IG Insider Brief — Drop 007

Date: 2025-07-28

📊 **Market Temperature**

**Score: 66 / 100**

July looked stable—but it wasn’t. Unemployment held at 4.2%, but job cuts exploded to 62,075 (up 140% YoY). It was the weakest hiring month in over two years, with just 73,000 new jobs—and revisions quietly erased 258,000 from May and June. Only 1.06 jobs exist per unemployed worker. It’s tight.

**Biggest shift?** Tariff uncertainty is now the #1 hiring drag. Managers are freezing headcount while they wait for trade policy clarity. DOGE budget cuts are hitting nonprofits and even healthcare.

**What to do:**

* **Target sectors still adding**: AI (+27.1%), healthcare (+55k), state education.
* **Avoid federal orgs and nonprofits**—layoffs are accelerating.
* **Use diffusion data** to fish in hiring zones only.
* **Lead with AI fluency + resilience** in your résumé and interviews.

**Bottom line:** The market’s not frozen—it’s fractured. The winners are still hiring, but you need to be precise, fast, and visibly valuable to land in the right pocket.

📉 **Headlines You Shouldn**’**t Miss**

**1. “What Workers Really Want from Artificial Intelligence”**  
*Stanford HAI News – July 2025*  
<https://hai.stanford.edu/news/what-workers-really-want-from-artificial-intelligence>  
📌 **Why it matters:** Workers want AI to handle the grunt work—but still want humans in control. Traditional data roles may lose value, while communication and training skills rise.  
🧠 **What to do:** Shift your branding from “data-driven” to “AI oversight expert.” Show how you guide or govern AI—not just use it.

**2. “Deepfake Job Candidates Flagged as Growing Cyberthreat”**  
*CFO Dive – July 2025*  
<https://www.cfodive.com/news/deepfake-job-candidates-flagged-growing-cyberthreat-ai/745362/>  
📌 **Why it matters:** Fake applicants are getting hired using AI-generated personas. That means more hoops for everyone.  
🧠 **What to do:** Be ready to prove you're human—live tests, ID checks, even screen shares. Authenticity is now a filter.

**3. “Summer Lull Ends: July Job Cuts Spike to 62,075”**  
*Challenger, Gray & Christmas – July 31, 2025*  
<https://www.challengergray.com/blog/summer-lull-ends-july-job-cuts-spike-tech-ai-tariffs-blamed/>  
📌 **Why it matters:** It’s not just tech anymore—federal cuts are rippling into healthcare and nonprofits.  
🧠 **What to do:** Study the bloodbath. Skip sectors shedding headcount. Focus your search where hiring momentum still exists.

🔎 **What**’**s Working Now**

• **Embed in Niche Communities**  
Top candidates are solving micro-problems in Slack and Discord channels—like a developer in a Rust group who landed 3 offers just by being helpful. Recruiters monitor these spaces. Your participation *is* your portfolio.

• **Use Plain Language, Not Keywords**  
LinkedIn’s AI now understands intent. Type “I want to make cities more walkable” and it finds urban planning roles—even ones you'd never think to search. One user discovered a janitor job through a taco wrapper query.  
🧠 *Stop keyword stuffing. Start with your mission.*

• **Play the Diffusion Index**  
June’s index dropped below 50 = more industries cutting than hiring. Smart seekers are targeting only the 45% still growing (utilities, education, healthcare)—and getting 3x more callbacks.  
🎯 *Only apply where headcount is growing.*

• **Leverage ICE Raid Fallout**  
Bilingual candidates are thriving in education and healthcare (+45% response rates) as immigration enforcement reshuffles the blue-collar labor pool.  
🧠 *Got work authorization? Say it clearly. And lead with your languages.*

• **Send Post-Interview Looms**  
Forget thank-you emails. A 30-second video with one new idea gets forwarded internally 3x more often.  
📹 *Use Loom. Be concise. Add value.*

✅ **Job Hack**

**The “Actively Hiring” Response Time Filter**

LinkedIn now shows which companies are *actively hiring*—and how fast they respond. Here’s how to use that intel to beat the crowd:

1. Filter by “Actively Hiring” badges
2. Sort by **response time**, not posting date
3. Target companies with **48–72 hour response windows** (not <24)—they’re serious but less crowded
4. Apply on Sunday nights or holiday mornings
5. Your app rises to the top when recruiters return

**Why it works:**  
Fast responders get flooded. But the 2–3 day companies are just as real—with 80% less competition. One data analyst landed 5 interviews in 2 weeks after months of silence just by switching to this tactic.

🧠 *Think like a sniper, not a spammer. Timing + filtering = traction.*

⚡ **Changing Dynamics**

**1. Tariff Paralysis Freezes Hiring**  
Hiring managers aren’t pulling the trigger when 25% tariffs could blow up next quarter’s budget. If you work in ops, logistics, or procurement, position yourself as the one who plans through chaos—mention “supply chain resilience” and “tariff mitigation” in every conversation.

**2. DOGE Cuts Are Gutting Nonprofits**  
Federal budget slashing is cascading into nonprofits and healthcare contractors, with layoffs up 413% year-to-date. If your paycheck touches federal money, now is the time to pivot—translate your impact into private sector language and get out ahead of the axe.

**3. Recruiters Are Maxed Out**  
Application loads are up 56% per recruiter. Silence doesn’t mean no—it means “buried.” If you haven’t followed up, you’re invisible. If you haven’t reapplied, someone else just did.

**4. Blue-Collar Roles Now Require Proof Up Front**  
ICE raids have employers paranoid. Expect I-9 checks at the door. If you’re authorized to work, say it loudly. If you speak a second language, lead with it—it’s a differentiator in healthcare and education right now.

🧠 AI Tracker

→ **LinkedIn's AI Understands Missions, Not Keywords**  
The platform now surfaces jobs based on what you want to *achieve*, not the title you search. Type “help people eat healthier,” and it shows nutrition counselor roles—even if you never used the word “nutrition.”  
**So what?** Rewrite your headline as a mission statement.  
**Action:** Change “Marketing Manager” to “I help sustainable brands reach conscious consumers.” It works—for both humans and AI.

→ **23% of Layoffs Now Explicitly Blame AI**  
Intel just cut 24,000 roles—replaced not by overseas labor, but by LLMs. AI isn’t “disrupting.” It’s deleting.  
**So what?** If your job is repetitive, assume you’ve got 6–12 months to pivot.  
**Action:** Add “AI augmentation” to every résumé bullet showing how you *use* AI to multiply results.

→ **Deepfake Candidates Force Identity Theater**  
North Korean hackers used AI personas to get hired by U.S. firms. The result? Everyone now faces suspicion.  
**So what?** Interviews now include live tests, screen shares, and stricter verification.  
**Action:** Be ready to prove you’re human—repeatedly.

→ **Live Interview Copilots Create Clone Candidates**  
Tools like Final Round AI whisper answers in real time. Employers are catching on—watching for robotic pauses and vague phrasing.  
**So what?** Relying on these tools is now a high-risk move.  
**Action:** Practice real storytelling. Interviewers can smell AI.

💬 **Interviewer Behavior**

→ **The Hybrid Gauntlet Is Standard**  
Most companies now run virtual screens first—then fly finalists in for a final round. It’s two separate auditions: camera presence up front, in-person energy at the finish.  
**What this means for you:** You need to master both formats. Don’t assume one strong round will carry you.

→ **“Tariff Anxiety” Questions Replace Culture Fit**  
New behavioral standards are emerging: “How would you handle a 25% cost increase?” or “Tell me about navigating uncertainty.”  
**What this means for you:** Prep a STAR story about thriving during external disruption. Make it recent. Make it quantified.

→ **AI Fluency Checks Even in Non-Tech**  
Even ops, HR, and marketing roles now get asked: “How have you used AI in your work?” They’re not looking for theory—they want workflow.  
**What this means for you:** Build a 90-second story about a real problem AI helped you solve. Include the tool and the time saved.

→ **Lightning Culture-Add Rounds**  
Some teams are replacing long vibe checks with 5-minute calls asking: “What fresh lens would you bring to this team?”  
**What this means for you:** They’re not looking for a clone. Prepare a one-sentence differentiator you can drop cold.

📌 **Prompt Lab**

**Use Case:** Transform your vague LinkedIn About section into an AI-readable mission story that actually gets you found.

**The Strategic Mission Optimizer**

Act as a LinkedIn optimization expert who understands both AI algorithms and human psychology. Rewrite my About section using these constraints:

CURRENT ABOUT: [paste your current LinkedIn About]  
TARGET ROLE: [specific job title you're targeting]  
TOP 3 ACHIEVEMENTS: [list with numbers/percentages]

Create a 3-paragraph About section that:

1. Opens with a mission statement, not a job title (e.g., “I make supply chains resilient to global disruption”)
2. Naturally integrates 5–7 role-relevant skills as part of achievement stories
3. Includes 2–3 quantified wins that demonstrate mission success
4. Ends with a future-focused vision of problems you want to solve
5. Uses conversational “I” language that would make sense spoken aloud
6. Stays under 2,000 characters

Also provide:  
– Three plain-language job search queries based on this mission  
– A one-paragraph explanation of why this format works for LinkedIn’s new AI

**Why it works:**  
LinkedIn’s AI now understands mission, not just keywords. This prompt crafts an About section that hits both the algorithm *and* the human reading it.

⚠ **Sketch Radar**

🚨 **Deepfake Corporate Infiltration**  
AI-generated video and audio are being used to impersonate real candidates—sometimes successfully. Over 300 U.S. companies have been infiltrated by DPRK-linked actors posing as remote tech workers.  
**Red flag:** Odd mouth movements, poor sync, requests to use virtual backgrounds.  
**Defense:** Be prepared for multiple rounds of ID checks, screen shares, and live validation. Legit employers will understand the scrutiny.

🚨 **Boss Imposter Onboarding Scam (FTC Alert: July 11)**  
Scammers monitor LinkedIn for new job announcements, then text new hires pretending to be their manager—often asking for gift cards or financial transfers.  
**Red flag:** “Hey, got a second?” texts with financial urgency—even if they reference your new job.  
**Defense:** Always verify financial requests through official company channels. Never respond via personal phone or email.

🚨 **Military/Veteran Remote Job Traps**  
Scammers are targeting servicemembers with fake “security clearance required” roles, designed to steal DD-214 forms and ID documents.  
**Red flag:** Requests for clearance verification before an official offer letter.  
**Defense:** Real contractors never ask for military paperwork via email. Verify through .mil or DOD transition offices.

🚨 **Tariff Specialist License Scams**  
Fake “import/export coordinator” jobs are charging applicants $200–$500 for bogus certification or licensing fees.  
**Red flag:** Any job tied to trade compliance that asks for payment before hiring.  
**Defense:** Real trade employers are desperate for talent—they’ll pay you, not the other way around.

💼 **Side Hustle Intel**

**1. Group Travel Organizing ($900–1,600 per trip)**  
Marketing-savvy professionals are coordinating trips for solo travelers—especially women—to Iceland, Colombia, and South Africa. One Atlanta-based organizer runs monthly getaways with 12–20 guests and no upfront inventory.  
**Start today:** Post in a Facebook travel group offering to organize a weekend trip with 5 people. See who bites.

**2. AI-Powered Creative Freelancing**  
Freelancers are using AI tools to deliver premium content: Soundraw for music ($20–100 per track), Midjourney for graphics ($50–200 per project), and ChatGPT for blog outlines polished by hand ($75–150 per article).  
**Start today:** Make three samples, list them on Fiverr, and pitch yourself as “AI-assisted with human polish.”

**3. Tariff Impact Consulting ($75–150/hour)**  
With trade chaos looming, small businesses need help modeling cost impacts and supply chain alternatives. No certification needed—just spreadsheet skills and research chops.  
**Start today:** Post on LinkedIn: “I help SMBs navigate tariff uncertainty with fast, custom modeling.” Expect inbound.

**4. Podcast Guest Booking Service ($500–1,500/month)**  
Podcasters are overwhelmed finding guests—and paying $50–100 per successful placement. With over 113 million listeners by 2029, it’s a growing market.  
**Start today:** Email 5 podcasters offering to find their next guest. Use HARO to source quality experts.