Twitter Thread by Leo Polovets

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1/ People often ask if it's worth it for companies to have an HQ in Silicon Valley. Real estate is crazy expensive here, salaries are astronomical as a result, there's heavy rush hour traffic, and so on. Why do companies put up with this??

One answer: an abundance of top talent.

2/ To take a data-driven approach, I used LinkedIn to count the number of people with different job titles in 4 metro areas: Houston, Atlanta, Toronto, and SF. Each of these has roughly 6 million people, so I would expect them to have similar amounts of tech talent.

3/ Caveat: a) this is not *super* scientific and b) these are searches from my LinkedIn account, so maybe the numbers will vary for different users. Regardless, I believe the numbers paint a strong picture.

4/ HOUSTON
DevOps = 270
VP of Engineering = 798
Customer Success = 294
iOS Developer = 71
Sr Data Scientist = 73

5/ ATLANTA
DevOps = 924
VP of Engineering = 657
Customer Success = 1232
iOS Developer = 214
Sr Data Scientist = 125

6/ TORONTO
DevOps = 946
VP of Engineering = 515
Customer Success = 1094
iOS Developer = 386

Sr Data Scientist = 181

7/ SF
DevOps = 2959
VP of Engineering = 4194
Customer Success = 5229
iOS Developer = 1020
Sr Data Scientist = 1350

8/ What this data suggests to me is that SF has 5x-10x more tech talent per capita compared to other big metro areas. There's more competition for that talent, but the large supply is invaluable -- especially for unusual roles. E.g. SF has 29 video codec engineers; Houston has 0.

9/ As long as there is so much tech talent in this area, I think Silicon Valley will remain a great place for a startup's HQ. However, I also believe the advantage will diminish over time as more & more tech talent emerges in other areas -- or moves there because of living costs.

10/ Addendum: a few people asked me to throw NYC into the mix. Here we go:
DevOps = 1792
VP of Engineering = 2318
Customer Success = 3023
iOS Developer = 778
Sr Data Scientist = 670

So approximately 50-60% of Silicon Valley's counts, but 3x the population.