



TRIANGLE TALENT

A Regional Skills Analysis

Volume 3



WAKE COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**RALEIGH
CHAMBER** 

CAVD
CAPITAL AREA
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



NO. 3
City Where Jobs are Growing the Fastest (Raleigh, NC)
Quartz, 2024

INTRODUCTION

Regional Skills Analysis

What does it take to build a resilient economy? How do we fuel a workforce that continually lands our city, region, and state at the top of various “best of” lists? According to CNBC’s annual Top State for Business ranking, “At a time when companies are clamoring for workers while trying to navigate a treacherous economy, no state is meeting their needs more effectively than North Carolina.”

We are fortunate to find our city, and broader region and state, at the top of lists like this. We top these lists because we work together to stay ahead of the curve and anticipate the needs of our workforce. In 2017, we launched the Triangle Talent Regional Skills Analysis, a first-of-its kind study. That first study revealed critical skills needs in growing industries including IT, life science, and construction and skilled trades. We conducted the study again during the height of the pandemic in 2020. Global pandemic or not, the economy was changing, industries were shifting, and so were companies’ skill, talent, and education needs.

The third Regional Skills Analysis was launched in June 2023. This survey was led by Wake County Economic Development in partnership with The Raleigh Chamber and Capital Area Workforce Development, and was deployed to businesses across the Research Triangle Region. A parallel study was launched by Cape Fear Collective and the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce in the Cape Fear Region.

Survey Objectives

- ✓ Understand both short and long-term hiring needs
- ✓ Inform training and education providers of the current workforce needs
- ✓ Provide current workforce information for policy makers in workforce, education and economic development
- ✓ Create an efficient structure for ongoing industry feedback

77.5% of Triangle area companies expect to grow their workforce in the next three years.

From June to August, the team worked with hundreds of regional partners to promote the survey to a wide range of businesses to gather data to inform future skills needs in the region. As a result, we received nearly 1,000 responses from across the greater Research Triangle.



SURVEY KEY THEMES

In 2023, company hiring expectations are the highest we have seen in our survey, with few industries planning to downsize.

77.5% of Triangle Area companies expect to grow their workforce in the next three years. This is the highest value we have seen since we first conducted the survey in 2017. This represents a significant shift in sentiment from the pandemic-era study conducted in 2020. The highest expectations of growth are in energy, construction and healthcare. IT and life science hiring projections are relatively low when compared to prior surveys. Most sectors expect to grow or maintain their existing workforce.

Healthcare and the public sector have consistently high demand, driven by growth in both sectors.

The survey revealed a demand for between 50,000 and 86,000 jobs in the next 3 years across the Triangle region. Professional services, healthcare and manufacturing project over 10,000 new jobs. For context, the region currently has 1.1 million private sector jobs and grew at an average annual rate of 2.9% from 2012-2022. 30,000 additional jobs per year is consistent with this recent rate of growth.

Four-year degrees remain top of mind for employers, but they are considering more options and looking for additional, specialized credentials.

While four-year college degrees remain the most sought-after credentials across all industries in the region, community college programs (associates and certificates) continue to be highly valued. For the first time, “other professional certifications” surpassed 50%, indicating employer interest in industry-specific nontraditional credentials and certifications. There are significant differences across industry sectors for requested credentials.

Small and medium-sized businesses are underutilizing many resources available for sourcing talent.

Friends and networks remain the most common sources of talent. In a continuation of the pattern set by past surveys, businesses continue to prioritize their existing networks when hiring. In fact, use of friends and networks is most pronounced among small businesses. Four-year universities rose in ranking this year.

In the following pages, you will find survey results from each industry.

Industry Findings



Construction & Skilled Trades 4



Healthcare & Social Assistance 5



Professional & Technical Services 6



Logistics, Transportation & Warehousing 7



IT, Software & Analytics 8



Restaurants, Lodging & Hospitality Services 9



Public Sector & Education 10



Life Sciences & Biosciences 11



Retail 12



Manufacturing 13



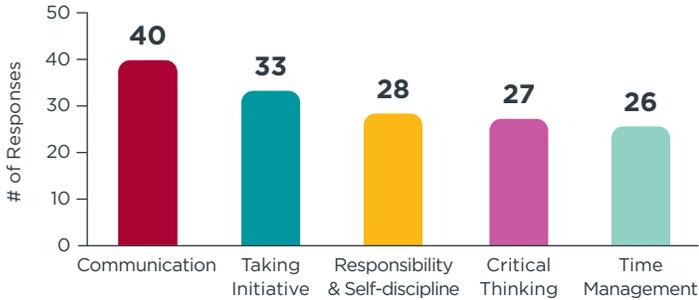
Energy, Utilities & Cleantech 14



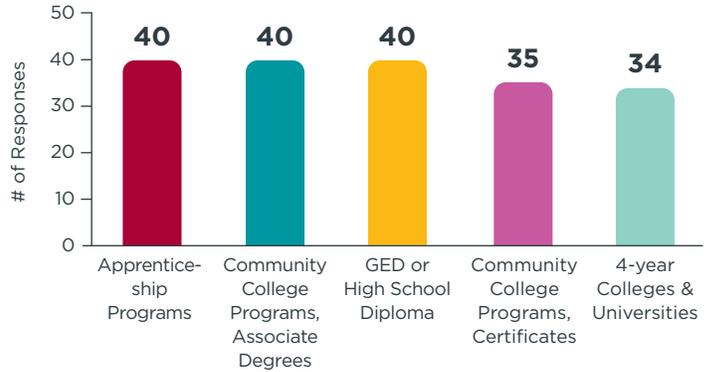
This study is funded through the generosity of the Truist Foundation and our EDGE 6 Investors.

CONSTRUCTION & SKILLED TRADES

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



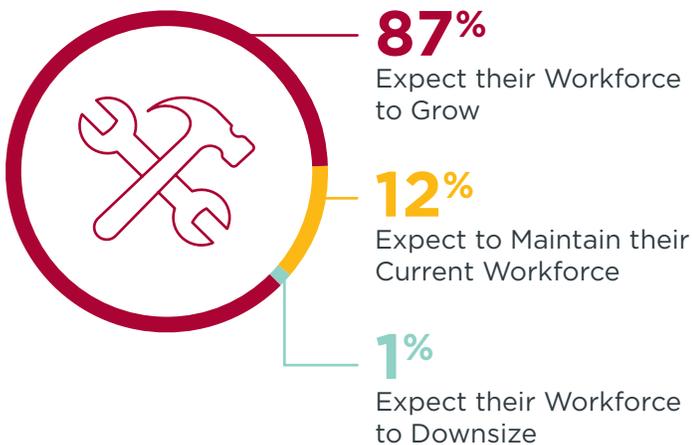
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 35** Commercial Construction Field Supervisors
- 31** Commercial Construction Project Managers
- 25** Estimators
- 21** Supervisors and Managers
- 16** Other

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 64** Efficient Completion of Tasks
- 39** Communication and Visualization of Proposed Work
- 27** Interpretation of Drawings Used in Project Planning
- 26** Participate and Contribute to a Safe Work Environment
- 23** Willingness to Adapt to Current Technology

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?

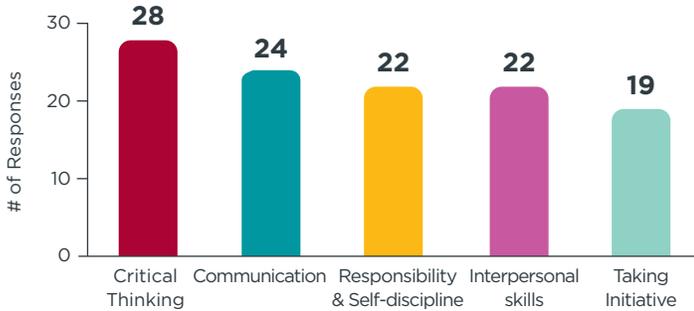


Key Takeaway

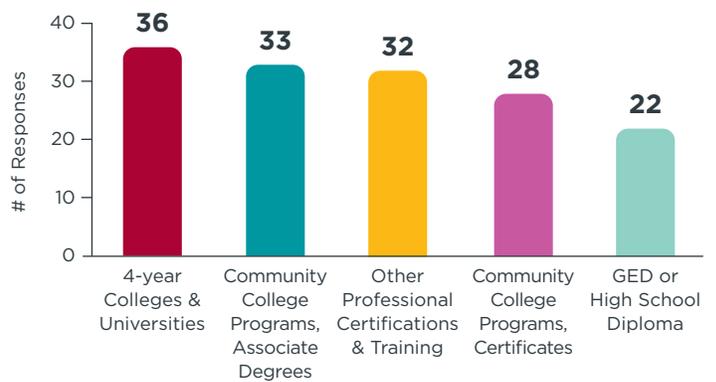
This industry has the **highest growth projection** across all industries surveyed.

HEALTHCARE & SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



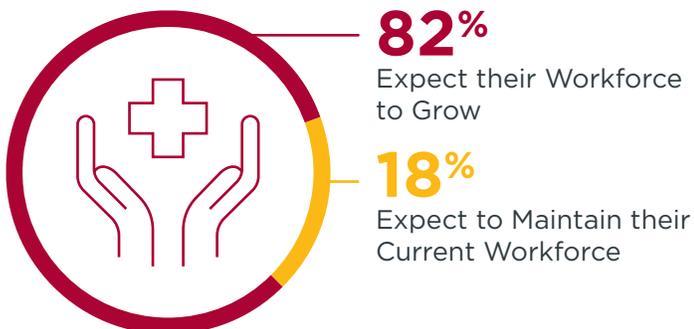
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 34** Nurses (Incl. RN, LPN)
- 27** Case and Care Managers
- 24** Health Aides & Assistants, Including Home Health Aides & CNA's
- 22** Other
- 16** Social Workers

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 42** Effective Communication and Appropriate Documentation when Responding to Patient Questions/Concerns
- 27** Confidential Patient/Client Information Collection in Compliance with Facility Guidelines
- 25** Treatment Plan Creation Using a Problem-solving Model, Incorporating Patient/Client Input
- 24** Efficient Response to Patient/Client Health Changes
- 19** Analysis of Information Gathered from Patient Evaluation

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?

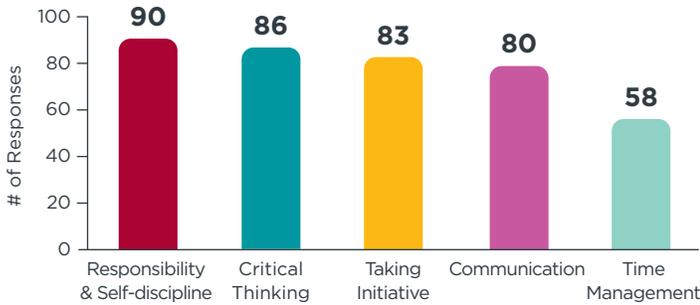


Key Takeaway

This industry reports the **most need to hire nurses, care and case managers, and health aids and assistants in the next 3 years.** They also expect these roles to be the most difficult to fill.

PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL SERVICES

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



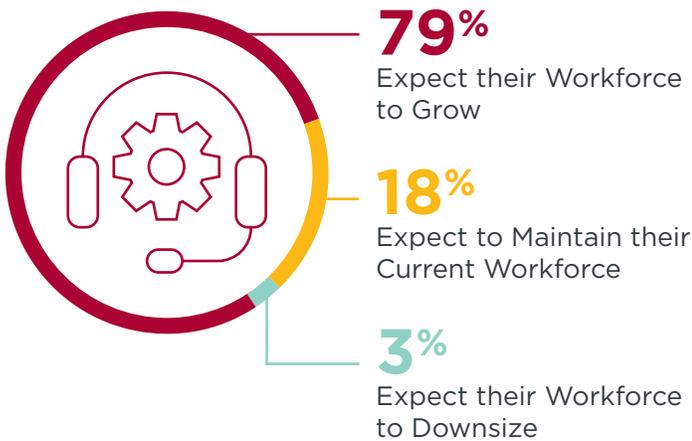
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 68** Administrative Assistants
- 60** Marketing Professionals
- 57** Accountants & Bookkeepers
- 46** Financial Professionals
- 43** Other

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 119** Ability to Work Efficiently
- 106** Effective Communication Appropriate to Intended Audience
- 103** Creation & Maintenance of Positive Client Relations
- 77** Information Gathering and Analysis
- 61** Knowledge of Relevant Computer Software

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?



Key Takeaway

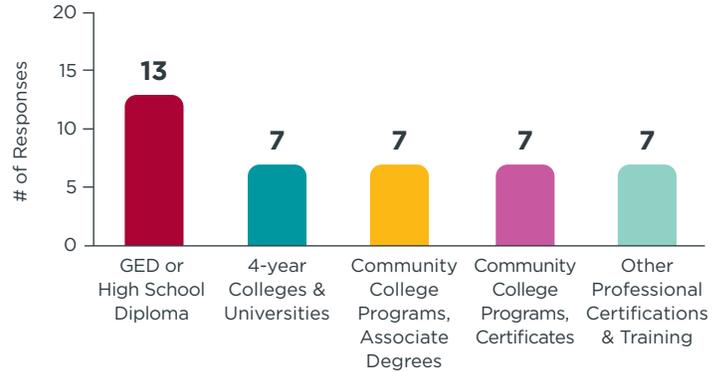
Small businesses in this sector have **higher expectations of growth than larger businesses** in the same category.

LOGISTICS, TRANSPORTATION & WAREHOUSING

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



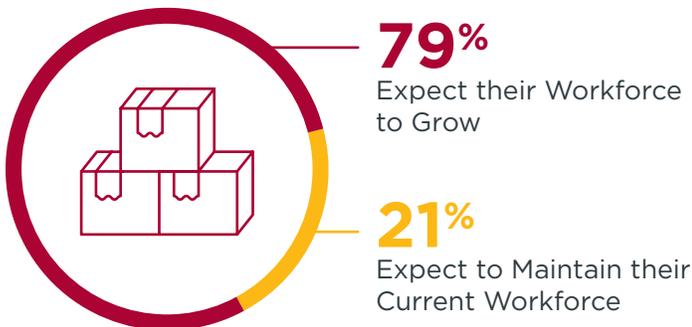
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 9** Mechanics, Machinists, & Repair Personnel
- 9** Labors & Material Movers
- 8** Transportation & Drivers
- 6** Supervisors & Managers
- 6** Business & Engineering Professionals

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 11** Communication of Relevant Information for Decision Making
- 9** Allocation of Resources to Minimize Gaps in Operation
- 6** Information Gathering and Analysis
- 4** Prediction of Future Trends
- 4** Knowledge of Relevant Computer Software

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?

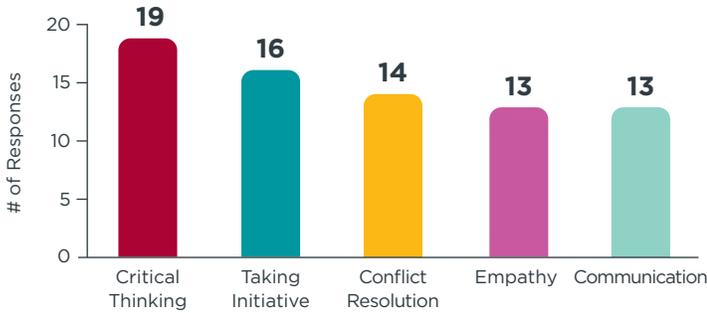


Key Takeaway

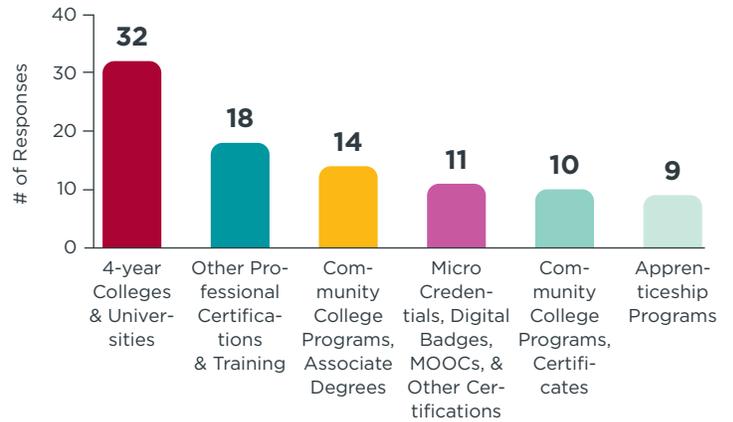
In this industry, technical skills needed include a strong element of soft skills such as communication and decision making.

IT, SOFTWARE & ANALYTICS

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



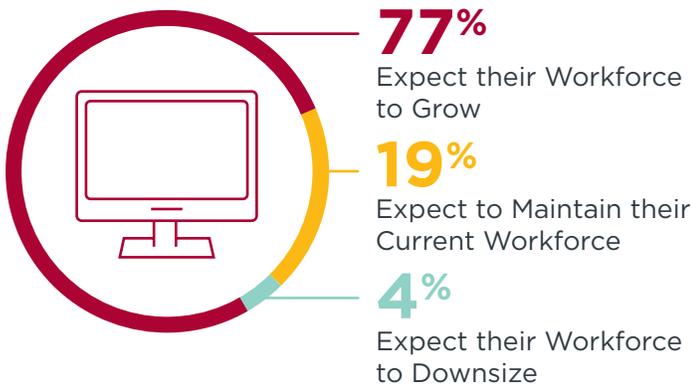
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 25** Software Developers, Programmers & Engineers
- 16** Computer, Networking & IT Support Professionals
- 15** Cyber Security Analysts
- 15** Artificial Intelligence Professionals
- 14** Data Scientists

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 21** Effective Communication Appropriate to Intended Audience
- 18** Knowledge of Relevant Computer Software
- 13** Remaining Current on Advancements in Technology
- 13** Creating and Maintaining Positive Client Relations
- 13** Analysis and Recognition of Potential Security Threats

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?

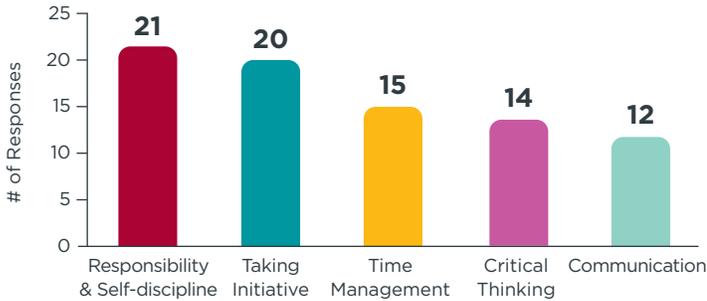


Key Takeaway

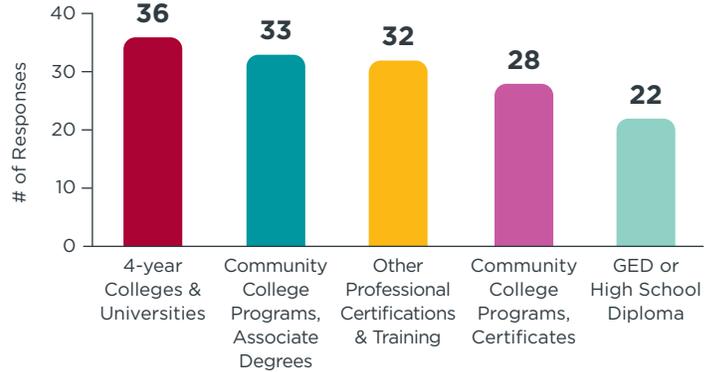
This sector most favorably rates the local talent pipeline, with an **average pipeline rating of 3.46 out of 5.**

RESTAURANTS, LODGING & HOSPITALITY SERVICES

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



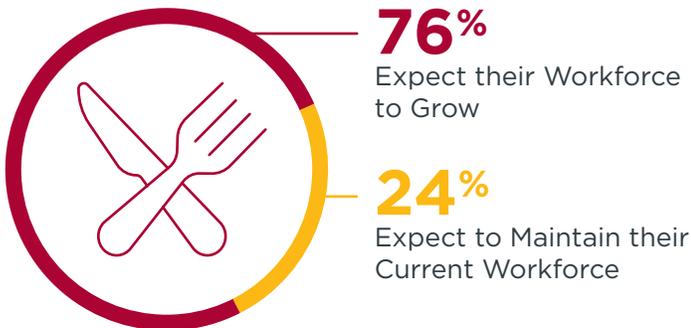
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 16** Food Preparation Staff
- 14** Supervisor & Managers (General Manager, HR Manager, Financial professionals Manager etc.)
- 12** Housekeepers
- 12** Event Planning/Operations Staff
- 11** Wait/Banquet Staff

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 30** Commitment to Customer Service
- 20** Application of Appropriate Food, Health & Safety Practices
- 18** Effective Communication & Negotiation Techniques
- 11** Information Gathering & Analysis
- 9** Knowledge of Relevant Computer Software

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?

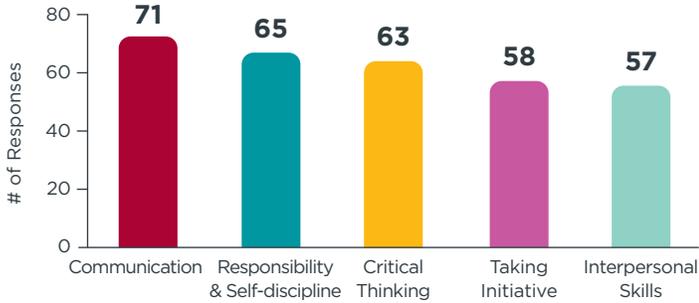


Key Takeaway

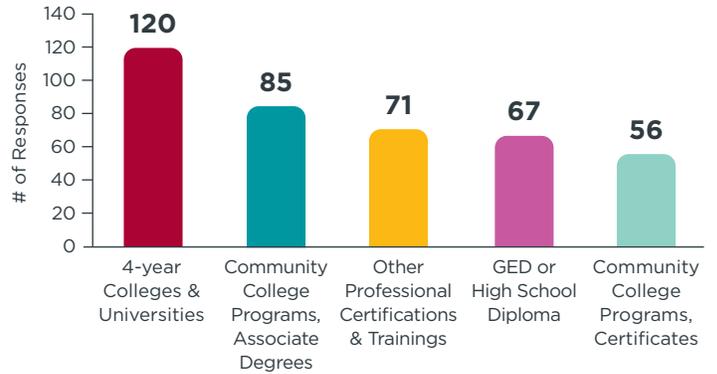
This sector is one of three surveyed with **no reported expectations of downsizing in the next three years.**

PUBLIC SECTOR & EDUCATION

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



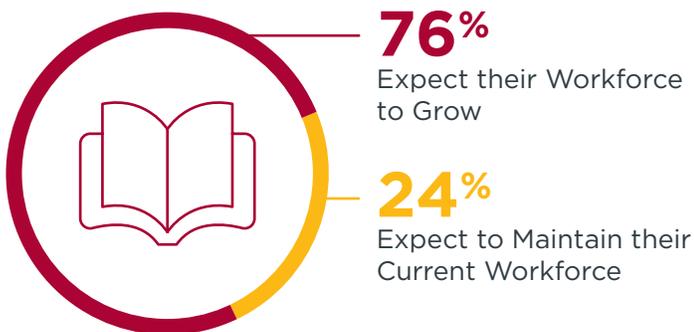
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 135** Administrative, Technical & Support Staff
- 55** Teachers/Faculty
- 46** Facilities/Maintenance
- 44** Administrators
- 42** Marketing Professionals

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 102** Ability to Organize, Plan & Set Goals
- 92** Effective Management & Leadership Skills
- 84** Ability to Implement Plans & Policies
- 54** Strong Writing Skills
- 46** Information Gathering & Analysis

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?

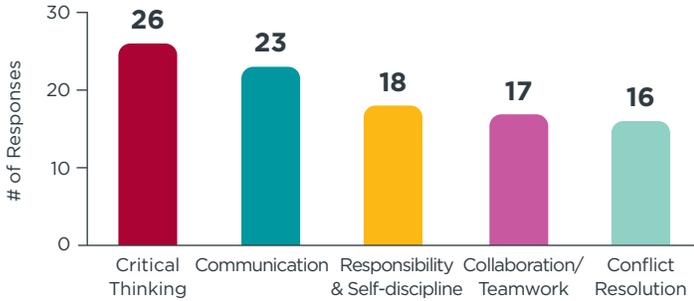


Key Takeaway

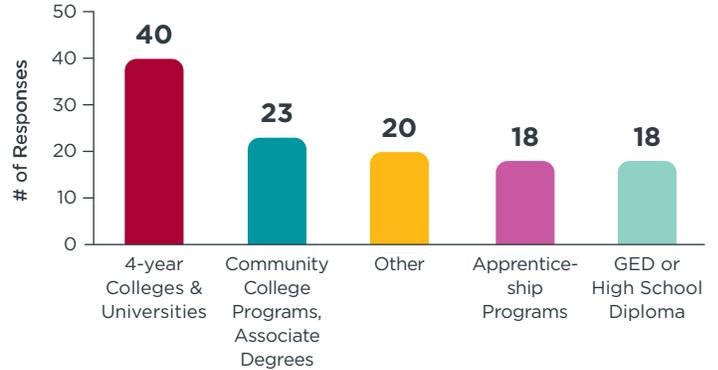
We received historically-high survey responses from this sector this year, revealing their **biggest need to be administrative, technical and support staff.**

LIFE SCIENCES & BIOSCIENCES

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



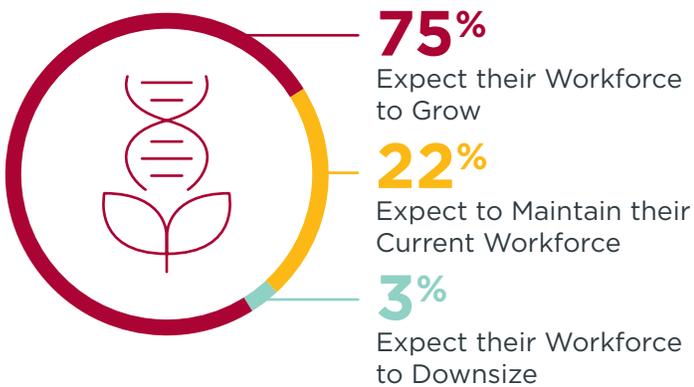
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 28** Quality Assurance/ Quality Control Professionals
- 27** Engineers
- 24** Research Associates/Scientists
- 23** Plant Operations & Manufacturing Support Workers
- 20** Project Managers

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 25** Experience with Specific Laboratory Techniques and Ability to Learn and Adapt to New Technologies
- 21** Effective Communication Appropriate to Intended Audience
- 19** Project Management Skills
- 18** Knowledge of Regulatory Affairs and Approval Process
- 18** Calibration, Validation, & Maintenance of Equipment & Instruments

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?



Key Takeaway

This sector reports **sourcing talent from 4-year universities at a higher rate than any other industry surveyed.**

RETAIL

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



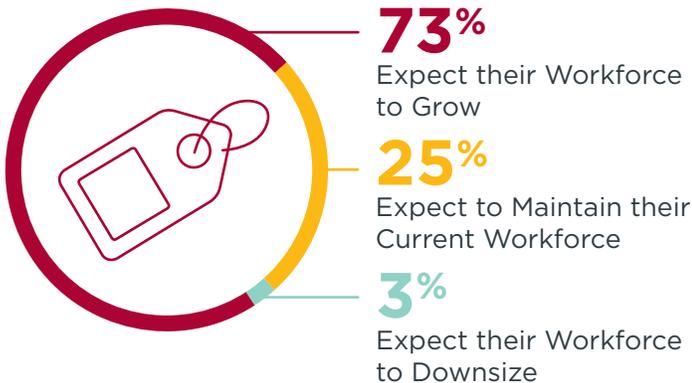
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 24** Front-line Retail Staff (Cashiers, Floor Staff)
- 18** Marketing Professionals
- 15** Managers & Supervisors
- 12** Warehousing, Stocking & Logistics Staff
- 11** Other

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 31** Commitment to Customer Service
- 28** Effective Communication
- 19** Organization
- 9** Knowledge of Relevant Computer Software
- 9** Information Gathering & Analysis

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?

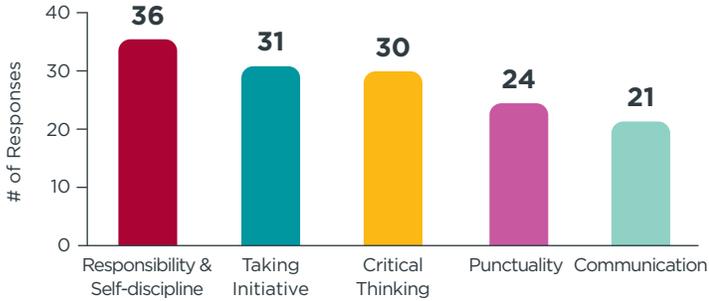


Key Takeaway

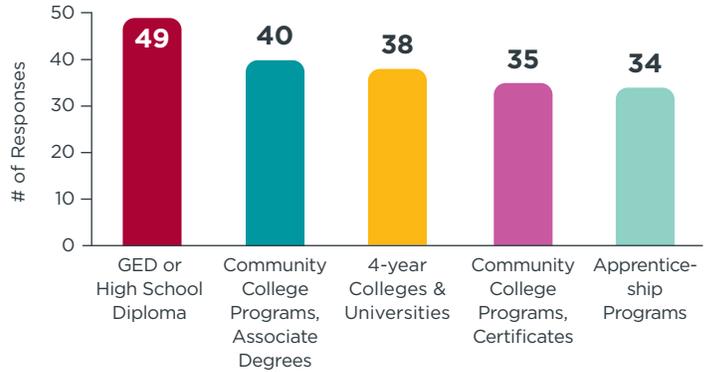
This sector relies more heavily on **friends and networks for sourcing talent than other industries.**

MANUFACTURING

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 44** Front-line Production Workers
- 34** Engineers
- 31** Machine Operators (Not Computerized)
- 28** Maintenance & Repair Personnel
- 24** Supervisors & Managers

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 36** Effective Communication to Share the Status of Work & Problems
- 30** Selection & Effective Use of Tools, Machinery, Equipment & Other Resources in Production
- 30** Effective Use of Resources, Limiting Waste, Continuous Improvement
- 25** Participates & Contributes to a Safe Work Environment
- 19** Effective Implementation of Operational Manuals and Instructions

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?

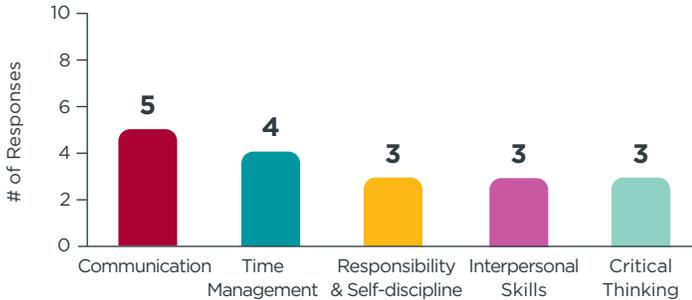


Key Takeaway

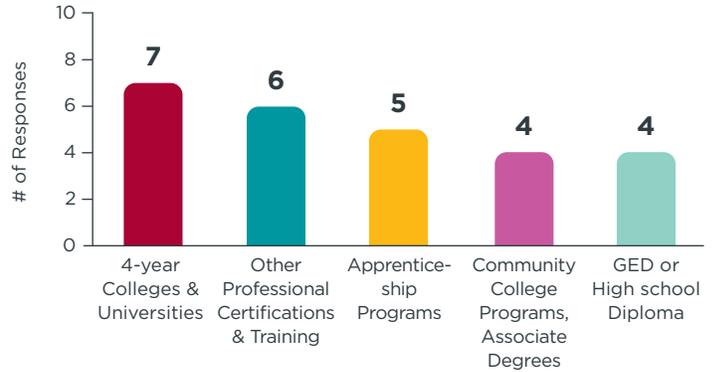
GED or high school diplomas and associates degrees outweigh 4-year colleges and universities in this sector.

ENERGY, UTILITIES & CLEANTECH

What qualities or soft skills are most difficult to find in the workforce?



What credentials or education experience are you seeking in your future workforce?



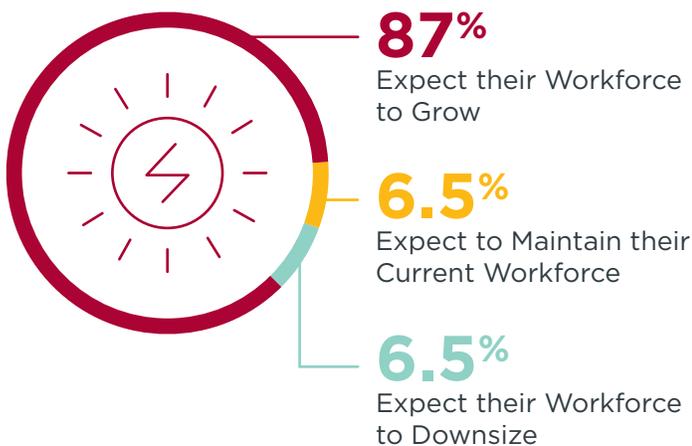
Which positions do you expect to have the most openings in the next 3 years?

- 8** Engineers
- 6** Field Technicians
- 4** Environmental Specialists
- 4** Specialists (e.g. HR, Admin, Budgeting and Business Planning)
- 4** Administrators

What skills are the most important for hiring?

- 5** Project Management Skills
- 4** Effective Communication Appropriate to Intended Audience
- 4** Assessment, Negotiation & Implementation of Measures to Comply with Laws & Regulations
- 3** Participate & Contribute to a Safe Work Environment
- 3** Knowledge of Relevant Computer Software

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years?



Key Takeaway

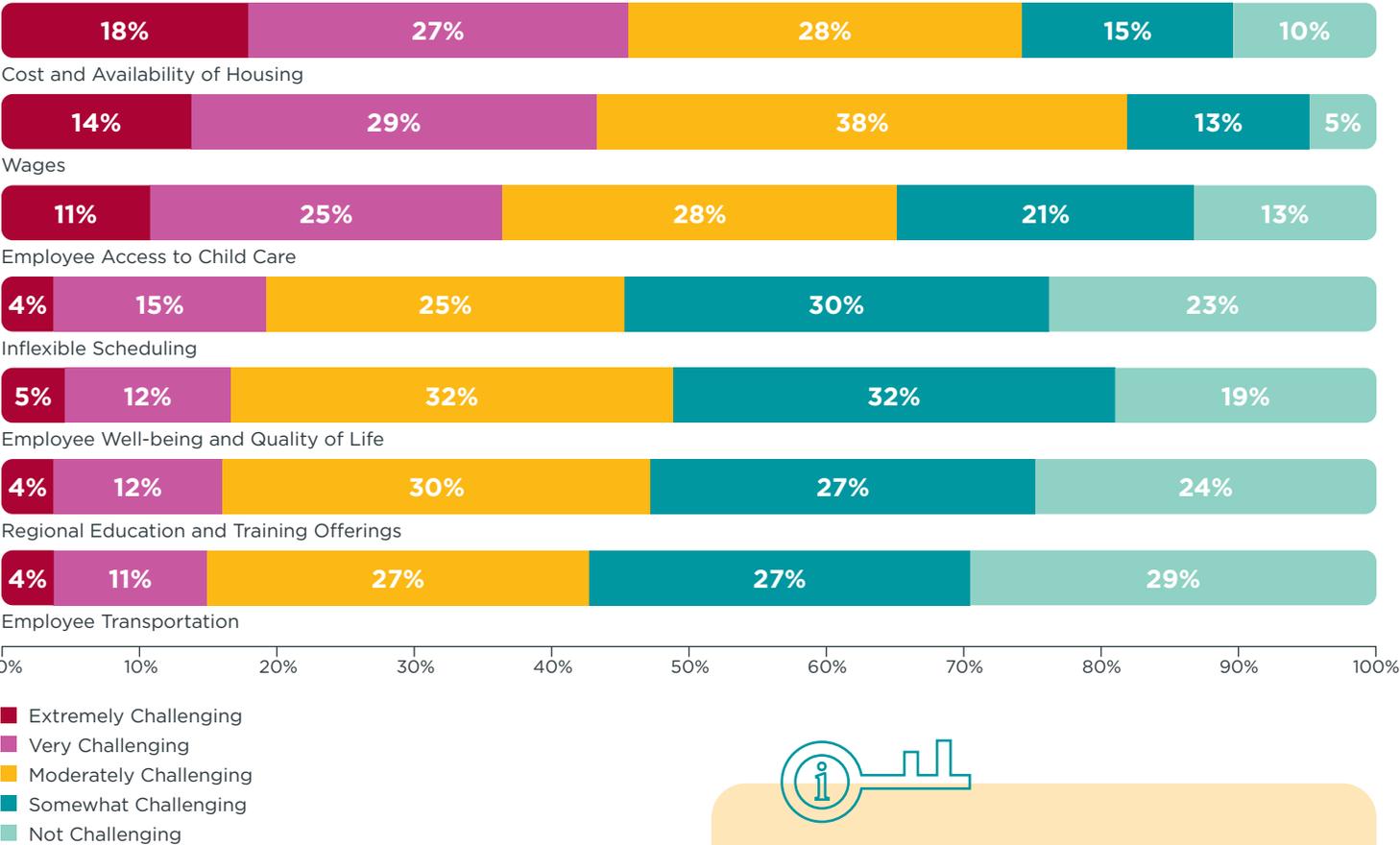
This industry has the **second highest rating of the quality of the talent pipeline for well-trained workers.** Respondents also share that career and technical education is the best way to engage students at the K-12 level.

BARRIERS AND OBSTACLES

Housing affordability is a key obstacle.

For the first time this year, we asked survey respondents about key obstacles to recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce. The survey revealed that wages, housing affordability, and child care are the largest obstacles cited by employers to attracting and retaining workers. Data collected in the Cape Fear region (2023) and Western North Carolina (2022) show a similar trend.

How do you perceive the following obstacles to recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce?



Key Takeaway

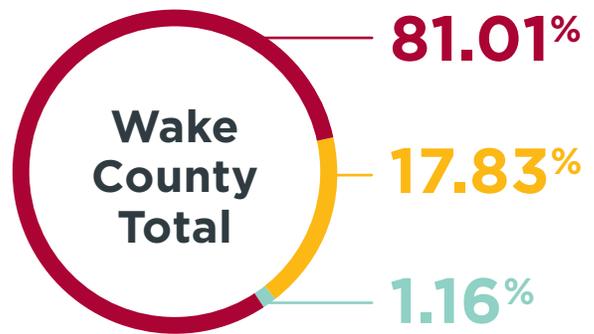
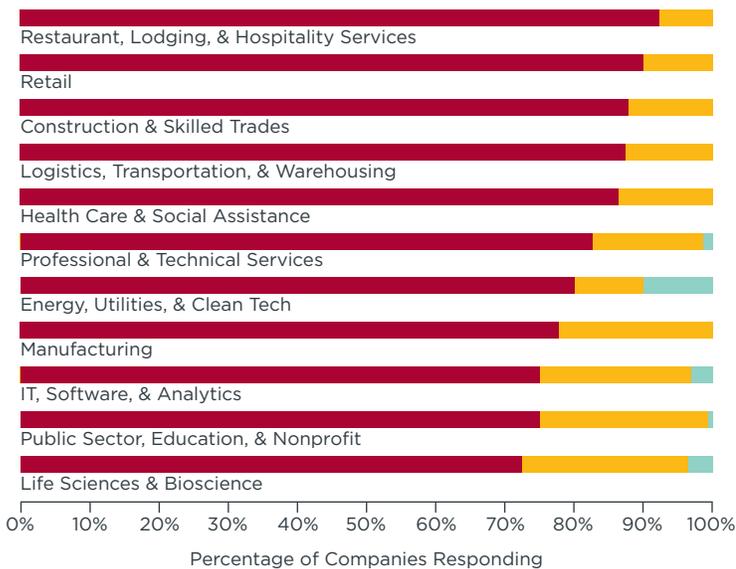
Cost and availability of housing, wages and employee access to child care are consistently the top three barriers across Wake, Durham and Johnston Counties.

WAKE COUNTY DATA OVERVIEW

Wake County Results

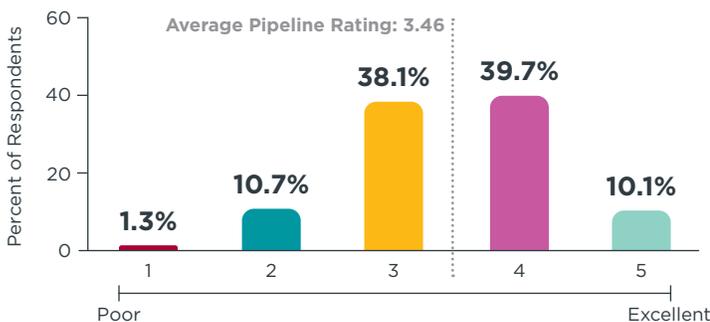
The Triangle's largest county in terms of land mass and population, Wake County is home to nearly 1.2M people and is growing more than twice as fast as the rest of the state. With a workforce of over 655,000, the largest industry sectors are technology, life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and cleantech. Below is a snapshot of the data collected from the regional skills analysis specific to Wake County.

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years? (307 responses)



■ Expect their Workforce to Grow
 ■ Expect to Maintain their Current Workforce
 ■ Expect their Workforce to Downsize

On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being the best), how would you rate the quality of the local pipeline supplying well-trained workers?



Key takeaways:

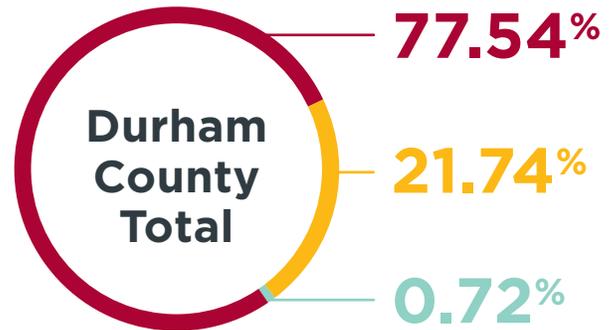
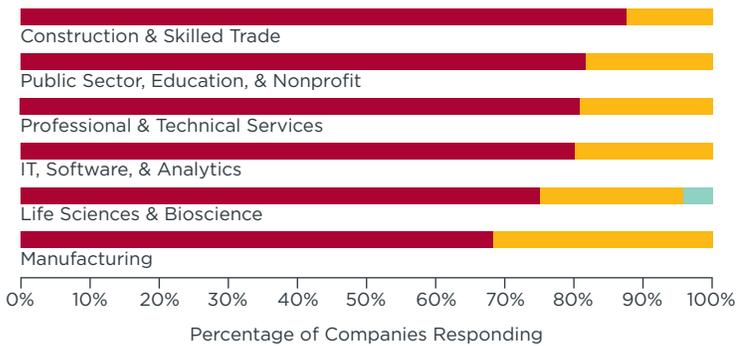
- Highest expectations of workforce growth (81%) across Wake, Durham, and Johnston Counties
- Above average evaluation of the talent pipeline (3.46 out of 5) with especially strong approval from IT, software and analytics, professional and technical services, and energy, utilities and cleantech
- Companies large and small anticipate hiring additional staff in the next three years

DURHAM COUNTY DATA OVERVIEW

Durham County Results

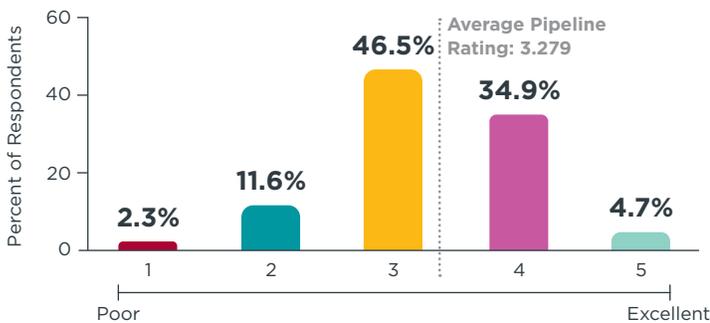
Durham County is located in the northern half of North Carolina and is a short drive away from Raleigh and minutes from the Research Triangle Park. With a workforce of over 184,000, the largest industry sectors are life sciences, healthcare, biotech, and technology. Below is a snapshot of the data collected from the regional skills analysis specific to Durham County.

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years? (86 responses)



■ Expect their Workforce to Grow ■ Expect to Maintain their Current Workforce ■ Expect their Workforce to Downsize

On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being the best), how would you rate the quality of the local pipeline supplying well-trained workers?



Key takeaways:

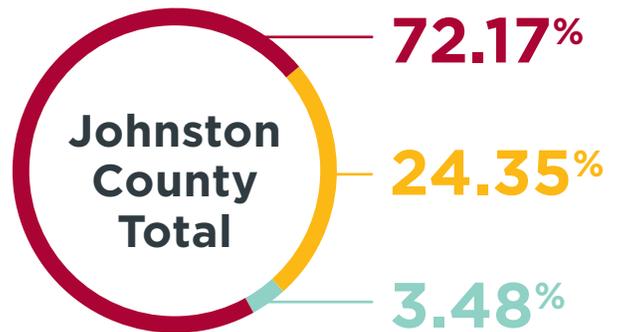
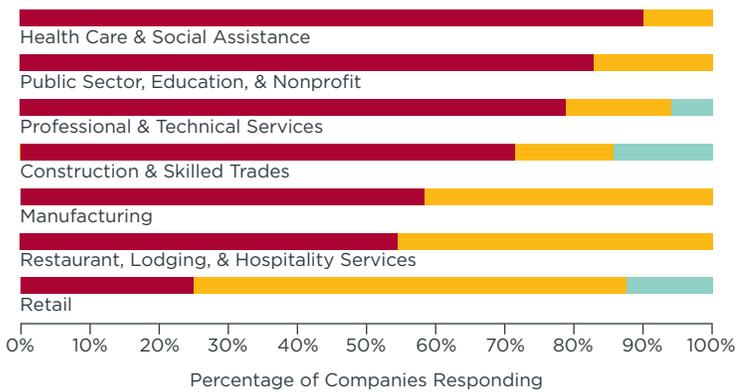
- Less than 1% of respondents anticipate downsizing their workforce in the next 3 years
- Above average evaluation of the talent pipeline (3.279 out of 5) with strong approval from retail, professional and technical services, life science and bioscience, and construction and skilled trades
- Cost and availability of housing is the top cited obstacle to recruiting and retaining a skilled workforce

JOHNSTON COUNTY DATA OVERVIEW

Johnston County Results

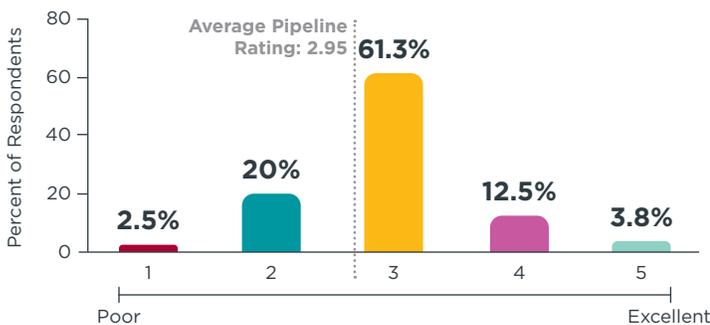
Johnston County is located in the eastern half of North Carolina and is minutes away from Raleigh and the Research Triangle Park. With a workforce of over 111,000, the largest industry sectors are manufacturing, retail trade, education, and health services. Below is a snapshot of the data collected from the regional skills analysis specific to Johnston County.

Do you expect your workforce to grow in the next 3 years? (80 responses)



■ Expect their Workforce to Grow
 ■ Expect to Maintain their Current Workforce
 ■ Expect their Workforce to Downsize

On a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being the best), how would you rate the quality of the local pipeline supplying well-trained workers?



Key takeaways:

- Average evaluation of talent pipeline (2.95 out of 5) with strongest ratings from professional and technical services, public sector, education and nonprofit and logistics, transportation and warehousing
- Small businesses of 1-4 employees expect to double in size in the next three years
- Healthcare and social assistance project the largest growth in the next 3 years and expect zero downsizing

PARTNERS

Associated Builders and Contractors
BRITE Institute at NC Central University
Capital Area Workforce Development Board
Chamber For a Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro
Chatham County
City of Raleigh
City of Raleigh | Small Business Programs
Construction Managers Association of America
District C
Downtown Raleigh Alliance
Duke Energy
Duke University
Duke University Health System
Durham Chamber of Commerce
Durham County Public School System
Durham Tech Community College
Durham Workforce Development Board
Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina
Edgecombe County
Frankel Staffing
Franklin County
Granville County
Greater Raleigh Convention Center & Visitors Bureau
Greene Resources
Harnett County
Johnston Community College
Johnston County
Johnston County Public School System
Made in Durham
Meredith College
MyFutureNC
Nash County
NC Biotechnology Center
NC Central University
NC Chamber
NC Community College System
NC Department of Commerce Workforce Solutions
NC Justice Center
NC Life Sciences Organization
NC Military Business Center
NC Restaurant and Lodging Association
NC RIOT
NC State Industry Expansion Solutions
NC TAP
NC4ME

NC TECH
North Carolina Business Committee for Education
North Carolina State University
Orange County Economic Development
Person County
Raleigh Chamber
Raleigh Economic Development
Raleigh Metro SHRM
Research Triangle Foundation
Research Triangle Regional Partnership
Research Triangle Cleantech Cluster
RTI International
Saint Augustine's University
Sanford Area Growth Alliance
Shaw University
The Nautical Group
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Town of Cary
Town of Chapel Hill
Town of Fuquay-Varina
Town of Garner
Town of Holly Springs
Town of Knightdale
Town of Morrisville
Town of Rolesville
Town of Wake Forest
Town of Wendell
Town of Zebulon
Triangle SHRM
UNC Health
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of North Carolina System
Vaco Raleigh, LLC
Vance County
Vance Granville Community College
Wake County Government
Wake County Public School System
WakeMed Health & Hospitals
Wake Technical Community College
WakeED Partnership
Warren County
Wilson County

Thank you to each of the partners for playing a critical role in disseminating the survey to your networks. Your support is invaluable to this effort.



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Thank you to Truist Foundation for supporting this initiative.