.5% response rate on this topic. Data revealed that core barriers (accounting for  $\geq 40\%$ ) included salary expectations (45.7%) and cultural adaptation (40.0%); secondary barriers encompassed family relocation (20.0%) and mutual recognition of qualifications (20.0%); while general barriers involved visa restrictions (16.2%).

**TABLE 2-5 MAIN CHALLENGES IN RECRUITING INTERNATIONAL TALENT (N=105)**

| Category                         | Total Count | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Salary Expectations              | 48          | 45.7%      |
| Cultural Adaptation              | 42          | 40.0%      |
| Qualification Mutual Recognition | 21          | 20.0%      |
| Family Relocation                | 21          | 20.0%      |
| Visa Restrictions                | 17          | 16.2%      |
| Other                            | 25          | 23.8%      |

Among these obstacles, compensation expectations emerge as the predominant challenge, affecting nearly half of enterprises. This stems from the fundamental mismatch between talent market valuations and companies' actual payment capacity and willingness, representing a classic market-driven obstacle. Cultural adaptation follows closely, stemming from difficulties in integrating work environments and management styles, which similarly highlights the core challenge of soft environment adaptation. Secondary barriers – such as family relocation, qualification recognition, and visa restrictions – form a tiered system of institutional and lifestyle constraints, reflecting the additional challenges of cross-border recruitment in terms of regulatory alignment and living support. This framework clearly demonstrates that cross-border recruitment is not merely about 'hiring', but also involves the dual challenges of 'market competition' and 'organizational integration'.



# Chapter 3

## The Present Situation and Challenges of Enterprise Talent Training in the GBA

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## Chapter 3 The Present Situation and Challenges of Enterprise Talent Training in the GBA

### 3.1 CORPORATE TALENT DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

**The enterprise talent training and development system is generally in the state of promotion**

The research team conducted a survey on corporate talent development systems, achieving a 99.1% response rate. As shown in Table 3-1, only 13.9% of surveyed companies maintained well-established and operational talent development systems. Notably, over 87.5% of these enterprises had been in operation for 10 years or longer. The majority (70.4%) were continuously refining their talent development frameworks, reflecting the prevailing trend in corporate talent management. Only 13.9% implemented sporadic training programs, while 1.7% had not initiated such initiatives. Among companies with established systems, training content demonstrated diverse coverage: 88.7% offered onboarding programs for new hires, 84.3% provided professional skill enhancement training, 64.3% conducted soft skills development, 61.7% offered leadership and management training, and 53.0% delivered industry-specific knowledge and trend training.

**TABLE 3-1 HAVE ENTERPRISES ESTABLISHED A COMPREHENSIVE TALENT CULTIVATION AND DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM? (N=115)**

| Category                                             | Count | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Yes, very comprehensive and effectively implemented  | 16    | 13.9%      |
| Yes, but still continuously optimizing and improving | 81    | 70.4%      |
| No, only some scattered training activities          | 16    | 13.9%      |
| No, no related work has been initiated yet           | 2     | 1.7%       |

The current talent development ecosystem in enterprises exhibits a dual characteristic of ‘mature accumulation’ and ‘ongoing optimization’. While companies with over a decade of operation have established robust talent cultivation systems, demonstrating that such systems require long-term operational practice to mature, nearly 70% of enterprises are still in the optimization phase. This reflects widespread industry recognition of talent development systems, with ‘systematic capacity building’ becoming a consensus. Training content predominantly focuses on foundational onboarding and professional skills development (nearly 90%), emphasizing a pragmatic approach of ‘solidifying basics and sharpening core competencies’. However, soft skills, leadership development, and industry-leading training remain underrepresented, revealing an imbalance in some enterprises’ systems that prioritizes foundational knowledge over advanced skill enhancement.

### Designing Career Progression Pathways Is a Core Strategy for Enterprise Talent Cultivation

The research team examined corporate designs for employee career development pathways, with a 97.4% response rate for relevant survey items. As shown in Table 3-2, promotion channels constituted the core design element, where management career advancement pathways accounted for the highest proportion (84.1%), followed by professional technical career advancement pathways at 69.0%. Cross-departmental rotation opportunities were offered by 57.5% of companies, indicating widespread recognition of such development models. However, innovative and personalized pathway designs remained notably underdeveloped: only 31.9% of companies encouraged employee innovation practices, 26.5% implemented customized career development plans, and merely 9.7% achieved comprehensive coverage of all career development pathways.

**TABLE 3-2 CAREER DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS DESIGNED BY ENTERPRISES FOR EMPLOYEES (N=113)**

| Category                                                                                              | Total | Proportion |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Established Management Track Promotion Path (from entry-level employees to senior managers)           | 95    | 84.1%      |
| Constructed Professional/Technical Track Promotion Path (e.g., from junior engineer to senior expert) | 78    | 69.0%      |
| Provided Cross-Department Rotation Opportunities to Broaden Employees' Career Perspectives            | 65    | 57.5%      |
| Supported Internal Entrepreneurship or Project Incubation to Encourage Innovative Practices           | 36    | 31.9%      |
| Developed Personalized Career Development Plans Tailored to Employee Characteristics and Needs        | 30    | 26.5%      |
| Selected All of the Above                                                                             | 11    | 9.7%       |

Data reveals that current corporate career development pathways exhibit a pattern of 'mature traditional channels but insufficient innovative individualization'. On one hand, the high adoption rate of dual-track promotion systems for management and technical roles demonstrates widespread recognition of clear career progression as crucial for talent retention and motivation. The growing acceptance of cross-departmental rotations also reflects proactive efforts to expand employee capabilities and optimize talent allocation. On the other hand, the low participation in innovative career paths and severe lack of personalized planning indicate that most companies' development systems remain at the 'standardized supply' stage, failing to adequately address the diverse developmental needs of employees. This traditional-channel-dominated design model will struggle to meet the differentiated development demands of talents at different levels and types in the future.





## 3.2 ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGES IN ENTERPRISE TALENT CULTIVATION

### **The difficulty in quantifying and evaluating training outcomes represents the most significant challenge in constructing a cultivation system**

The research team identified key pain points in corporate talent development, with a 90.5% response rate to the survey. Data from Table 3-3 reveals that quantifiable evaluation of training outcomes (65.7%) ranks as the most critical challenge. Employee engagement (41.0%) and content-business disconnect (41.0%) are equally prevalent, showing a causal relationship. The existing framework also faces two systemic issues: insufficient international perspective courses (28.6%) and difficulties in integrating cross-city training resources (24.8%).

**TABLE 3-3 KEY CHALLENGES IN CORPORATE TALENT DEVELOPMENT (N=105)**

| Category                                                   | Total Count | Percentage |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Difficulty in Quantifying and Evaluating Training Outcomes | 69          | 65.7%      |
| Disconnect Between Training Content and Business Needs     | 43          | 41.0%      |
| Low Employee Participation Enthusiasm                      | 43          | 41.0%      |
| Lack of Courses with an International Perspective          | 30          | 28.6%      |
| Difficulty in Integrating Cross-City Training Resources    | 26          | 24.8%      |

Data shows that the core contradictions in current corporate talent development are concentrated in two major aspects: ‘the inability to verify the value of training’ and ‘the mismatch between training supply and demand’. The core pain point of difficulty in quantifying and evaluating training outcomes essentially reflects the lack of a ‘value loop’ in corporate talent development, preventing training efforts from forming a virtuous cycle of ‘investment – evaluation – optimization – improvement’. Meanwhile, issues such as the disconnect between training content and business needs, as well as low employee engagement, highlight the misalignment between training supply and job-specific demands. This not only reduces the effectiveness of training but may also affect employees’ career development expectations due to their inability to enhance skills through training, indirectly increasing the risk of talent attrition. Additionally, the scarcity of courses with an international perspective and the difficulty in integrating cross-city resources underscore the mismatch between regional-specific needs and existing training resources, failing to adequately support the strategic demands in GBA enterprises for cross-border collaboration and international development.



**The core reason for talent loss is compensation and career development, not training and learning opportunities**

This study investigates the root causes of employee turnover from a human resource management perspective, with a 99.1% response rate for this question. As shown in Table 3-4, the top two reasons are: lack of competitive compensation and benefits (71.3%) and limited career development opportunities (66.1%). The third major cause, 40.0%, stems from a mismatch between corporate culture and employee values, highlighting their emphasis on workplace atmosphere and value alignment. Other contributing factors include insufficient training and development opportunities (32.2%), inappropriate management approaches by superiors (27.8%) and unreasonable performance evaluation system (27.0%). These findings suggest that employees only prioritize secondary needs like training and management standards after meeting basic security and positive experiences.

**TABLE 3-4 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT REASONS LEADING TO EMPLOYEE TURNOVER (N=115)**

| Category                                               | Total Count | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Lack of Competitive Compensation and Benefits          | 82          | 71.3%      |
| Limited Career Development Opportunities               | 76          | 66.1%      |
| Mismatch Between Corporate Culture and Employee Values | 46          | 40.0%      |
| Insufficient Training and Development Opportunities    | 37          | 32.2%      |
| Inappropriate Management Style of Superiors            | 32          | 27.8%      |
| Unreasonable Performance Appraisal System              | 31          | 27.0%      |

In human resource management, compensation and career development constitute the dual core drivers of talent attrition, highlighting GBA's high marketization of talent and low mobility barriers. Professionals exhibit heightened sensitivity to salary competitiveness, career advancement pathways, and long-term growth prospects when selecting employment. Corporate culture and value alignment emerge as critical retention factors, reflecting a shift in talent demands from material to spiritual dimensions. However, training and learning opportunities are not the primary drivers of talent attrition, confirming the pattern where core needs remain unmet while higher-level needs prove insignificant.



### 3.3 ANALYSIS OF CORPORATE POLICY NEEDS FOR STRENGTHENING TALENT DEVELOPMENT

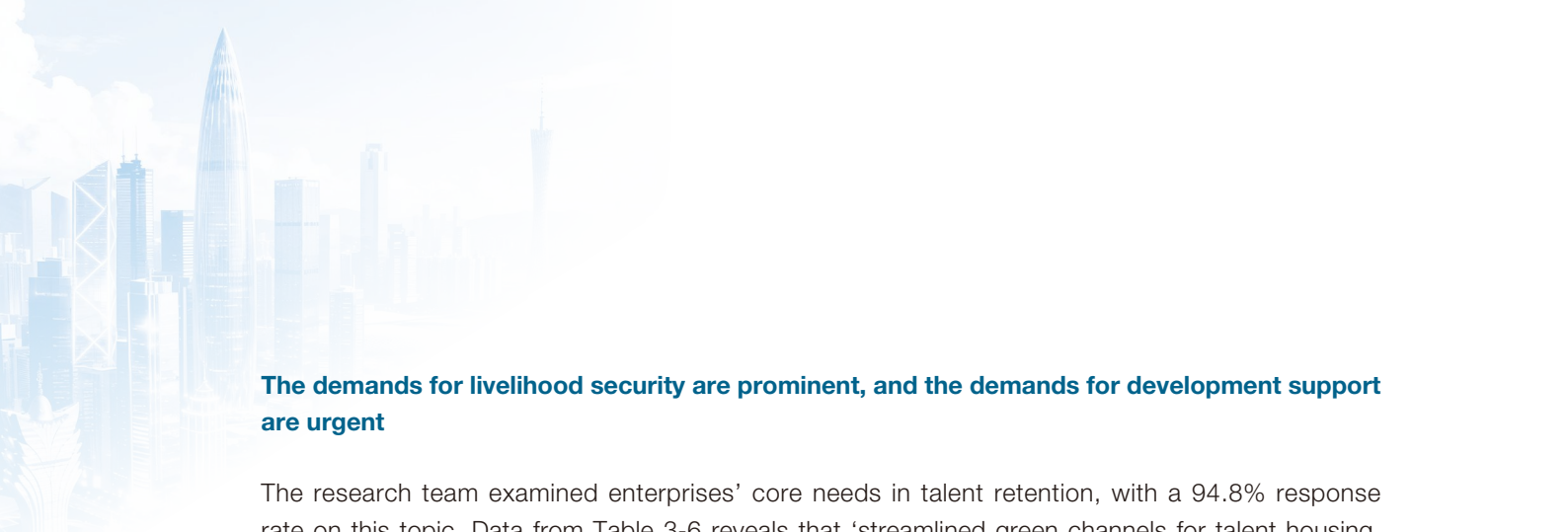
#### Universal Policy Benefits as the Core Demand, with Diverse Supporting Needs Becoming Prominent

The research team conducted a survey on enterprises' core needs and pain points in talent attraction and cultivation, with a 94.0% response rate. Data from Tables 3-5 indicate that 'expanding policy benefits' topped the list with 80.7% of enterprises prioritizing it, followed by 'developing a robust talent market service' (58.7%) as the second most critical need. Additionally, 55.0% of enterprises expressed a general desire for the government to establish platforms and strengthen collaboration with universities and research institutes. Both 'establishing internship bases' and 'university-enterprise joint education programs' received equal attention, each accounting for 25.7% of the needs.

**TABLE 3-5 ENTERPRISES' DEMAND FOR TALENT ATTRACTION AND CULTIVATION POLICIES (N=109)**

| Category                                                                                                | Total Count | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Expanding Policy Coverage                                                                               | 88          | 80.7%      |
| Enriching and Improving Talent Market Services                                                          | 64          | 58.7%      |
| Government Facilitating Platforms to Establish Connections with Universities, Research Institutes, etc. | 60          | 55.0%      |
| Establishing Internship Bases                                                                           | 28          | 25.7%      |
| School-Enterprise Joint Education Programs                                                              | 28          | 25.7%      |

First, corporate' talent acquisition policy needs focus on policy inclusivity. Current talent attraction policies predominantly favor specific enterprise types (e.g., leading enterprises, high-tech enterprises) or high-end professionals, leaving small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and traditional industry enterprises disadvantaged. This fails to fully activate talent recruitment vitality across all enterprise sectors, a pain point that aligns with the 'expanding policy beneficiary scope'. Second, there is a pressing need for improved talent market service systems and collaborative platforms. Current market-oriented services for recruitment, assessment, and talent mobility lack professionalism and efficiency, failing to precisely match the mutual needs of enterprises and talents. This increases time and labor costs for talent acquisition. Moreover, enterprises require targeted solutions like joint training programs and technical breakthroughs to address challenges such as insufficient internal talent reserves and inefficient technology transfer. Additionally, large-scale, long-term cultivation needs remain underdeveloped: companies prefer 'plug-and-play' ready-to-use talents, showing limited willingness to invest in long-term development. Existing long-term cultivation policies also lack specificity and practical implementation, failing to effectively meet actual corporate demands and resulting in low expectations for such policies.



### The demands for livelihood security are prominent, and the demands for development support are urgent

The research team examined enterprises' core needs in talent retention, with a 94.8% response rate on this topic. Data from Table 3-6 reveals that 'streamlined green channels for talent housing, school enrollment, and healthcare services' ranked first at 70.0%, closely followed by 'expanded housing security coverage' (69.1%), highlighting professionals' strong demand for basic living support. Developmental needs also emerged prominently: 'enhanced tech-finance support for enterprises' (60.9%) and 'improved public tech service platforms' (53.6%). Additionally, 'diverse talent exchange programs' (48.2%) were identified, reflecting enterprises' supplementary needs for professional networking and industry perspective expansion.

**TABLE 3-6 POLICY NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR ENTERPRISE TALENT DEVELOPMENT (N=102)**

| Category                                                                                                                            | Total Count | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Establishing Green Channels for Services such as Talent Housing, Household Registration, Children's Education, and Medical Security | 77          | 70.0%      |
| Expanding the Scope of Talent Housing Security                                                                                      | 76          | 69.1%      |
| Increasing Financial Support for Enterprise Technology and Innovation                                                               | 67          | 60.9%      |
| Improving the Construction of Public Technology Service Platforms                                                                   | 59          | 53.6%      |
| Organizing More Diverse and Rich Talent Exchange Activities                                                                         | 53          | 48.2%      |

The talent cultivation needs of enterprises exhibit a distinct pattern: 'safety as the foundation, development as the priority'. The high proportion of livelihood security demands fundamentally reflects the 'survival needs first' principle for talents, while also exposing supply gaps in housing and public services in certain regions. This forms a closed loop with earlier issues like policy implementation shortcomings in regional talent development environments and the cost of living in high-turnover cities. Meanwhile, the elevated share of developmental support needs indicates that enterprises have recognized that 'mere security cannot retain talent long-term'. They now require external support through fintech and public service platforms to provide growth opportunities, transitioning from 'retaining talent through security' to 'retaining talent through development'.



# Chapter 4

## Current Situation and Challenges of Cross-border Mobility of Enterprise Talents in the GBA

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## Chapter 4 Current Situation and Challenges of Cross-border Mobility of Enterprise Talents in the GBA

### 4.1 ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING CROSS-BORDER TALENT MOBILITY IN ENTERPRISES

**Attraction factors of cross-border flow: the core elements are salary level and career promotion opportunities, with significant differences among different cities**

The research team investigated the factors influencing cross-border talent mobility in enterprises within GBA, with a 91.7% response rate for this survey. Data from Table 4-1 reveals that the core attraction factors were ‘compensation and benefits’ (4.48) and ‘career advancement opportunities’ (4.12). Key supporting factors included ‘social welfare’ (3.90) and ‘policy support’ (3.78), while supporting environment factors comprised ‘educational resources’ (3.58) and ‘family relocation challenges’ (3.57).

**TABLE 4-1 AVERAGE IMPACT LEVEL OF CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY INFLUENCING FACTORS(N=99)**

| Category                         | Average impact level |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Compensation and Benefits        | 4.48                 |
| Career Advancement Opportunities | 4.12                 |
| Social Welfare                   | 3.90                 |
| Strength of Policy Support       | 3.78                 |
| Educational Resources            | 3.58                 |
| Family Relocation                | 3.57                 |
| Cost of Living                   | 3.38                 |

The essence of cross-border talent mobility lies in market-driven allocation, where competitive compensation packages and clear career progression paths form the foundation of attractiveness. Social welfare benefits and policy support follow closely, indicating that overseas professionals now prioritize personal and family quality of life when choosing employment locations. Meanwhile, satisfaction with family-related factors and educational resources ranks relatively lower, highlighting areas for improvement in institutional convenience, family welfare, and educational accessibility.

When analyzing key influencing factors across cities, the average salary range is 4.00-5.00 (with Macao leading at 5.00 and Dongguan at 4.00 being the lowest). Career advancement opportunities average 3.00-5.00 (Zhaoqing leads at 4.67, while Macao and Foshan are the lowest at 3.00). Educational resources range from 1.00 to 4.50 (Jiangmen leads at 4.50, Macao at 1.00), and social welfare scores between 1.00-5.00 (Jiangmen at 4.83, Macao at 1.50). Policy support measures average 2.00-5.00 (Macao at 5.00, Foshan at 2.20), while living costs range from 1.50 to 4.00 (Macao, Dongguan, and Zhongshan at 4.00, Huizhou at 1.90). Family-related factors cluster between 2.00-4.50 (Jiangmen at 4.17, Foshan at 2.00).



**TABLE 4-2 DIFFERENCES IN CROSS-BORDER INFLUENCING FACTORS AMONG CITIES  
(AVERAGE VALUES)**

| City of the company | Number of enterprises | Salary and salary | Career advance chance | Education resources | Social welfare | Policy support | Living cost | Family factors |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| Macao               | 2                     | 5.00              | 3.00                  | 1.00                | 1.50           | 5.00           | 4.00        | 3.50           |
| Dongguan            | 7                     | 4.00              | 4.57                  | 3.29                | 3.71           | 3.00           | 4.00        | 4.00           |
| Foshan              | 5                     | 4.60              | 3.00                  | 1.20                | 2.00           | 2.20           | 3.40        | 2.00           |
| Guangzhou           | 9                     | 4.22              | 3.56                  | 3.89                | 4.22           | 4.44           | 3.67        | 3.44           |
| Huizhou             | 10                    | 4.70              | 4.20                  | 2.90                | 3.70           | 3.10           | 1.90        | 2.30           |
| Jiangmen            | 6                     | 4.50              | 4.17                  | 4.50                | 4.83           | 4.00           | 4.17        | 4.17           |
| Shenzhen            | 24                    | 4.50              | 4.08                  | 3.58                | 4.00           | 3.83           | 3.17        | 3.58           |
| Hong Kong           | 19                    | 4.21              | 3.84                  | 3.05                | 3.37           | 3.79           | 3.58        | 3.47           |
| Zhaoqing            | 3                     | 4.67              | 4.67                  | 3.33                | 3.67           | 2.67           | 3.33        | 3.33           |
| Zhongshan           | 9                     | 4.67              | 4.17                  | 3.67                | 4.17           | 4.00           | 4.00        | 3.83           |
| Zhuhai              | 7                     | 4.86              | 4.00                  | 3.57                | 3.71           | 4.00           | 3.29        | 3.43           |

Overall, compensation packages and career advancement opportunities are key high-impact factors for attracting overseas talent across cities, while educational resources have relatively limited influence in most urban areas. Shenzhen and Hong Kong are primarily influenced by salary packages, with other factors having moderate impact. Career advancement opportunities show particularly strong effects in manufacturing hubs like Zhaoqing, Dongguan, and Huizhou, reflecting the early-stage development of cross-border sci-tech innovation industries in non-core cities. Macao enterprises identify compensation (5.00) and policy support (5.00) as primary cross-border factors, highlighting the region's unique institutional advantages and policy incentives. However, the small sample size (only 2 companies) suggests potential subjective bias in these high ratings. Similarly, Guangzhou enterprises are mainly influenced by policy support and salary packages.

### **The Convenience of Cross-border Flow: Core Hub Cities Lead, and the Radiation of Circles Decreases**

The research team conducted a survey on the ease of cross-border talent mobility among cities in the GBA, with an effective response rate of 81.9%. The data results (Table 4-3) indicate that the first tier comprises high-convenience cities (average  $\geq 4.0$ ), including Macao (4.50), Guangzhou (4.10), and Zhuhai (4.00). The second tier consists of medium-convenience cities (average 3.5-4.0), such as Hong Kong (3.78), Shenzhen (3.73), and Huizhou (3.70). The third tier includes low-convenience cities (average  $< 3.5$ ), such as Dongguan (3.43), Zhongshan (3.33), Foshan (3.25), and Zhaoqing (3.00).



**TABLE 4-3 CROSS-BORDER TALENT MOBILITY CONVENIENCE IN CITIES OF GBA**

| City of the company | Number of enterprises | Mean |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------|
| Macao               | 2                     | 4.50 |
| Dongguan            | 7                     | 3.43 |
| Foshan              | 4                     | 3.25 |
| Guangzhou           | 10                    | 4.10 |
| Huizhou             | 10                    | 3.70 |
| Jiangmen            | 7                     | 2.86 |
| Shenzhen            | 22                    | 3.73 |
| Hong Kong           | 18                    | 3.78 |
| Zhaoqing            | 1                     | 3.00 |
| Zhongshan           | 6                     | 3.33 |
| Zhuhai              | 8                     | 4.00 |

The cross-border talent mobility in the GBA follows a distinctive pattern: core hub cities lead the pack, tiered radiation zones gradually diminish, and Hong Kong, Macao, and mainland cities exhibit divergent distribution. This pattern vividly demonstrates how three key factors – geographical advantages, policy support systems, and cross-border service capabilities – determine talent mobility convenience. Core hub cities leverage their strategic locations, coupled with comprehensive cross-border policies and efficient ‘one-stop’ services, to establish high mobility advantages. In contrast, tiered cities experience diminishing convenience due to inadequate supporting resources and fragmented service coordination. Macao and Hong Kong maintain high/middle mobility levels, driven by their international hub status and functional advantages. These disparities highlight the current reality in the GBA: while hardware infrastructure converges, software services continue to diverge.

## 4.2 ANALYSIS OF FACTORS RESTRICTING ENTERPRISES’ OVERSEAS EXPANSION AND CROSS-BORDER TALENT MOBILITY

### Enterprises expanding overseas most need international talent to address cultural differences

The research team investigated the key barriers hindering enterprises in the GBA from expanding overseas, with an effective response rate of 80.2%. Data from Table 4-4 reveals that the primary obstacles are cultural differences causing misinterpretation of market needs (3.75) and local policy restrictions (3.70), followed by technological mismatches (3.49) and a shortage of international AI talent (3.25).

**TABLE 4-4 IMPACT OF BARRIERS TO GLOBAL EXPANSION (N=82)**

| Factor hindering international expansion                         | Impact level |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Cultural differences leading to misunderstanding of requirements | 3.75         |
| Local policy restrictions                                        | 3.70         |
| Technology matching gap                                          | 3.49         |
| Insufficient international AI talent pool                        | 3.25         |

The constraints on enterprises' global expansion in the GBA demonstrate a pattern of 'cultural differences as the dominant factor with multi-factor gradient distribution', underscoring the pivotal role of international talents with host country cultural acumen. Regional disparities in values, consumption habits, and communication logic may cause disconnections between product design, marketing strategies, and service models (e.g., religious taboos, aesthetic preferences, and decision-making process differences) from local markets. Such deviations cannot be resolved through mere technological upgrades or policy circumvention, necessitating professional international talent to bridge these gaps. This characteristic further reinforces the demand for cross-border professionals in international business development: enterprises now seek not only basic cross-border trade coordination but, more crucially, versatile talents with 'local cultural insight + international business capabilities'.

#### **Cross-border talent mobility still faces multi-dimensional barriers, with converging impacts**

The results (Tables 4-5 and 4-6) indicate that, in terms of the average impact level, except for family resettlement difficulties (3.57) which is slightly higher, the other four factors all average between 3.17 and 3.36, indicating a moderately high impact level. This suggests that all factors have constrained cross-border talent mobility.

The distribution pattern reveals a consistent trend: all factors exhibit a low-impact proportion being minimal while medium-high impact proportions are substantial. Specifically, the cumulative proportion of scores in the 1-2.5 (low impact) range is consistently below 30%, whereas the cumulative proportion of scores in the 3+ (medium-high impact) range exceeds 70%. Notably, the 4+ (high impact) range accounts for approximately 50% of the total.

**TABLE 4-5 MAIN OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN EMPLOYEE CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY (N=84)**

| Class                               | Average degree of influence of factors |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Difficulties in housing placement   | 3.57                                   |
| Living cost                         | 3.36                                   |
| Differences in laws and regulations | 3.34                                   |
| Cultural/linguistic barriers        | 3.31                                   |
| Complex cross-border procedures     | 3.17                                   |

**TABLE 4-6 DISTRIBUTION OF IMPACT LEVELS OF MAJOR BARRIERS FACED BY EMPLOYEES IN CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY**

| Impact level | Frequency for<br>'Differences<br>in Laws and<br>Regulations' | Frequency for<br>'Complexity of<br>Cross-Border<br>Procedures' | Frequency<br>for 'Cultural/<br>Language<br>Barriers' | Frequency for<br>'Cost of Living' | Frequency<br>for 'Family<br>Relocation<br>Difficulties' |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 1~1.5        | 6                                                            | 9                                                              | 11                                                   | 8                                 | 7                                                       |
| 2~2.5        | 16                                                           | 17                                                             | 7                                                    | 11                                | 13                                                      |
| 3~3.5        | 23                                                           | 21                                                             | 23                                                   | 24                                | 20                                                      |
| 4~4.5        | 28                                                           | 24                                                             | 33                                                   | 26                                | 20                                                      |
| 4.5~5        | 21                                                           | 21                                                             | 19                                                   | 23                                | 32                                                      |

The challenges facing cross-border talent mobility manifest as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, affecting both individuals' willingness to relocate and enterprises' difficulties in global talent allocation. Data analysis reveals that social and lifestyle barriers currently hold relatively greater influence, primarily stemming from personal subjective experiences and practical needs. Among these factors, family resettlement difficulties rank slightly higher than all others, demonstrating that cross-border talent mobility is not merely an individual decision but a systemic choice involving family relocation and lifestyle adaptation. Family considerations far outweigh individual career development factors. Additionally, medium-to-high living cost impacts (above 3 points) account for nearly 80% of cases, with high-impact scenarios (above 4 points) exceeding 50%. This highlights the significant living cost pressures in some Greater Bay Area cities, which become crucial practical considerations for cross-border employment. While cultural/linguistic barriers average slightly lower (3.29), the 4~4.5point range constitutes 34.5% of cases – the highest proportion in this category – emphasizing challenges like cross-cultural communication, language adaptation, and integration with local lifestyles, which pose major obstacles to talent integration into local work and life.





## 4.3 ANALYSIS OF ENTERPRISES' FOCUS AREAS AND DEGREE OF VARIATION IN CROSS-BORDER WELFARE

### Tax and Social Security Benefits Are of Highest Concern, with Significant Differences in Welfare Needs Across Cities

The research team surveyed corporate attention to various cross-border benefits, with an effective response rate of 83.6%. Data from Table 4-7 and 4-8 indicate that tax incentives and social security coordination are the most prioritized cross-border benefits, averaging 3.94 and 3.90 respectively. Housing subsidies and medical insurance interoperability each average 3.76 and 3.74, while child education support averages 3.71. All three categories demonstrate comparable attention levels, consistently above 3.70. Notably, corporate interest in cross-border benefits correlates with urban geographic location and cross-border business activity, with significant variations across different cities.

The attention to cross-border welfare exhibits a distinct pattern: cities along the western Pearl River coast score higher, while traditional international cities perform lower. Zhuhai tops the list with an average attention score of 4.77, with other western Pearl River cities like Zhongshan (4.26) and Jiangmen (4.17) all exceeding 4.0. In contrast, more internationalized cities such as Shenzhen (3.82) and Hong Kong (3.55) show relatively lower attention levels, while Dongguan (3.43) and Zhaoqing (3.13) rank at the lower end.

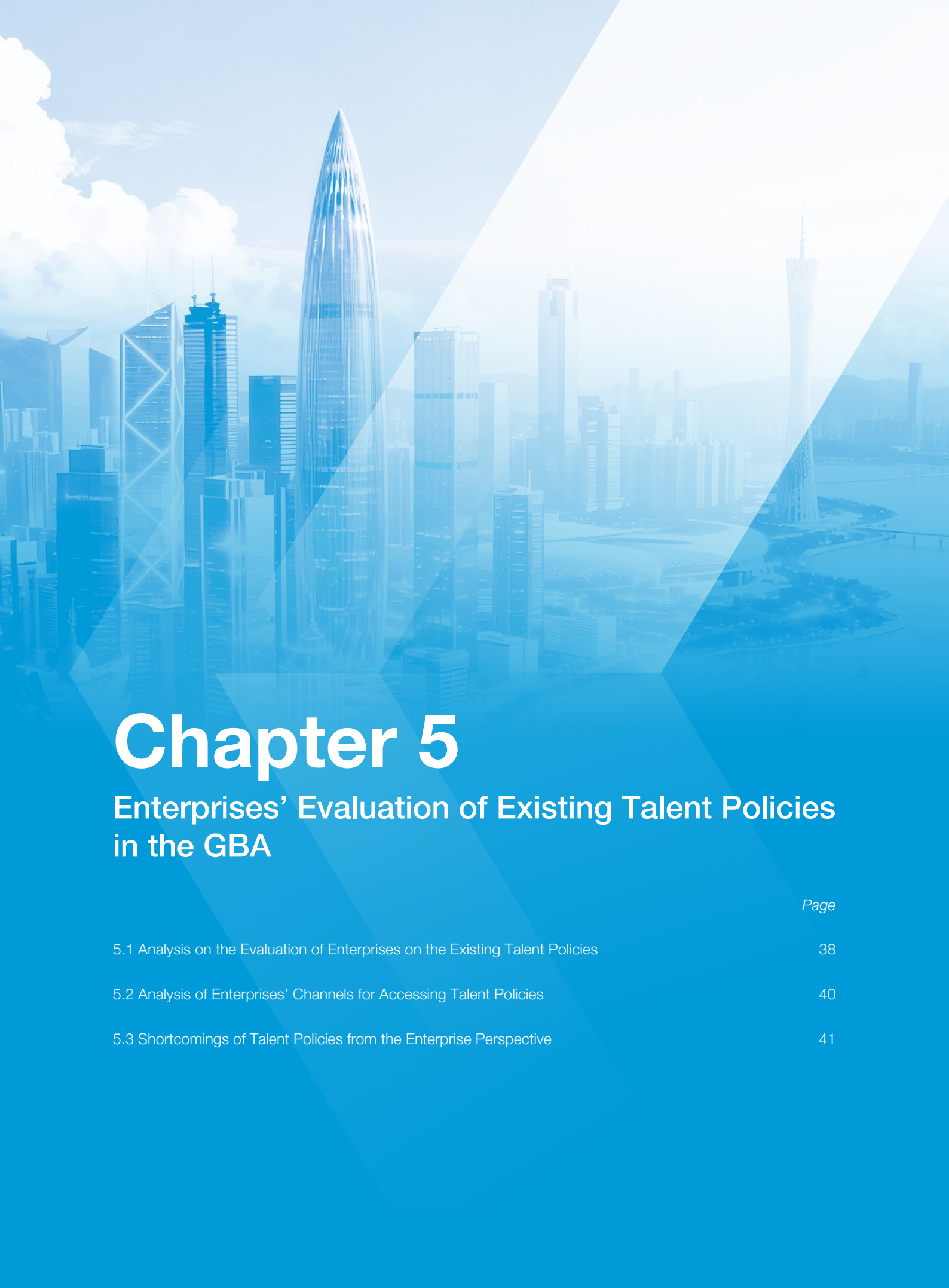
**TABLE 4-7 ENTERPRISES' CONCERNS REGARDING CROSS-BORDER BENEFITS (N=89)**

| Type of policy benefit            | Average level of focus |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Tax incentives                    | 3.94                   |
| Social security coordination      | 3.90                   |
| Housing subsidies                 | 3.76                   |
| Medical security interoperability | 3.74                   |
| Children's education support      | 3.71                   |

**TABLE 4-8 DIFFERENCES IN CROSS-BORDER WELFARE CONCERNS AMONG ENTERPRISES IN DIFFERENT CITIES**

| City      | Number of enterprises | Average level of focus |
|-----------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Macao     | 2                     | 3.30                   |
| Dongguan  | 6                     | 3.43                   |
| Foshan    | 3                     | 3.67                   |
| Guangzhou | 10                    | 4.48                   |
| Huizhou   | 9                     | 3.64                   |
| Jiangmen  | 7                     | 4.17                   |
| Shenzhen  | 24                    | 3.82                   |
| Hong Kong | 19                    | 3.55                   |
| Zhaoqing  | 3                     | 3.13                   |
| Zhongshan | 7                     | 4.26                   |
| Zhuhai    | 7                     | 4.77                   |

The report reveals that tax incentives directly correlate with corporate labor costs and the actual income of overseas talents, while social security integration concerns the legal compliance of long-term talent protection. Both serve as fundamental safeguards for cross-border talent recruitment, making them key priorities for enterprises. Three categories of benefits – medical coverage, housing subsidies, and children’s education support – receive similar attention as essential living amenities. These benefits directly impact the living adaptability of overseas talents, but their focus is less concentrated than core tax and social security benefits due to variations in family structures and lifestyle needs. Additionally, cities like Zhuhai and Zhongshan on the western Pearl River Delta, which serve as crucial components of cross-border living circles and are pilot cities for talent policies, require enterprises to leverage cross-border welfare advantages to bridge the gap with international standards in Shenzhen and Hong Kong. Consequently, these cities attract more attention to cross-border benefits. In contrast, Shenzhen and Hong Kong, with their mature international welfare systems and relatively complete foundational support for cross-border talent adaptation, no longer view cross-border benefits as a core challenge in talent attraction, resulting in relatively lower attention.



# Chapter 5

## Enterprises' Evaluation of Existing Talent Policies in the GBA

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# Chapter 5 Enterprises' Evaluation of Existing Talent Policies in the GBA

## 5.1 ANALYSIS ON THE EVALUATION OF ENTERPRISES ON THE EXISTING TALENT POLICIES

The survey data shows that the enterprises' evaluation of talent policies and related analysis are presented in Table 5-1, with a response rate of approximately 80% for the relevant questions.

**TABLE 5-1 EVALUATION OF ENTERPRISES ON THE EXISTING TALENT POLICIES**

| Item                                                                           | N  | Mean | SD   | 1 | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------|------|---|----|----|----|----|
| Adaptability of talent identification standard                                 | 94 | 3.61 | 1.01 | 3 | 6  | 37 | 27 | 21 |
| Facilitate cross-border flow of talents                                        | 95 | 3.67 | 0.97 | 2 | 8  | 29 | 36 | 20 |
| Support for industry-university-research collaboration                         | 94 | 3.56 | 1.05 | 4 | 8  | 33 | 29 | 20 |
| Degree of housing security improvement                                         | 94 | 3.77 | 0.94 | 2 | 4  | 31 | 34 | 23 |
| Entrepreneurship loan/Financial services/Personal income tax incentives        | 93 | 3.54 | 1.00 | 2 | 11 | 32 | 31 | 17 |
| Supporting services (convenience for daily life and administrative procedures) | 93 | 3.63 | 0.94 | 1 | 8  | 34 | 31 | 19 |
| Policy support for innovative technology industry                              | 93 | 3.75 | 1.01 | 2 | 6  | 31 | 28 | 26 |
| Hardware/Platform of innovation and entrepreneurship base                      | 93 | 3.71 | 0.97 | 2 | 5  | 34 | 29 | 23 |
| Professional qualification access thresholds                                   | 92 | 3.51 | 0.98 | 2 | 10 | 35 | 29 | 16 |
| International industry standards/Legal alignment                               | 92 | 3.59 | 1.00 | 2 | 9  | 33 | 29 | 19 |
| Intellectual property protection                                               | 91 | 3.6  | 1.10 | 3 | 11 | 29 | 24 | 24 |

Overall, enterprises in the GBA generally rate their satisfaction with talent and business environment policies as 'average' to 'satisfied' (mostly satisfied). The valid sample size for each question ranges from 91 to 95. The average scores for each question are 3.51–3.77, with a higher proportion of respondents scoring 3 or 4 points. A significant number of enterprises fall into the moderate range of 'fairly satisfied' or 'mostly satisfied'. The combined scores of 4–5 points across nearly all dimensions ranged from 49% to 61%, indicating that the majority of enterprises were satisfied. However, about 7%–15% of enterprises still scored 1–2 points on each item, suggesting that a group of enterprises experienced suboptimal performance in critical aspects, which was not an isolated phenomenon. The standard deviation of each item ranged from 0.94 to 1.10, indicating significant differences in experience among different enterprises.



Among the policy measures, housing security and innovation-driven technology sector policies achieved the highest scores (3.77 and 3.75) with the lowest proportion of low-rated items, reflecting greater stability in benefits and stronger consensus. Innovation and entrepreneurship bases (3.71) and cross-border talent mobility facilitation (3.67) followed closely, indicating overall satisfaction with infrastructure and cross-border resource allocation. Supporting services (3.63) and intellectual property protection (3.6) ranked in the middle range but showed significant variation, highlighting differences in experience across industries and usage scenarios. In contrast, international industry standards/law alignment (3.59), financial services/entrepreneurship loans (3.54), and professional entry thresholds (3.51) scored lower with higher low-rated proportions, suggesting that institutional coordination and financial support are more easily perceived by businesses.

### **Enterprises are more likely to positively evaluate policies in the form of ‘basic supply’ and ‘platform resources’**

Across all enterprise evaluations, it is widely recognized that policies related to talent and industrial environment receive higher and more consistent ratings. For instance, policies such as housing security (average score: 3.77, standard deviation: 0.94, with only 6.4% of enterprises expressing low satisfaction), industrial policy support (average score: 3.75, standard deviation: 1.01), industrial infrastructure platforms (average score: 3.71, standard deviation: 0.97), cross-border mobility facilitation (average score: 3.67, with 10.5% of enterprises dissatisfied), and supporting service policies (average score: 3.63, standard deviation: 0.97) have all achieved relatively high evaluation scores.

The common features of these policies are: they are easily ‘visible’, ‘usable’, and more intuitively perceived (housing, park platforms, public services, industrial support). Consequently, they not only rank higher in average scores but also exhibit significantly lower satisfaction rates, indicating relatively stronger policy experience consistency.

### **Low Satisfaction with Rules and Policies on Cross-domain Mobility**

Correspondingly, institutional regulations and cross-sector policy coordination tend to create greater disparities with higher dissatisfaction rates among enterprises. Specifically, these include: Q9 (Reducing professional access thresholds, average score 3.51, low satisfaction rate 13%), Q5 (Financial/tax incentives, average score 3.54, low satisfaction rate 13.9%), and Q10 (International standards/law enforcement alignment, average score 3.59, low satisfaction rate 12.0%).

The common characteristics of these policies include: multi-sectoral and multi-regional involvement, mutual recognition of qualifications, compliance with procedural requirements, and ‘rule frictions’ such as tax burdens and fund disbursement. Even when policy documents exist, enterprises are more likely to encounter uncertainties in processing, disbursement, coordination, and eligibility criteria, resulting in a higher proportion of low satisfaction.



In general, enterprises' actual perception of talent policies stems not from whether such policies exist, but from their operational smoothness, genuine cost reductions, and stable policy implementation. While most companies in the GBA are satisfied with these policies, a significant number of enterprises rate them poorly, reflecting a feedback pattern where a minority express clear dissatisfaction.

### **The intellectual property rights policy and the industry-university-research support policy belong to the two-level differentiation policy type**

Data indicates that the standard deviation for intellectual property rights protection stands at 1.1 (the highest), with a low satisfaction rate of 15.3%. The same applies to industry-academia-research collaboration, where the SD value is 1.05 and the dissatisfaction rate reaches 12.8%. A high SD value highlights significant disparities in corporate perceptions – some companies strongly endorse the policy, while others clearly oppose it. This reflects factors like the company's industry profile, actual experience in rights protection or commercialization, and the frequency of collaborations with academic institutions. Overall, such policies are highly relevant to those who need them, but may lack visibility to those who neither require nor benefit from them, potentially leading to polarized evaluations.

## **5.2 ANALYSIS OF ENTERPRISES' CHANNELS FOR ACCESSING TALENT POLICIES**

The survey data on talent acquisition channels for enterprises in the GBA, along with related analyses, are presented in Table 5-2. The response rate for relevant questions reached 93.1%.

**TABLE 5-2 TALENT ACQUISITION CHANNELS FOR ENTERPRISES IN THE GBA (N=108)**

| Channels                                                          | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Government official websites and policy documents                 | 79        | 73.2%      |
| Policy briefing activities organized by government departments    | 63        | 58.3%      |
| News media reports                                                | 58        | 53.7%      |
| Policy interpretation sessions organized by industry associations | 53        | 49.1%      |
| Peer exchange and experience sharing                              | 48        | 44.4%      |
| Other                                                             | 2         | 1.9%       |

Statistical data reveals that government websites and policy documents are the most frequently used channels, appearing 79 times (73.2%). Government-organized policy briefings (58.3%) and media reports (53.7%) follow closely. Industry associations' policy interpretation sessions account for 49.1%, while peer exchanges and experience-sharing activities contribute 44.4%, demonstrating the role of informal communication in information dissemination. Overall, enterprises primarily rely on authoritative, public, and institutional channels to access talent policy information, while also supplementing their understanding and application through informal exchanges.



## The Dual Approach of Official Pipeline and Private Communication of Talent Policy Information

Over two-thirds of respondents proactively visit government websites to access policy information, demonstrating the foundational success of government transparency initiatives and reflecting professionals' proactive information-seeking mindset. More than half of corporate managers have participated in such offline activities, indicating recognition of government efforts to interpret policies through face-to-face interactions. Notably, unofficial channels also wield significant influence. Industry associations' policy interpretation sessions, peer exchanges, and experience-sharing platforms each account for over 40% of information dissemination channels. This reveals how industry organizations and peer networks serve as communicators and interpreters in policy communication, effectively translating official policy language into practical guidelines tailored to corporate needs. Such peer endorsement often carries greater persuasive power than official propaganda.

## The Mechanism Change from 'Let Talent Find Policy' to 'Let Policy Match Talent Automatically'

The talent policy dissemination network for enterprises in the GBA has largely taken shape, covering multiple channels including government websites, policy promotion events, news media, and industry associations. This diversified communication system ensures timely access to policy information for both talents and enterprises. However, interview data reveals that current policy dissemination still primarily follows a 'talent seeking policy' approach, requiring enterprises and individuals to proactively identify and match relevant policies. As talent competition intensifies, passive searching may lead to delayed responses and missed opportunities. Therefore, the key breakthrough in the next phase lies in transitioning from 'letting talents find policies' to 'letting policies automatically reach talents'.

## 5.3 SHORTCOMINGS OF TALENT POLICIES FROM THE ENTERPRISE PERSPECTIVE

The statistical analysis of the survey reveals deficiencies in talent policies, with the results and related analysis presented in Table 5-3. The response rate for relevant questions was 93.1%.

**TABLE 5-3 SHORTCOMINGS OF TALENT POLICIES FROM AN ENTERPRISE PERSPECTIVE**  
(N=108)

| Shortcoming                           | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Limited policy coverage               | 60        | 55.6%      |
| Inadequate policy promotion           | 55        | 51.0%      |
| Long policy implementation cycle      | 43        | 39.8%      |
| Cumbersome policy application process | 42        | 38.9%      |
| Unclear policy standards              | 38        | 35.2%      |
| Other                                 | 5         | 4.8%       |



Data reveals that the most critical shortcoming cited by surveyed enterprises is the limited policy coverage, with 60 respondents (55.6%) reporting this issue. Policy promotion remains inadequate (51.0%), underscoring the need for stronger dissemination and public awareness. The third concern is the lengthy policy implementation cycle (39.8%), highlighting the time-consuming nature of policy execution. Additionally, cumbersome application procedures (38.9%) and ambiguous policy criteria (35.2%) pose practical barriers to policy utilization. Other deficiencies (4.8%) involve specific or unique challenges. Overall, enterprises primarily face difficulties in policy coverage, communication efficiency, and enforcement when implementing talent policies.

### **Policy Dividend: Visible but Unattainable**

In the process of implementing and benefiting from talent policies, many enterprises have identified a gap between policy frameworks and their actual needs. The narrow coverage of these policies has excluded numerous small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and emerging talents. Excessive qualification requirements and conditions favoring high-end professionals have increasingly exposed the lack of inclusivity. While companies generally acknowledge that concentrating resources on a select few can ensure policy effectiveness, this approach risks overlooking broader innovation forces and latent contributions.

In reality, companies' primary concerns revolve around time and process costs. The lengthy application cycle and multiple approval stages often require repeated material submissions and waiting periods, which not only hinder capital utilization but may also disrupt talent recruitment or project timelines. Some firms even abandon applications due to overly complex procedures. Meanwhile, ambiguous standards leave companies uncertain about their preparation direction, forcing them to experiment repeatedly while gathering materials.

Overall, enterprises expect policies to evolve toward broader and more inclusive coverage, more proactive and precise communication channels, and more efficient and streamlined implementation processes, ensuring that resources are not only visible but also utilizable.

### **Three core pain points of talent policy: narrow coverage, low efficiency and inadequate publicity**

The three primary pain points in policy implementation are: 1) Limited coverage, where high entry barriers prevent most businesses and talents from benefiting; 2) Inadequate promotion, as passive disclosure models result in imprecise information dissemination; 3) Low efficiency, with lengthy approval cycles and cumbersome procedures severely discouraging application enthusiasm. These issues reveal that the policy design favors select elites while the implementation mechanism remains bureaucratic. Systematic optimization is needed in three key areas: inclusiveness, proactivity, and convenience.



# Chapter 6

## Recommendations for Talent Development in the GBA

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## Chapter 6 Recommendations for Talent Development in the GBA

Before proposing recommendations for talent development in the GBA, it is essential to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the perceived ‘9+2’ talent development environment (see Table 6-1, Table 6-2, and Figure 6-1) among surveyed enterprises. This approach helps identify environmental strengths and weaknesses, thereby enhancing the precision of problem diagnosis and targeted policy recommendations.

**TABLE 6-1 EVALUATION OF REGIONAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT BY ENTERPRISES IN THE GBA (N=100)**

| Category                                                            | Average satisfaction level |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Business environment                                                | 4.13                       |
| Transportation and location advantages                              | 4.25                       |
| Personal development prospects and career advancement opportunities | 4.00                       |
| Policy support                                                      | 3.89                       |
| Professional talent pool                                            | 3.80                       |

**TABLE 6-2 OVERALL EVALUATION OF TALENT DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT BY ENTERPRISES IN DIFFERENT CITIES (N=93)**

| City Where Enterprise is Located | Average Comprehensive Satisfaction Level |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Guangzhou                        | 4.36                                     |
| Shenzhen                         | 4.25                                     |
| Zhuhai                           | 4.24                                     |
| Dongguan                         | 4.06                                     |
| Hong Kong                        | 4.01                                     |
| Zhongshan                        | 3.98                                     |
| Huizhou                          | 3.90                                     |
| Jiangmen                         | 3.69                                     |
| Foshan                           | 3.60                                     |
| Macao                            | 3.50                                     |
| Zhaoqing                         | 2.80                                     |



**FIGURE 6-1 WORD CLOUD OF INTERVIEW TEXTS WITH ENTERPRISES IN THE GBA**





The level of satisfaction with policy support essentially depends on the alignment between the policy supply from the government side and the talent demand from the enterprise side. Overall, enterprises have relatively high evaluations of GBA's transportation connectivity and business environment, and widely believe that individuals have good development opportunities. This reflects GBA's comprehensive advantages in factor agglomeration, industrial synergy, and governance efficiency, providing a solid foundation for talent mobility and innovation activities. However, regarding talent policies, policy support and professional talent reserves are perceived by enterprises as weak links. Issues such as relatively high procedural costs, uneven coverage and reach, and insufficient precision may still exist. The shortfall in professional talent reserves indicates that the synergy between talent cultivation/supply and industrial upgrading needs requires further strengthening. At the city level, enterprises in Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Zhuhai give more prominent overall evaluations. Dongguan, Hong Kong, Zhongshan, and Huizhou are in the middle tier, while Jiangmen, Macao, and other cities have relatively lower satisfaction levels. The differences in evaluations between Hong Kong, Macao, and mainland cities also highlight, from a different perspective, that there is still room for further improvement in rule convergence, public service interoperability, and cross-border collaboration mechanisms.

The effectiveness of corporate talent management depends not only on the organization's internal talent strategy and management capabilities, but also on the synergy between external institutional frameworks and talent supply systems. Government agencies reduce institutional barriers for talent recruitment and utilization through policy regulations, public services, and cross-border institutional alignment, while enhancing corporate satisfaction through inclusive and efficient implementation. As the primary sources of talent and knowledge, universities and industry-academia-research institutions continuously deliver 'practical, versatile, and globally competent' professionals to enterprises through standardized job requirements, project-based training, and technology transfer mechanisms, thereby strengthening technological innovation support. Based on this, this chapter proposes targeted recommendations for government agencies, universities, industry-academia-research institutions, corporate management departments, and job seekers to foster a collaborative talent governance framework that works in concert and provides mutual reinforcement.

## **6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND AUTHORITIES**

This survey finds that the contradictions in enterprise talent development within the GBA are concentrated in the following three areas:

Firstly, the three major talent policy challenges frequently reported by enterprises— 'insufficient universality of policies', 'inadequate policy promotion', and 'long policy implementation cycles'— indicate a significant mismatch between talent policy supply and the actual needs of enterprises. Secondly, the internationalization level of enterprise talent is uneven, and institutional barriers to talent internationalization and cross-system mobility between regions persist. Talent mobility between Hong Kong, Macao, and the mainland urgently needs improvement. Thirdly, enterprise talent cultivation systems are weak, with a severe shortage of foundational, enterprise-supported skills training and development, requiring attention from the government and relevant authorities.



In response to the prominent issues reflected in the survey, such as the mismatch in enterprise talent policy supply, impeded regional talent mobility, and insufficient enterprise talent cultivation capacity, local governments and relevant authorities urgently need to systematically implement measures from aspects including improving institutional supply, optimizing governance methods, and strengthening public support to promote the overall optimization of the enterprise talent development environment in the GBA. Recommendations are proposed in the following four areas:

**First, optimize the supply method of talent policies to enhance their universality and adaptability**

Efforts should be accelerated to transition talent policies from a ‘selective, project-based’ model to a ‘universal, institutionalized’ one, reducing excessive focus on individual leading enterprises and high-level individuals, and enhancing policy coverage for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as applied and skilled talents. Centered on the actual talent needs of enterprises, efforts should be made to transform some competitive review-based policies into foundational support policies with clear conditions and stable rules. Mechanisms that automatically match policies based on ‘enterprise hiring behavior’ as a trigger condition should be explored to reduce the institutional costs for enterprises in obtaining policy support and enhance the accessibility and sustainability of policy tools.

**Second, transform the transmission method of talent policies, shifting from ‘passive disclosure’ to ‘precise reach’**

Addressing the issue identified in the survey where policy information struggles to reach enterprises in a timely and effective manner, the traditional approach relying solely on government websites, centralized releases, and uniform briefings should be transcended. The talent policy transmission mechanism should shift from ‘broad-coverage dissemination’ to ‘demand-oriented reach’. Leveraging basic information such as enterprise registration data, industry distribution, employment structure, and development stage, mechanisms for enterprise profiling and talent demand identification should be established to proactively and precisely push suitable talent policies to eligible enterprises, reducing the institutional costs for enterprises in self-searching and repeatedly screening policy information.

Simultaneously, the synergistic role of government departments, industrial parks, industry associations, and professional service agencies in policy transmission should be strengthened. By employing methods such as policy specialists or policy stewards, policy interpretation and matching services can be embedded into the daily operations and development scenarios of enterprises, achieving dynamic alignment between policy supply and enterprise demand. By improving the targeting and reach rate of policy transmission, talent policies can truly find enterprises and be usable by enterprises, avoiding situations where policies are formally sufficient but practically ineffective.



### **Third, implement tiered and categorized talent policies and systems based on the differences in governance levels among the ‘9+2’ cities**

The survey indicates significant disparities among the GBA’s ‘9+2’ cities in terms of governance capacity, institutional maturity, and policy implementation efficiency. The obstacles to cross-regional talent mobility exhibit distinct structural characteristics. In the next phase, it is necessary to abandon a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to coordination and implement tiered, differentiated talent system coordination arrangements according to different city types.

For cities with higher governance levels and more mature institutional foundations, the next phase should focus on upgrading from factor coordination to rule coordination, promoting talent system alignment at a higher level. Priority should be given to promoting mutual recognition and standard alignment at the rule level in areas such as professional qualifications, professional title evaluations, and research achievement recognition. Cross-city universal mechanisms for talent evaluation and utilization should be explored to reduce institutional friction for talent mobility between high-governance cities, forming replicable and scalable coordination models first.

For cities with relatively average governance levels and carrying capacity, greater emphasis should be placed on consolidating foundational institutions and public service capabilities, avoiding the blind pursuit of high-intensity coordination before institutions are mature. The focus should be on enhancing the standardization and stability of public talent services, increasing predictability in basic areas such as household registration, housing, children’s education, and medical security. By improving the overall environment, the attractiveness and retention rate for talent can be increased. Simultaneously, mechanisms such as paired coordination or functional complementarity with high-governance-efficiency cities can be established to gradually align institutional design and policy implementation, promoting talent mobility facilitation step by step.

For the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Macao Special Administrative Region, while fully respecting their existing systems and high degree of autonomy, efforts should focus on resolving key obstacles affecting the long-term cross-border development of talent. Deepening institutional alignment in areas such as mutual recognition of professional qualifications, research and innovation cooperation, youth talent exchanges, and living support connectivity should be prioritized to reduce the institutional costs associated with talent experiencing ‘short-term commutes, difficulty in settling’. Through refined design of institutional interfaces, talent from Hong Kong and Macao can be gradually guided from project-based, phased mobility towards long-term development and deep participation within the GBA.



#### **Fourth, the government should conduct foundational skills training to strengthen the basic support for talent cultivation in SMEs**

The survey shows that SMEs generally face practical problems such as insufficient resources, limited capacity, and cost constraints in talent cultivation, making it difficult for them to independently undertake systematic, long-term talent skills training tasks. In this context, merely emphasizing corporate responsibility can easily exacerbate structural shortcomings in talent cultivation, which is ultimately detrimental to stimulating the vitality of SMEs. Local governments and relevant authorities need to create necessary conditions for SMEs to conduct talent cultivation by providing foundational public resources.

On one hand, relying on industrial clusters, industry agglomeration zones, and public service platforms, a public resource system for skills training and capacity enhancement open to SMEs should be established. It should focus on covering areas such as industry-general skills, digital skills, and job transition capabilities, reducing the organizational and marginal costs for enterprises to conduct training. By centrally supplying training resources through public platforms, scaled and standardized talent cultivation support can be achieved, compensating for the insufficient capacity of individual enterprises.

On the other hand, through institutional design, public training resources should be guided to align with the actual job requirements of enterprises, avoiding a disconnect between training content and hiring practices. The government should be encouraged to involve enterprises in curriculum design, instructor allocation, and training evaluation to enhance the relevance and practicality of public training. Simultaneously, methods such as training vouchers or job skills enhancement subsidies can be explored to increase the willingness of SMEs and employees to utilize public training resources.

By building a talent cultivation support system based on public resources and guided by enterprise demand, the issue of insufficient talent cultivation capacity in SMEs can be alleviated, the overall quality of talent supply in the GBA can be improved, and more stable talent support can be provided for the long-term development of enterprises and industrial upgrading.



## 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

The survey reveals that amid evolving external talent landscapes and policy frameworks, enterprises in the GBA are confronting dual pressures in talent development. On one hand, rapid technological advancements and accelerated industrial restructuring demand more sophisticated talent structures and role definitions. On the other hand, increased workforce mobility and rising recruitment costs have left small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) grappling with resource constraints in talent acquisition, retention, and cultivation. Against this backdrop, corporate management must adapt talent strategies to align with market realities, optimizing talent development and utilization efficiency within existing constraints. Key measures include:

### **First, accelerate the adoption of artificial intelligence and digital technologies to improve existing employment practices and organizational structures**

Enterprises should view artificial intelligence as a vital tool for addressing talent constraints, rather than merely a technological investment. Within manageable limits, they should promote AI applications in process management, decision support, and foundational roles. By ‘replacing repetitive tasks with technology and directing talent toward high-value functions’, this approach can reduce over-reliance on single positions or specific skills. Simultaneously, as AI adoption progresses, companies should dynamically adjust job structures and competency requirements, guiding talent toward more creative and interdisciplinary roles to enhance overall HR allocation efficiency.

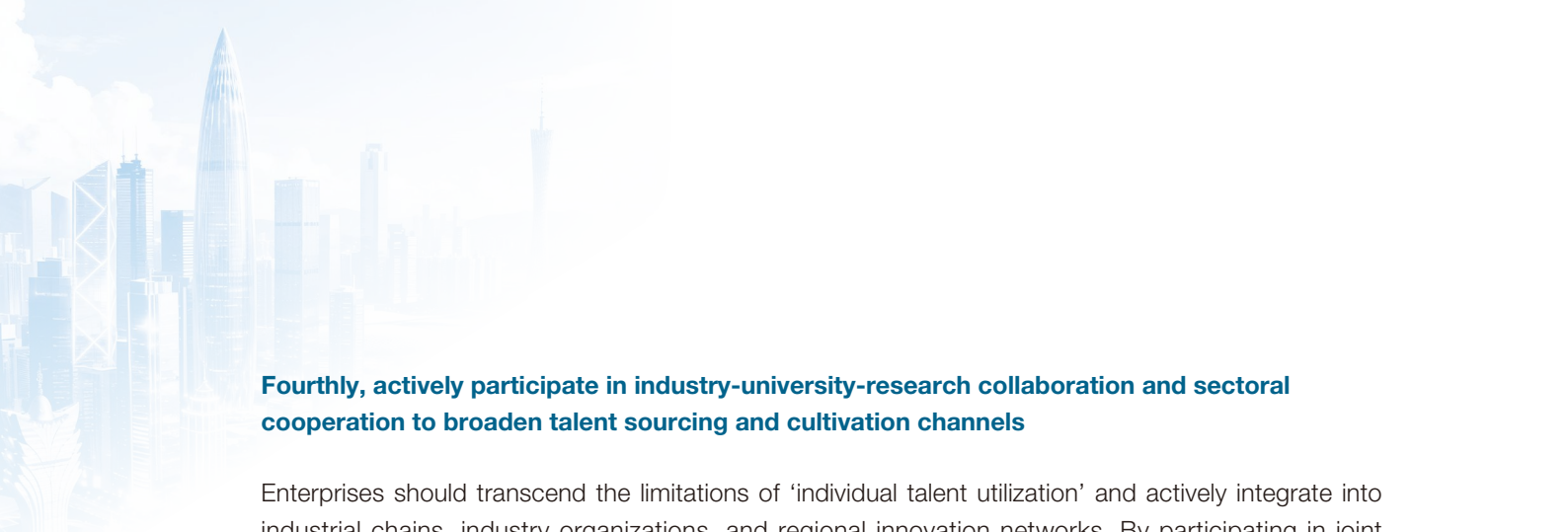
### **Secondly, improve the internal talent evaluation and incentive mechanism of enterprises, and enhance the talent retention willingness**

In an era of rising talent mobility, companies should prioritize stabilizing internal evaluation and incentive mechanisms. By developing a performance system that integrates job contributions, skill development, and teamwork, organizations can help employees build long-term career aspirations. Even with limited salary room, clear career progression paths, skill certifications, and work autonomy can strengthen employee loyalty and reduce the risk of irrational turnover.

### **Thirdly, small and medium-sized enterprises should build a bottom-line, low-cost and long-term talent training mechanism under the condition of limited resources**

In today’s increasingly competitive market, while some SMEs may lack the resources for independent systematic training, they should prioritize integrating talent development into job practices and daily operations. Methods like mentorship, project-based learning, and job rotation can effectively enhance skills in real-world scenarios, reducing reliance on costly external training. By proactively leveraging government-sponsored public training resources and industry-sharing platforms, organizations can achieve ‘cooperative training’ and ensure sustainable talent development.





#### **Fourthly, actively participate in industry-university-research collaboration and sectoral cooperation to broaden talent sourcing and cultivation channels**

Enterprises should transcend the limitations of ‘individual talent utilization’ and actively integrate into industrial chains, industry organizations, and regional innovation networks. By participating in joint training programs, internships, and research collaborations, they can engage early in talent development processes, thereby reducing future recruitment costs. Currently, universities and research institutions are actively exploring specific pathways for collaborative talent cultivation, demonstrating great potential for coordinated talent development. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are also actively engaging in joint recruitment and collaborative training through platforms such as industry associations and industrial parks, enhancing their overall talent acquisition capabilities.

#### **Fifthly, pay more attention to the talent policy and actively participate in the feedback mechanism of the talent policy**

From the current industrial upgrading direction and the evolution trend of talent policy, the focus of talent policy support will gradually shift from high education and high-level talents to more attention to high skills, application and position-oriented talents, especially the high skills blue-collar groups for small and medium-sized enterprises.

In this context, enterprises should not merely position themselves as recipients and implementers of policies, but actively participate in their formulation and refinement. On one hand, companies can systematically convey frontline job requirements, skill standards, and training costs through policy consultations, industry forums, pilot projects, and other methods, ensuring policy designs better align with practical business needs. On the other hand, enterprises should proactively identify high-skilled positions and critical occupations within their organizations, refine skill level classifications and career progression pathways, thereby establishing a clear and actionable foundation for the implementation of future high-skilled blue-collar policies.

### **6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDUSTRY-ACADEMIA-RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE ENTITIES**

The survey indicates that the structural contradictions faced by enterprises in the GBA regarding talent supply are closely related to the low operational efficiency of industry-academia-research collaboration mechanisms. Although forms of university-enterprise cooperation and industry-academia-research integration have increased in recent years, such collaborations in practice remain predominantly project-based and short-term, and have yet to effectively transform into stable, sustainable talent supply mechanisms. Particularly in addressing the cultivation of talent for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as high-skilled and applied talents, the institutional function of industry-academia-research collaboration still requires further improvement.



Based on this, the report recommends that industry-academia-research collaborative units should shift from a project-centered approach to a talent development-focused model. This transition will enable them to better align with real industry needs, enhancing the relevance and long-term impact of collaborative education. The recommendations are outlined in the following aspects:

**First, strengthen the industry demand orientation, promote the talent training goal and enterprise job demand in depth docking**

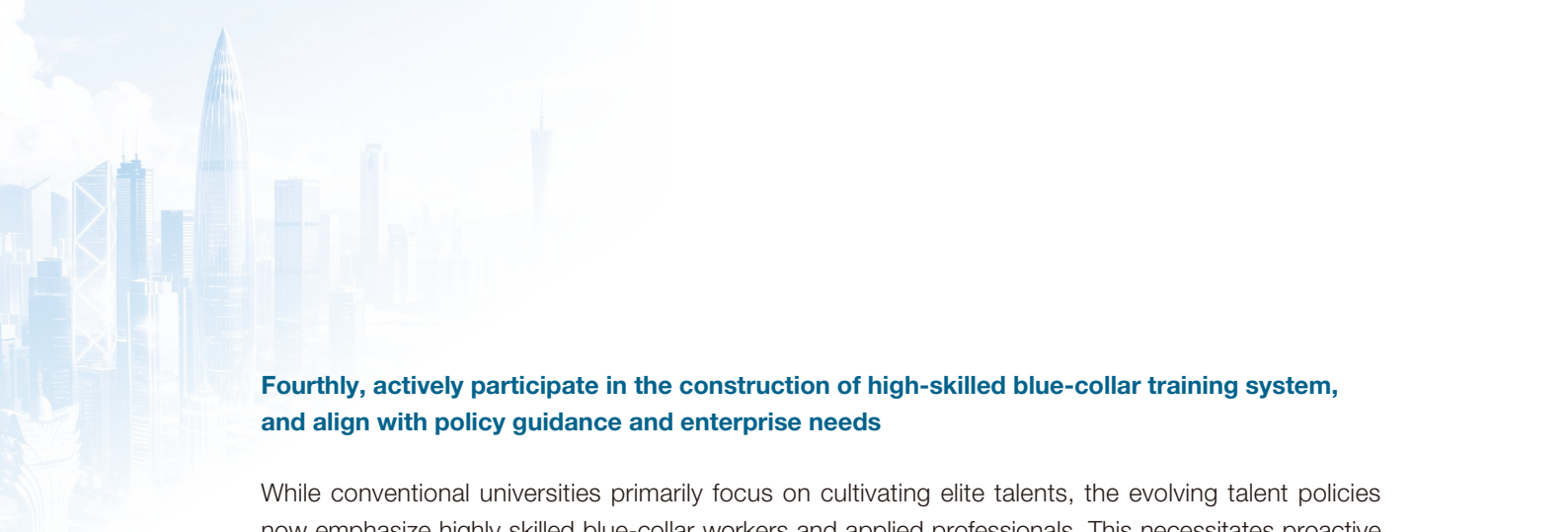
Higher education institutions, vocational schools, and research organizations should systematically involve enterprises in designing talent development programs. This requires integrating industry trends, job competency requirements, and skill standards into curriculum frameworks and training objectives to prevent talent cultivation from becoming disconnected from real-world employment needs. Particularly in cultivating highly skilled blue-collar workers and applied professionals, emphasis should be placed on practical abilities, job adaptability, and lifelong learning capabilities. Such efforts will help graduates or new entrants quickly integrate into corporate production and technical systems.

**Secondly, explore diversified and hierarchical talent training paths to serve the needs of different types of enterprises**

To address the distinct staffing needs and training capabilities of leading enterprises versus SMEs, industry-academia-research collaboration partners should develop more flexible talent development models. For SMEs, priority should be given to short-cycle, modular, and scalable skill development pathways to reduce participation barriers and collaborative costs. Enterprises with R&D capabilities can advance higher-level talent collaboration through joint training programs and project-based practices. By implementing tiered and categorized talent supply, the industry-academia-research collaboration model can better adapt to diverse enterprise entities.

**Thirdly, the transformation from ‘project cooperation’ to ‘long-term mechanism’ to enhance the stability of collaborative training**

Industry-academia-research collaboration should progressively move beyond short-term project-based cooperation models, establishing institutionalized frameworks including joint training programs, collaborative evaluation systems, and long-term practice bases. By clarifying the responsibilities and incentive mechanisms of all stakeholders in talent development, this approach facilitates the transition from ad-hoc partnerships to stable institutionalized relationships, thereby reducing talent cultivation interruptions and resource wastage caused by project terminations.



#### **Fourthly, actively participate in the construction of high-skilled blue-collar training system, and align with policy guidance and enterprise needs**

While conventional universities primarily focus on cultivating elite talents, the evolving talent policies now emphasize highly skilled blue-collar workers and applied professionals. This necessitates proactive adjustments in educational frameworks and resource allocation to bolster the development of skilled and interdisciplinary talents. Through collaborative efforts with governments and enterprises in establishing skill standards, designing training programs, and building evaluation systems, we can create a high-skilled talent development ecosystem tailored for small and medium-sized enterprises. Such initiatives will enable industry-academia-research collaboration to play a pivotal role in the new talent policy framework.

## **6.4 DEVELOPMENTAL EXPERIENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL TALENTS**

This research indicates that in today's business landscape, companies now prioritize individual skill levels and work experience over academic credentials. Core competency assessments focus on professional expertise (79.6%), innovative thinking (73.4%), and work experience (73.4%), with 60% of enterprises ranking these as top priorities. Only 48% of companies still value academic backgrounds, while merely 2.7% place them at the bottom of their priority list. This shift reflects a transition from traditional diploma-centric hiring to experience-driven selection. Notably, over 55% of companies recognize soft skills as crucial, highlighting their focus on talent sustainability. More than 60% of enterprises acknowledge the value of soft skills. Key evaluation criteria include learning ability (67.3%), communication skills (64.6%), and teamwork (61.0%). These insights guide career development: whether entering the workforce or pursuing growth, professionals should focus on both 'accessibility' and 'retention with rapid growth'.

The key to success lies in transforming personal competitiveness from 'academic credentials' to 'verifiable professional skills + transferable experience'. Individuals should develop a competency model centered on their target role, identifying essential skills (tools, methodologies, industry knowledge, and job processes) alongside tangible evidence of professional achievements (project deliverables, case studies, portfolios, and quantifiable metrics). They should structure their resume and interview strategies using the framework: 'What I did – how I did it – results achieved – replicable methods'. Fresh graduates should leverage campus experiences like courses, internships, competitions, and open-source projects or portfolios to address skill gaps. Employed professionals should highlight key projects and value contributions, clearly defining their roles and boundaries to demonstrate adaptability in new environments. Additionally, they should highlight learning capabilities by showcasing records of mastering new tools or business areas within short cycles and delivering measurable outcomes, aligning with corporate evaluation preferences in today's competitive landscape.



Personal development after joining should follow the principle of ‘deepening hard skills while amplifying soft skills’, continuously refining and honing one’s competencies. For hard skills, the priority should be to establish visible output and stable delivery capabilities within the first 3-6 months, solidifying processes, templates, and methodologies, and securing key projects to accumulate high-quality experience. Building on this foundation, one can expand into ‘multi-skilled competencies’. For example, technical roles should enhance product understanding, project management, and business metric awareness, while business roles should strengthen data analysis, systematic expression, and cross-departmental collaboration, elevating capabilities from single-point execution to end-to-end problem-solving.

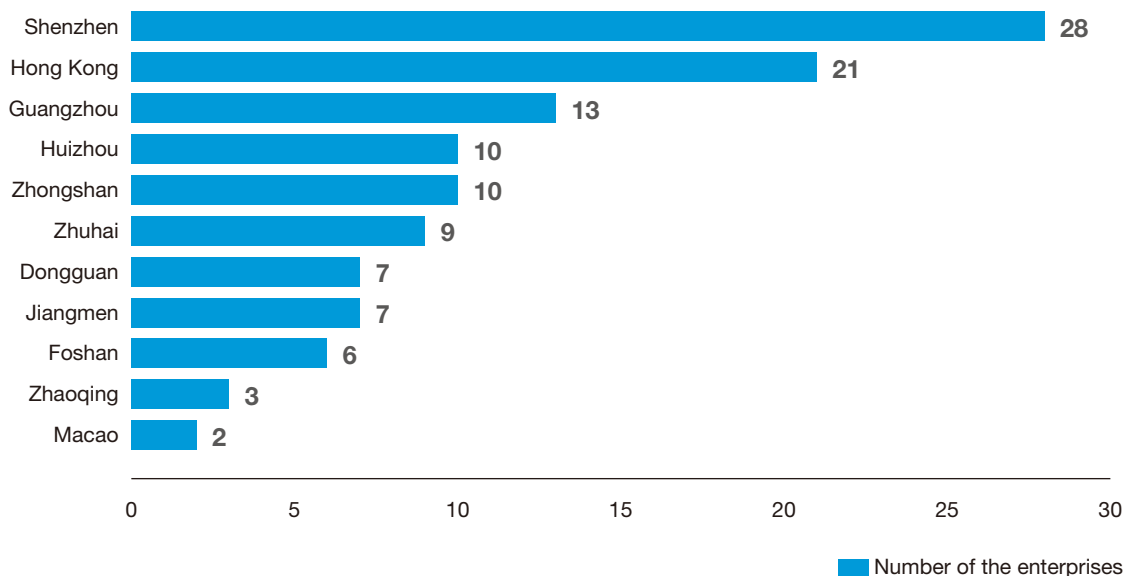
In soft skills development, learning capacity, innovative thinking, and communication/collaboration skills serve as ‘accelerators’: By conducting regular reviews, proposing actionable improvement plans, structuring complex issues, and fostering consensus, individuals can enhance their leverage in team collaboration and organizational operations. This ultimately establishes a professional skill progression logic – ‘professional skills as foundation – continuous experience accumulation – amplified impact of soft skills’ – enabling individuals not only to join enterprises but also to achieve faster growth and stronger career mobility within them.

## Appendix A Sample Situation of the Survey Questionnaire

From April to December 2025, our research team conduct a joint research initiative, which surveyed enterprises across GBA's '9+2' cities, focusing on four key areas: current talent management practices, talent mobility trends, perceptions and evaluations of talent policies, and AI applications. As of December 31, 2025, the survey had collected 116 valid responses. The basic demographic profile of the sampled enterprises is as follows:

### (1) URBAN DISTRIBUTION

The survey covers all '9+2' cities in the GBA, reflecting its comprehensive regional design. Shenzhen leads with 28 samples (24.1% of the total), followed by Hong Kong (21, 18.1%), Guangzhou (13, 11.2%), Huizhou and Zhongshan (10 each, 8.6%), Zhuhai (9, 7.8%), Dongguan and Jiangmen (7 each, 6.0%), Foshan (6, 5.2%), Zhaoqing (3, 2.6%), and Macao (2, 1.7%). The sample distribution aligns well with each city's economic scale and business density, ensuring strong regional representativeness.



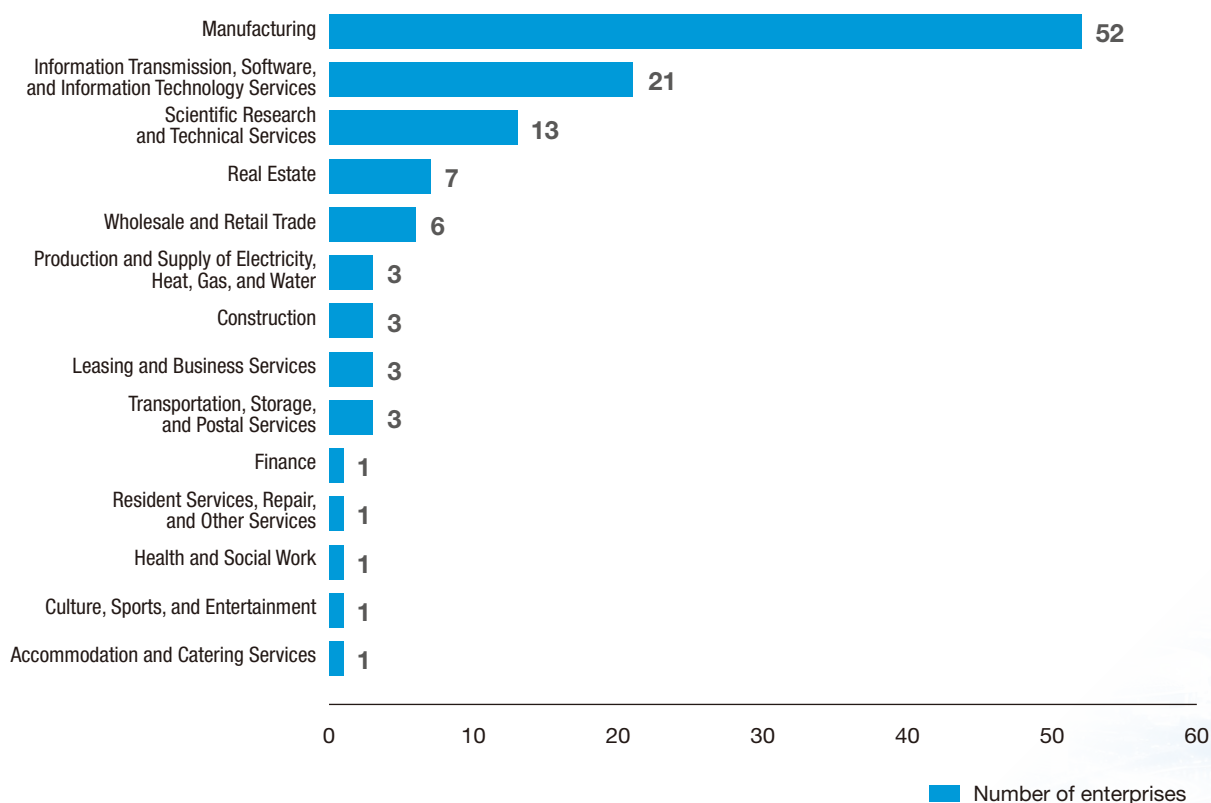
**FIGURE 1 DISTRIBUTION OF THE NUMBER OF SURVEYED ENTERPRISES BY CITY**





## (2) INDUSTRIAL DISTRIBUTION

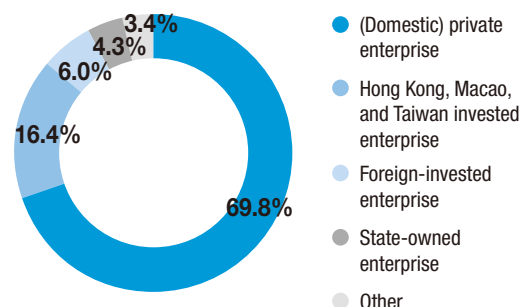
The survey sample demonstrates distinct structural characteristics across industries. As the industrial cornerstone of the GBA, manufacturing accounts for the largest proportion with 52 enterprises (44.8%), including sectors such as electronics information manufacturing, equipment manufacturing, automotive production, and pharmaceutical manufacturing. Information transmission, software, and information technology services (18.1%) combined with scientific research and technical services (11.2%) collectively represent over 30% of the sample, totaling 34 enterprises. These industries comprehensively cover cutting-edge fields like artificial intelligence, chips and semiconductors, and new materials. Other industries are also represented. This distribution scientifically balances traditional advantageous industries with strategic emerging industries, ensuring the sample accurately reflects both the differences and commonalities in talent management and technology application across various sectors.



**FIGURE 2 INDUSTRY DISTRIBUTION OF SURVEYED ENTERPRISES**

### (3) NATURE OF THE ENTERPRISE

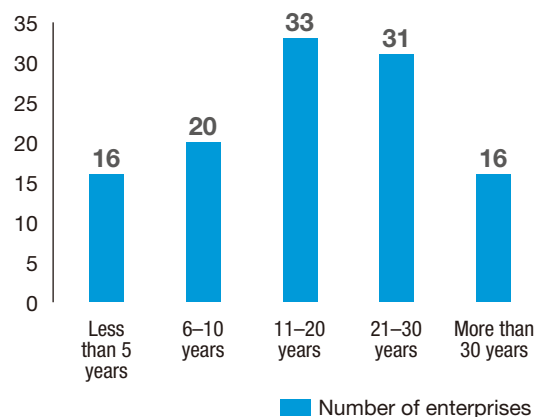
The survey sample primarily consists of domestic private enterprises, totaling 81 firms (69.8% of the total), followed by 19 Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan-invested enterprises (16.4%), 7 foreign-invested enterprises (6.0%), 5 state-owned enterprises (4.3%), and 4 other types of institutions including legal entities and public service organizations (3.4%). This distribution aligns with the private-sector-dominated ownership structure of enterprises in the GBA, while also accommodating enterprises from diverse investment sources, thereby enhancing the sample's diversity and the relevance of policy analysis.



**FIGURE 3 DISTRIBUTION OF ENTERPRISE NATURE IN THE SAMPLE OF THE SURVEYED ENTERPRISES**

### (4) YEARS OF ENTERPRISES' ESTABLISHMENT

The surveyed sample enterprises exhibit a balanced distribution across their founding years, spanning various developmental stages. Specifically, 16 enterprises (13.8%) were established within five years, 20 (17.2%) between six and ten years, 33 (28.4%) between eleven and twenty years, 31 (26.7%) between twenty-one and thirty years, and 16 (13.8%) over thirty years. This evenly distributed sample across enterprise lifecycles effectively reflects the distinct characteristics and needs of talent management in startups, growing enterprises, and mature companies.



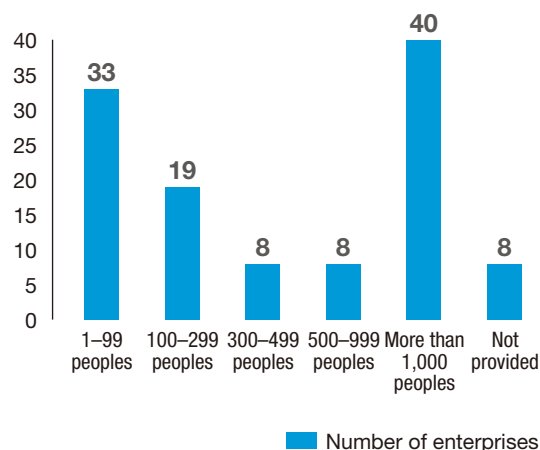
**FIGURE 4 DISTRIBUTION OF ESTABLISHMENT YEARS OF SURVEYED ENTERPRISES**



## (5) STAFF SIZE

The surveyed sample enterprises exhibit a wide range of employee scales: 33 companies (28.4%) have 1-99 employees, 19 (16.4%) have 100-299 employees, 8 each (6.9%) have 300-499 and 500-999 employees, while 40 (34.5%) exceed 1,000 employees. Eight companies did not provide employee scale data. This sample covers both small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and large enterprises, facilitating comparative analysis of talent management and policy responses across different organizational scales.

Overall, the survey sample demonstrates balanced distribution across multiple dimensions including city type, industry sector, enterprise nature, establishment period, and workforce size. It comprehensively covers major cities in the GBA, key industries, and enterprise types at various developmental stages. The sample structure exhibits both representativeness and scientific validity, enabling subsequent comparative analyses and conclusion drawing regarding talent mobility, policy evaluation, and artificial intelligence applications.



**FIGURE 5 DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEE SCALE  
IN SURVEYED ENTERPRISES**



## Appendix B Case Studies

Rooted in in-depth corporate interviews, this case study examines the GBA through five key dimensions: talent demand, recruitment, development, cross-border mobility, and globalization strategies. It analyzes five distinctive enterprises across five cities – Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Dongguan, Hong Kong and city on the west bank of the Pearl River – spanning strategic sectors including artificial intelligence, biopharmaceuticals, high-end semiconductors, industrial manufacturing, and software & information technology services. The study covers both established listed companies and private SMEs and startups, demonstrating how enterprises in the GBA build sustainable competitiveness through differentiated talent strategies amid complex market dynamics and technological shifts. The case profiles are summarized below:

Case 1: As an AI-focused private small and medium-sized enterprise in Guangzhou, this data services company has adopted a ‘core team + flexible demand’ talent structure to navigate rapid technological iterations and market volatility. By maintaining a small core team to steer technical direction and architecture design, the company ensures sustained innovation. Simultaneously, it builds a talent pool through industry-academia-research collaboration, flexibly addressing phased needs for project delivery and skill updates. This demonstrates how SMEs efficiently allocate talent to adapt to technological cycles.

Case 2: This biopharmaceutical company located on the west bank of the Pearl River has transcended geographical constraints through a differentiated strategy of ‘headquarters-focused cultivation + first-tier R&D + global network’. The company recruits industry veterans locally, establishes R&D centers in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou to attract top-tier scientific and clinical experts, and connects with international talent through Hong Kong nodes. This approach demonstrates how non-first-tier city tech firms systematically address local talent recruitment challenges through cross-regional deployment.

Case 3: A CNC technology company in Dongguan exemplifies how traditional manufacturers can build core competencies through internal development systems during digital transformation. Guided by the principle of ‘valuing practical skills over academic credentials’, the company identifies promising candidates from vocational and college graduates. These talents undergo hands-on apprenticeship training and rigorous skill refinement through a high-elimination mechanism. By implementing a partnership system that deeply aligns core talents with long-term corporate growth, the company has developed a distinctive manufacturing-oriented talent strategy encompassing cultivation, motivation, and retention.

Case 4: A high-end chip design company in Shenzhen has pioneered the ‘Shenzhen-Hong Kong Twin-City Model’ to compete with global top-tier R&D talent. With Shenzhen as its primary R&D hub, the company leverages Hong Kong’s international environment and low-tax policies to attract overseas experts, achieving flexible talent utilization through frequent cross-border collaboration. This case also highlights systemic challenges in facilitating international talent mobility within GBA, including policy coordination, living infrastructure, and commuting efficiency.



Case 5: A Chinese software and information technology service company in Hong Kong represents a typical practice of Chinese enterprises using Hong Kong as a ‘global talent hub’ during their overseas expansion. The company fully leverages the international perspective, bilingual skills, and compliance experience of Hong Kong talents, positioning it as a base for cultivating and exporting global talents. It has established an overseas market team composition of ‘mainland seed candidates + international background bridge talents + local sales’. This strategy highlights Hong Kong’s unique ‘super connector’ value in linking Chinese technology with the global market.

In summary, these five cases examine different aspects of talent management, collectively demonstrating how enterprises in the GBA – particularly those driven by technological innovation and globalization – are transitioning from a single-minded recruitment approach to a systematic, ecosystem-oriented talent strategy. Not only do they provide actionable and replicable models for businesses, but they also offer crucial insights into regional talent policy coordination and cross-cycle talent deployment within the GBA.

## **CASE A: CORE TEAM-DRIVEN TALENT HIERARCHY BUILT AROUND ELASTIC NEEDS**

City: Guangzhou

Nature of the enterprise: Private enterprise, small and medium-sized enterprise

Business Scope: Providing end-to-end software and IT services, including consulting, industry solutions, technical support, and IT talent development, serving clients across multiple sectors such as government, financial institutions, telecom operators, and power utilities.

Talent Keywords: Core Team, Talent Hierarchy, Flexible Demand

Introduction: Guangzhou-based data services Company (Company A) is a tech firm specializing in providing ‘AI middleware + professional AI models’ services to central SOEs in telecom operators, energy, and finance sectors. Confronting rapidly evolving AI application demands and shrinking technology cycles, Company A’s strategic focus lies not in unlimited team expansion, but in building a resilient talent ecosystem. This framework drives business innovation through a highly stable core team while leveraging a diversified external talent network for flexible support.

### **Core Team as the ‘Stable Pole’ Driven by Business and Long-term Bond**

Company A anchors its business innovation momentum in a lean, top-tier core team. This team, with only about 20 members, focuses on AI business R&D, including just 4-5 key architects and algorithm experts. Beyond developing cutting-edge industry-specific models, this core team is responsible for translating complex customer scenarios into AI technical solutions, serving as Company A’s technological moat builder. A company spokesperson stated in an interview: ‘Even if the business scales up significantly – say, to 800 employees – the core team will maintain its highly stable size’.





For its 4-5 most critical core members, Company A has implemented a ‘specialized equity and compensation framework’. A company spokesperson emphasized that ‘human capital remains the most crucial factor in AI competition’, particularly as the loss of key personnel poses significant risks. Through equity-linked incentives and a customized compensation system, Company A not only provides material rewards for top talent but also achieves deep risk-sharing, ensuring sustained technological accumulation and strategic stability. This approach effectively addresses the most prominent challenges in the high-tech industry: talent attrition and trade secret risks.

### **Building Flexible Network and Ability Gradient of Talents through Industry-University-Research Cooperation**

Faced with the ever-evolving challenges of AI technology, the core team alone cannot meet the flexible demands of continuous skill updates and project delivery. A company spokesperson explained that peripheral teams are expanded as needed, primarily handling follow-up tasks after AI model development, such as intelligent agents, system integration, and web development. These roles require less technical expertise, allowing for a higher turnover rate.

To this end, Company A actively collaborates with universities to build an ecosystem for industry-academia-research partnerships and talent development, positioning it as a key pipeline for forward-looking talent reserves and capability gradient construction. Company A has established partnerships with multiple institutions, including Harbin Engineering University, Sun Yat-sen University and South China University of Technology, in areas such as technology R&D, patent collaboration, and talent cultivation. These collaborations not only provide Company A with access to cutting-edge academic ideas and joint solutions to technical challenges, but more importantly, establish a sustainable ‘talent reservoir’. By participating in research projects and offering internship opportunities, Company A can identify and nurture promising young talents early on, instill business acumen, and build a talent echelon that understands corporate culture and technological trends – preparing the ground for future development and phased project needs. This approach achieves ‘advanced talent cultivation’.

Company A’s talent strategy clearly mirrors its business logic: leveraging a small, elite team to break through core technologies and define product architectures, then using standardized tools and processes to drive large-scale peripheral teams for delivery and promotion. This case demonstrates that for enterprises where complex technology-driven innovation is the core competitiveness, refining the core team and maintaining deep alignment with it may be more effective than blindly expanding R&D scale.



## **CASE B: CROSS-REGIONAL LAYOUT AND DIFFERENTIATED TALENT ATTRACTION STRATEGIES OF ENTERPRISES IN NON-FIRST-TIER CITIES**

City: City on the west bank of the Pearl River

Nature of the enterprise: Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan-invested enterprise

Business Layout: Focusing on major diseases such as oncology, autoimmune disorders, inflammation, and metabolism, we aim to establish a comprehensive end-to-end research and development platform for new drugs. Our commitment is to conduct research, development, production, and commercialization of globally first-in-class or best-in-class innovative biologics.

Talent Keywords: Non-first-tier cities, Cross-regional talent distribution, Government-enterprise collaboration

Introduction: An innovative drug R&D company (Company B) that originated on the west bank of the Pearl River has not only successfully attracted a group of overseas returnee scientists to non-first-tier cities, but also achieved rapid expansion in personnel scale and global business layout within a decade. The growth trajectory of this biopharmaceutical company has shattered the myth that 'high-end talents only gather in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen'. Behind this success lies Company B's differentiated talent deployment across different regions, which also imposes higher demands on government-enterprise collaboration in attracting and retaining talent.

### **Cross-regional business layout and differentiated talent strategy**

Company B's founding team comprises scientists with profound overseas experience. Their 'return to roots' sentiment drove them to choose to return to China and their hometown, where they embarked on a new venture to advance domestic innovative drug development. Starting from a 20-member team in 2012, Company B has experienced rapid growth, expanding to 100 employees by 2018 and now reaching a nationwide workforce of 3,600. Over the past decade, the team has grown approximately 180-fold. Currently, Company B remains in a phase of continuous expansion, with an annual net increase of around 500 to 600 employees.

Company B's rapid expansion is inseparable from its diversified talent deployment and differentiated recruitment strategies. Confronted with the objective reality of limited high-end R&D talent reserves on the west bank of the Pearl River, Company B adopted a diversified talent deployment strategy of 'headquarters deep cultivation + frontline R&D + global network'. The local headquarters, serving as the management hub, core production base, and translational medicine research center, focuses on attracting and retaining core R&D and production management talents with industrial experience who pursue stability and long-term value. R&D centers and clinical operations headquarters are established in first-tier cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. Leveraging the abundant university resources and international atmosphere in these cities, Company B precisely recruits graduates from top-tier institutions, senior scientists, and clinical operations experts, effectively compensating for the geographical shortcomings of the headquarters. Additionally, through the Hong Kong office global R&D center and overseas authorized collaborations, Company B connects international standards and resources, building a global talent network.



## How to Collaborate to Introduce and Retain Talents in Non-First-tier Cities?

The rapid expansion of this company has amplified the need for systematic policy support from local governments. The exponential growth in corporate workforce size has escalated the comprehensive challenges to urban carrying capacity. Firstly, enterprises now require not just individual leading scientists but also systematic, multi-level teams encompassing R&D, clinical trials, registration, and commercialization. This demands that local higher education and vocational training systems either provide stable talent supply or attract mature professionals through optimized policies. Secondly, employees predominantly composed of highly educated young professionals have raised expectations for urban living quality, cultural life, and healthcare/education standards. The ability to create an environment comparable to first-tier cities in terms of 'quality of life' has become pivotal for retaining talent.

For non-first-tier cities, local governments have entered a new phase in talent attraction and retention. This evolution marks a shift from initial efforts to 'support individual enterprises' to collaborative government-enterprise initiatives that cultivate a talent ecosystem and urban environment supporting strategic emerging industry clusters. A company executive revealed in an interview that non-first-tier city still lags behind Shenzhen and Guangzhou in comprehensive policy attractiveness and urban infrastructure when recruiting top-tier talent. The executive emphasized the need for more competitive talent policies, particularly addressing practical employee needs such as housing and children's education, which are critical for maintaining stable teams.

## CASE C: ENDOGENOUS CULTIVATION AND PARTNERSHIP SYSTEM BUILD A 'MOAT' TO RETAIN TALENTS

City: Dongguan

Nature of the enterprise: Private enterprise, small and medium-sized enterprise

Business Focus: Specializing in the R&D, manufacturing, and maintenance of intelligent cutting solutions for flexible materials including cutting equipment and associated software, with applications spanning footwear, automotive interiors, upholstered furniture, leather goods and handbags, luggage, and apparel.

Talent Key Words: Apprenticeship Training, Partnership System, Retaining Talents

Introduction: A Dongguan CNC technology company (Company C) is a national-level specialized, refined, distinctive, and innovative key 'Little Giant' with deep expertise in CNC cutting equipment. Since its founding in 2002, Company C has grown over two decades to become a key player in global supply chains, including Tesla, Apple Inc., Nike and Li-Ning Company Limited. With annual revenues exceeding RMB 500 million and over half of its orders coming from overseas, it operates three sales subsidiaries worldwide. Behind its remarkable growth against market challenges and international expansion lies a unique talent strategy deeply rooted in its manufacturing DNA, emphasizing 'endogenous cultivation' and 'practical-first' approaches.



### **Not Emphasizing Academic Qualifications but Practical Work: Building the Path of ‘Apprenticeship’ Talent Training**

Unlike many high-tech companies that chase highly educated talents, this firm’s talent selection process is highly pragmatic. It has explicitly adopted the motto ‘Practical Work, Not Academic Credentials’ and primarily targets vocational school and college graduates for recruitment. This strategy isn’t about lowering standards, but rather about identifying solid, adaptable foundational talents. Through rigorous internal training and high attrition rates, these individuals are cultivated into core business professionals.

Company C’s core technological capabilities are built upon a deep understanding of customer needs, a process that heavily relies on the core team – particularly the founder’s hands-on leadership in leading teams to directly gather frontline requirements from customer sites. Its R&D team of about 20 members is strategically distributed across key cities with high customer density: 7-8 software specialists in Beijing and Hangzhou, and 5-6 senior hardware designers in Dongguan. This model enables talent development to closely align with real-world business scenarios, creating a hands-on training approach where ‘the battlefield is the classroom’.

### **Excess Return and Partnership System: Sharing the Long-term Development Value of Enterprises**

To retain key talents, Company C has established an attractive incentive system centered on ‘offering exceptional rewards to those who create core value’. It clearly defines R&D specialists, core sales teams, top technicians, and executives as the core drivers of growth. For these positions, Company C provides compensation significantly above industry averages, not only in fixed salaries but also through performance-linked bonuses tied to project outcomes, technological breakthroughs, and market benefits. For instance, an engineer who successfully leads the development of a best-selling device may earn an annual compensation 1.5 times or more than equivalent market positions. This clear ‘reward-for-performance’ policy establishes a distinct value orientation within Company C, making top talents feel their technical expertise is ‘valued’ and their efforts respected.

More innovatively, Company C has elevated its profit-sharing mechanism from short-term incentives to long-term commitment, implementing a ‘partner system’ for core employees. This system is not a universal benefit but follows clear entry criteria: first, years of performance and loyalty evaluations, followed by qualifications for key skills or managerial roles. Currently, approximately 20% of employees – including highly skilled team leaders, senior engineers with unique expertise, and sales managers overseeing key regions – have become partners at various levels. This mechanism deeply binds core employees to Company C’s long-term development, creating a ‘moat’ to retain talent.



## **CASE D: THE 'SHENZHEN-HONG KONG TWIN CITIES MODEL' FOR CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY OF HIGH-END CHIP TALENTS**

City: Shenzhen

Nature of the enterprise: Private enterprise, small and medium-sized enterprise

Business Strategy: Specializing in high-performance processors, our product portfolio includes low-power microcontrollers, high-performance server processors, and customized solutions for vertical industries. These solutions are widely deployed in autonomous driving, 5G communications, and other cutting-edge fields.

Key words of talents: cross-border flow, double-city model, high-level talent

Introduction: A high-end chip design company in Shenzhen (Company D) is one of the earliest companies in China to focus on high-end processor design, dedicated to developing next-generation cloud-native CPUs for scenarios such as data centers and AI large model training, with full-process self-research capabilities from IP cores to backend implementation. As the computational power foundation for AI large model training, the AI boom has brought tremendous market opportunities to Company D while intensifying the competition for high-end chip talent. How can Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao collaborate to solve the dilemma of 'attracting and retaining top talent' by facilitating cross-border talent mobility? Company D has provided a solution called the 'Shenzhen-Hong Kong Twin-City Model'.

### **The Scarcity of Top R&D Talents and the Talent War**

Company D specializes in designing high-end processors, a quintessential example of 'brain-type' hard technology. Its talent requirements are distinctive: the team doesn't need to be large, but must be top-tier. Currently, Company D has a team of just over 120 people, 85% of whom are R&D personnel, with nearly half having overseas backgrounds. In an interview, a company executive stated that they seek 'special forces' capable of engaging in architectural design and cutting-edge research with global giants, rather than a large engineering team.

Top-tier R&D talents in the most cutting-edge fields are inevitably scarce. In addition to having to engage in fierce 'talent wars' with domestic leaders like Huawei, small and medium-sized enterprises also struggle to attract overseas top talents to return to China. These overseas talents not only compete internationally in terms of compensation but also place high importance on long-term planning for tax systems, children's education, medical standards, and an international lifestyle. Many scientists who have worked for years at top global universities or laboratories have deeply internationalized their family and social networks, making it difficult for them to fully relocate to mainland cities in the short term.





## The Dilemma of Cross-border Talent Flow in Shenzhen-Hong Kong Twin City Model

To address the challenge of attracting overseas talent, Company D has implemented a ‘Shenzhen-Hong Kong Dual-City Strategy’. Shenzhen serves as the core hub, hosting the corporate headquarters, key R&D, and primary operations. By leveraging Shenzhen’s industrial ecosystem, manufacturing chain advantages, and relatively low labor and office costs, the strategy ensures efficient R&D and project timelines. Meanwhile, Hong Kong acts as a strategic talent hub, enabling top-tier professionals who cannot reside long-term in mainland China due to family or tax considerations to work in Hong Kong offices. This setup facilitates frequent cross-border collaboration while strengthening industry-academia partnerships with local institutions like The University of Hong Kong and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

However, this ideal model faces multiple practical obstacles that create ‘soft barriers’ to talent mobility. First, there are policy gaps. Programs like Hong Kong’s ‘High-Talent Pass’ suffer from ‘easy applications but difficult renewals’, while Shenzhen and Hong Kong have failed to effectively coordinate talent recognition and welfare benefits (e.g., housing and healthcare), missing the synergistic effect of ‘1+1>2’. Second, living costs pose a barrier. Despite Hong Kong’s low tax burden, its high housing prices and Shenzhen’s talent apartments – often located in remote areas, with inconvenient commutes or unsuitable layouts (e.g., lacking apartments for single experts)–make them less attractive. Third, cross-border commuting efficiency is compromised. While frequent cross-border travel maintains collaboration, it inevitably consumes time and energy, further hindered by differing customs policies and convenience levels between the two cities.

Company D’s case highlights the core challenge confronting high-end chip enterprises in the GBA: While competing globally for top talent and exploring flexible cross-border employment models, they demand more precise, efficient, and internationally aligned talent policies alongside improved living support systems. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao region must urgently enable international high-end talents to not only work across cities but also settle comfortably in them, thereby laying the most solid talent foundation for establishing GBA as an international center of technological innovation.

## CASE E: TALENT HUB STRATEGY IN THE GLOBAL LAYOUT OF CHINA ENTERPRISES

City: Hong Kong

Business Type: Private enterprise, industry leader

Business Focus: As a provider of enterprise software and smart services, focusing on enterprise software products and intelligent service solutions across finance, human resources, supply chain, procurement, manufacturing, marketing, asset management, and research & development.

Talent Keywords: Globalization, Talent Hub, Super Connector



Introduction: A Chinese software and information technology service company (Company E) has utilized Hong Kong as a strategic pivot for its overseas operations, with its development trajectory reflecting the typical path of Chinese high-tech enterprises going global. Company E entered the Hong Kong market in 2003, initially serving Chinese enterprises in Hong Kong and Hong Kong-based companies engaged in mainland business. In recent years, driven by the surge in cost reduction and efficiency improvement demands among local Hong Kong enterprises and the growing recognition of domestic technological products, Company E has experienced rapid business growth, with its overseas operations achieving an annual growth rate of 30%-40%. During this expansion, Company E has developed a distinctive global talent selection and output strategy centered on Hong Kong as a ‘talent hub’.

### **Give full play to the unique value of Hong Kong as an international talent hub**

Company E keenly recognized Hong Kong’s unique positioning in the wave of globalization. A company spokesperson pointed out that historically, when European and American companies entered China, Hong Kong natives were often appointed as Greater China region leaders. Similarly, in today’s era of Chinese companies going global, Hong Kong talents have become ideal candidates for bringing Chinese products and services worldwide due to their international perspective, bilingual skills, familiarity with international rules, and high compliance sensitivity. Therefore, Company E not only regards Hong Kong as an important sales market but also positions it as a ‘base for cultivating and training international talents’, where they are honed before being dispatched to overseas branches to assume management roles.

Hong Kong should move beyond mere talent competition and shift to a new paradigm of ‘cultivating talent and exporting overseas’. With a large number of Chinese tech companies going global, there will be a shortage of hundreds of thousands of professionals capable of exporting Chinese technology and standards worldwide. Leveraging its institutional and cultural advantages, Hong Kong can systematically become the ‘cradle of Chinese global talent’.

### **The Construction of ‘Three-in-One’ Talent Combination Strategy in Overseas Market**

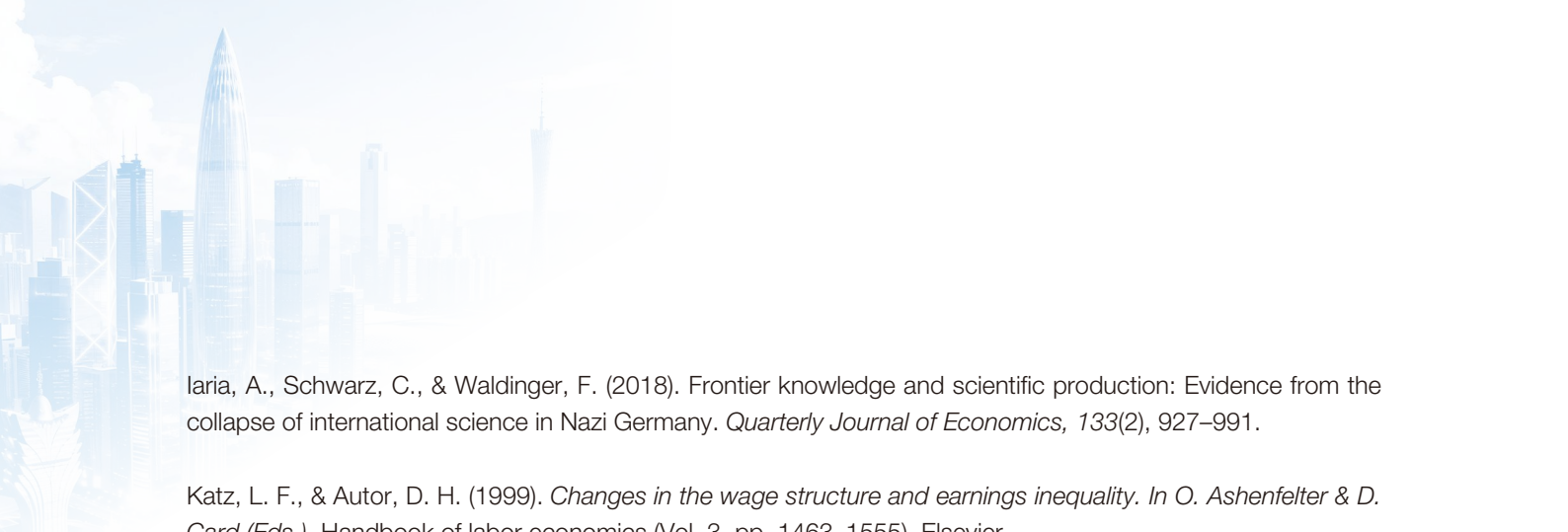
To address surging business demands, Company E has adopted a diversified strategy to attract key talent. For core R&D roles like Global Product Architect, it prioritizes recruiting seasoned experts with international industry experience. Given the shortage of fundamental R&D engineers in Hong Kong, Company E strategically repatriates two types of global Chinese-origin R&D professionals: first, seasoned experts who have worked for years at European and American giants and wish to return to Asia; second, high-end professionals who left due to adjustments in overseas R&D centers in China and often prefer to settle in Hong Kong. For expanding into new overseas markets, Company E has developed an efficient ‘trio’ model: a ‘seed candidate’ dispatched from headquarters, a local expert familiar with the environment, and a bridge talent with overseas experience.

This case reveals a key proposition in the wave of Chinese tech companies going global: the success of globalization depends not only on products and technology, but also on whether they can build a global talent team that is well-versed in international rules and understands China’s advantages. Company E deeply integrates its talent strategy with Hong Kong’s urban positioning, leveraging Hong Kong’s advantage as a ‘super connector’ to transform it into a ‘hub’ for attracting, refining and exporting global talent. This strategy not only serves Company E’s own expansion but also provides a vivid corporate-level illustration of Hong Kong playing a more central role in the new economic cycle.



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