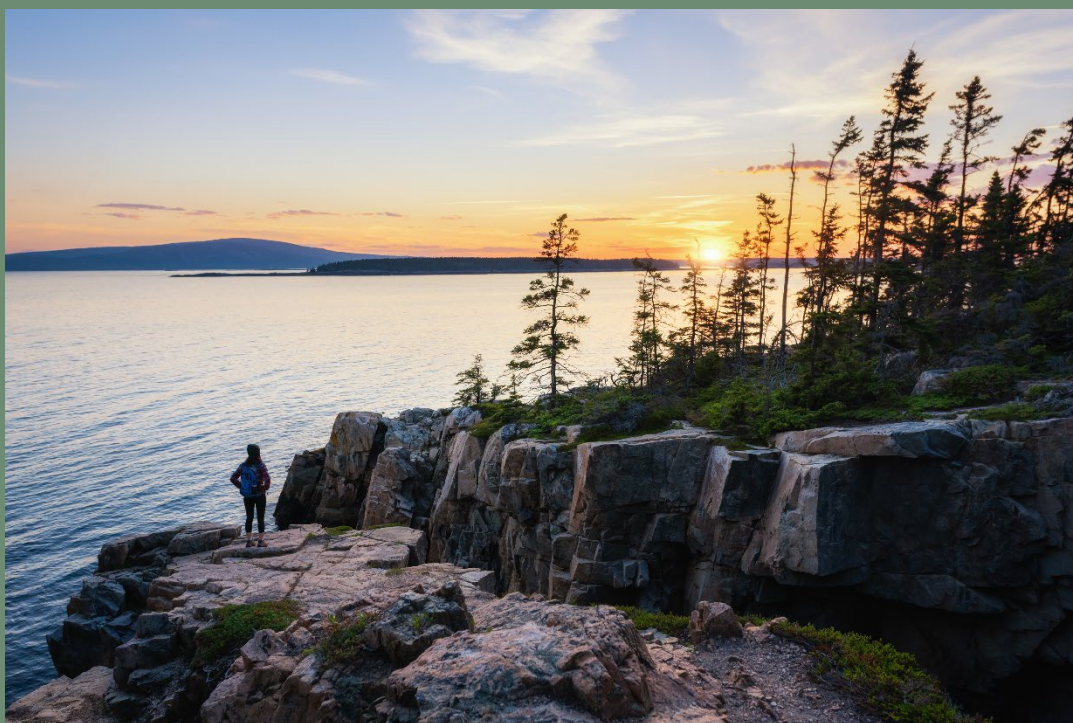


# Maine Outdoor Brands

## Workforce Needs Assessment Report



Survey Research  
Center

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Maine

July 2025

# Acknowledgements

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## Introduction

This report summarizes a workforce demand assessment survey conducted by the Survey Research Center (SRC) on behalf of Maine Outdoor Brands (MOB). The survey was intended to gather comprehensive, current data on workforce needs, skill demands, and employment trends among Maine's outdoor recreation businesses to guide strategic planning and workforce development initiatives. This survey is a follow up of the 2021 Workforce Needs Assessment Survey Report, which was also conducted by the SRC.<sup>1</sup>

## Methodology

The survey instrument used in this study duplicated some questions asked in the 2021 study along with additional questions borrowed from the Oregon State University's *Outdoor Industry Workforce Assessment Survey* report.<sup>2</sup> The survey was conducted using Qualtrics, an online survey platform, and was distributed in two different ways. First, MOB provided the SRC with a list of email addresses for a subset of their member brands and non-profits. The SRC sent personal survey links directly to these contacts. Next, an anonymous link was generated, which MOB passed along to its associates to share with their members as well. This latter step was taken to increase the number of responses.

Prior to the launch of the survey, MOB sent an advance email to its membership, announcing and explaining the purpose of the survey. Later that day, the SRC sent out survey links, referencing the earlier email. Approximately one week later, those who did not complete the survey received an email reminder, which was repeated two more times. SRC interviewers called those who still had not completed the survey, reminding them to complete the survey and asking if they needed the link resent. A total of 140 calls were made and 15 links were resent.

In total, 183 personal links were generated and distributed, and of these, 80 completions were obtained. This resulted in a response rate of 44%.

The anonymous link was sent by MOB to its associates via email. A total of 20 additional responses were obtained through this link.

Between both distributions—personal and anonymous—a total of 100 responses were obtained.

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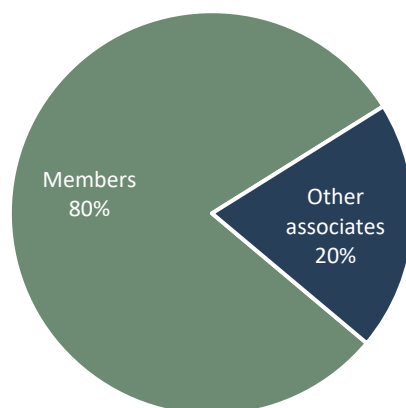
<sup>1</sup> This report can be obtained here: <https://www.srcmaine.org/our-work/>

<sup>2</sup> This report can be obtained here: <https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2022-outdoor-industry-workforce-assessment/>

## Survey Summary

### Response Type

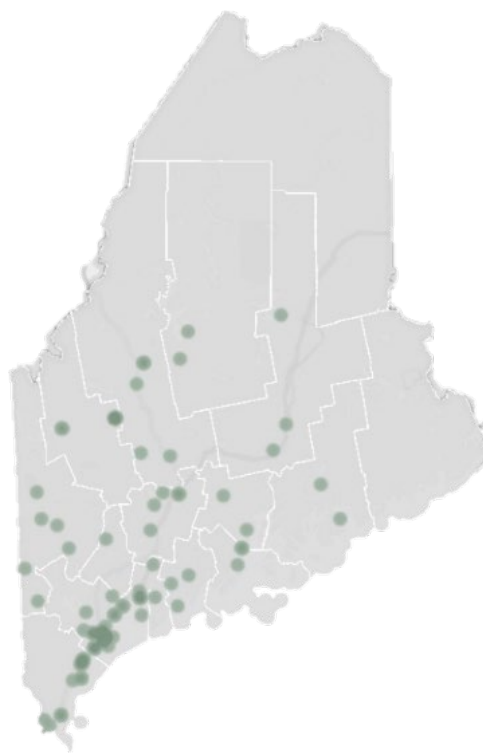
The majority of responses, 80%, came from MOB members, while the remaining portion came from other associates.



N=100

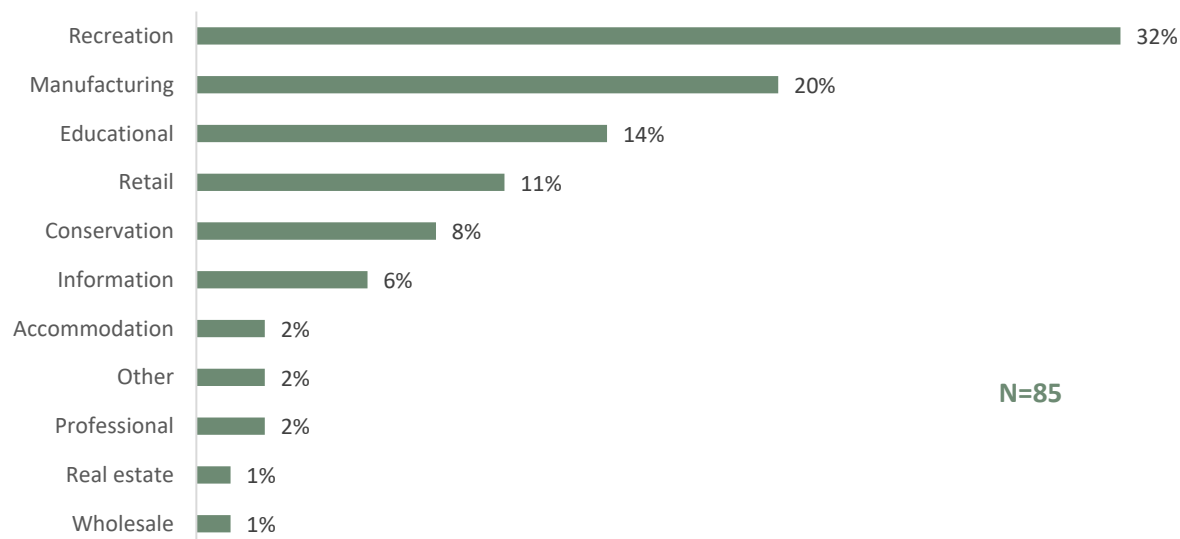
### Location

Respondents were asked to provide the zip code of their primary location in Maine. Most respondents answered this question (98%, n=98). While most responses came from southern Maine, there were responses from fourteen out of sixteen counties. There were no responses from Aroostook and Washington Counties.



## Type of Industry

Survey respondents were presented with 11 industries (including *other*) and asked to choose the industry that best described their business or organization. Eighty-five percent (85%) of respondents provided a response to this question. Almost one-third of respondents (32%) indicated that *arts, entertainment, and recreation* best described their business or organization, followed by *product and manufacturing*, at 20%, and *educational services*, at 14%.



### TYPE OF INDUSTRY

- Arts, entertainment, and **recreation** (guide, outfitter, land manager)
- Product and **manufacturing**
- **Educational** services
- **Retail** trade
- **Conservation** and stewardship
- **Information**/media
- **Other**
- **Professional** and business services (marketing, accounting, legal)
- **Accommodation** and food services
- **Wholesale** trade
- **Real estate** and rental and leasing

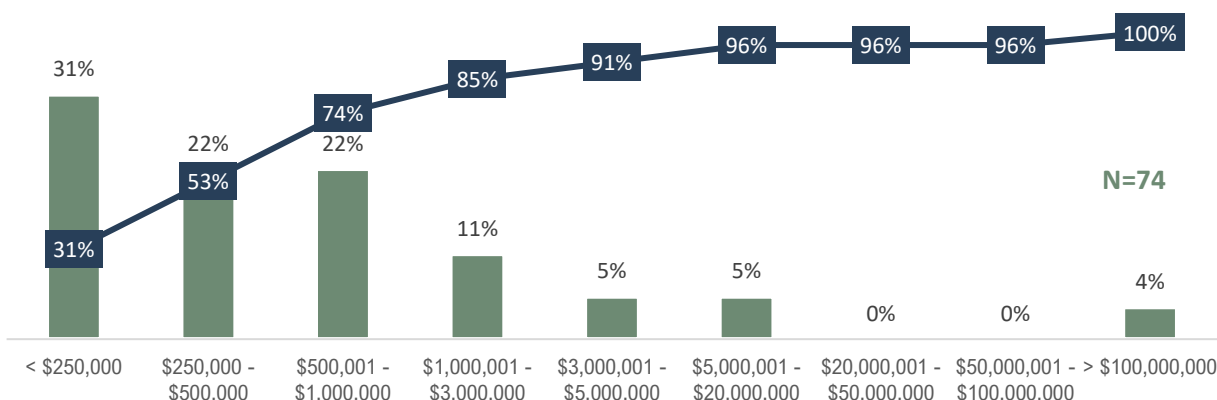


### COMPARE & CONTRAST

These responses differ somewhat from the 2021 survey. While *arts, entertainment, and recreation* and *product and manufacturing* likewise had the most responses in 2021 (at 26% and 23%, respectively), *retail trade* was the third most frequently selected response in 2021, with 13% of the responses falling into this category. *Educational services*, which was the third most frequently selected response in the current survey, was only selected by 5% of the respondents in 2021.

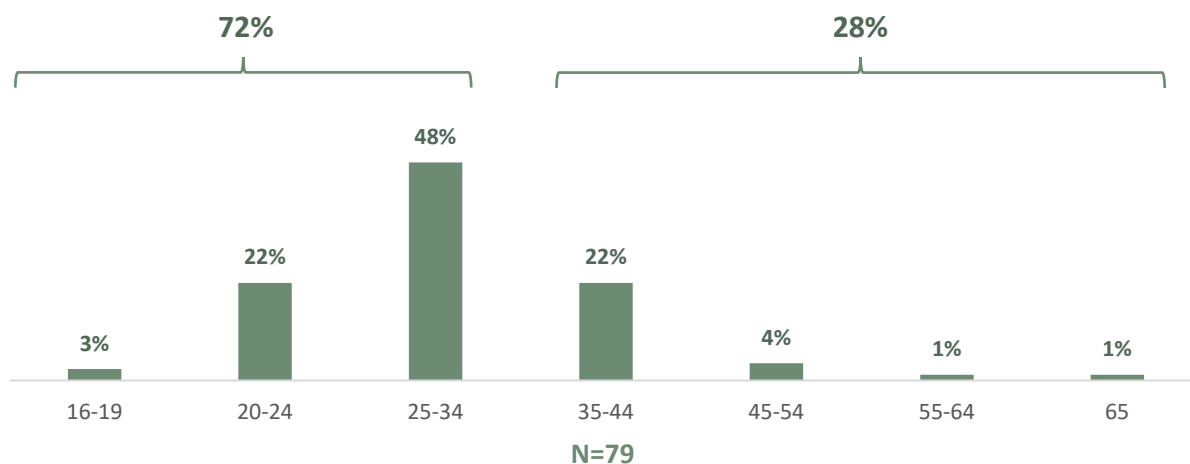
## Revenue

The survey presented respondents with nine revenue levels and asked them to report their organization's revenue for the last fiscal year. Seventy-four percent (74%) of respondents reported their revenue. The plurality of respondents (31%) reported revenue of *less than \$250,000*. An additional 22% each reported revenue of *\$250,000 to \$500,000* and *\$500,001 to \$1,000,000*. Thus, 74% of those who responded reported revenue of *\$1,000,000 and under*.



## Age of Typical New Hire

The survey asked respondents to report, to the best of their knowledge, the age range of the typical new hire. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of respondents answered this question. At 48%, the 25 to 34 age group captured the largest portion of responses. The majority of respondents, 72%, reported that the typical age of new hires was age 34 or younger.

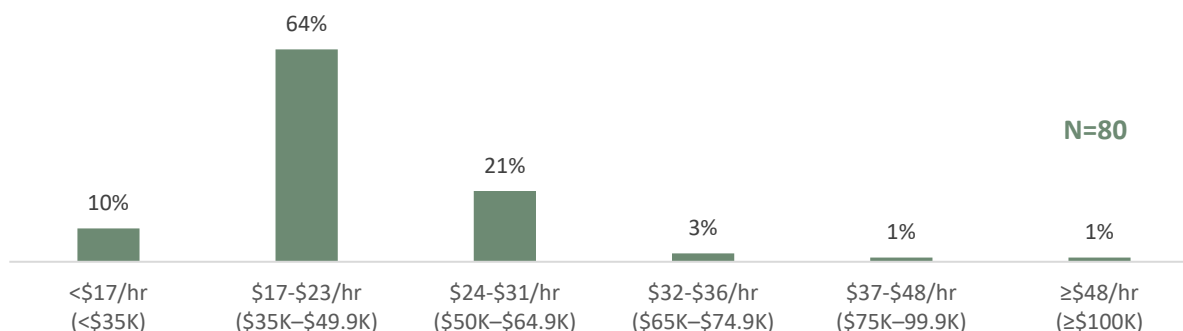


### COMPARE & CONTRAST

In 2021, the age distribution of new hires was similar—47% of respondents reported that the typical new hire was between 25 and 34 years of age.

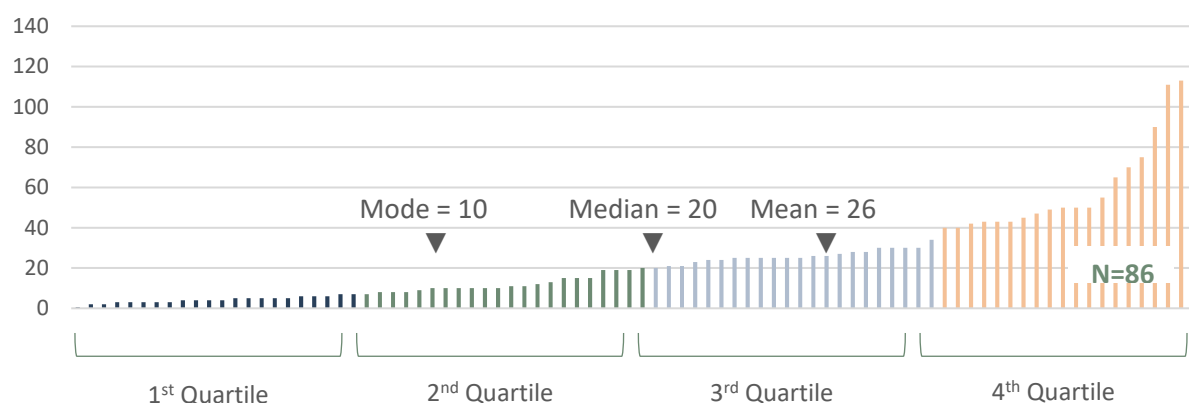
## Entry-Level Position Pay

Respondents were presented with six pay categories and asked to report the typical pay for an entry-level position at their organization. Eighty percent (80%) of respondents reported a pay category. The majority of respondents, 64%, reported an entry-level pay range of \$17 to \$23 per hour (equivalent to \$35K to \$49.9K annually). This was followed distantly, at 21%, by those who reported an entry-level pay range of \$24 to \$31 per hour (equivalent to \$50K to \$64.9K annually).



## Age of Organization

Respondents were asked to report the age of their business or organization. Eighty-six percent (86%) of respondents supplied a response to this question. The chart below separates these responses into quartiles and includes three measures of central tendency—the mean, median, and mode. The mean, or average, which is a widely understood way to describe a distribution, was 26 years. This measure, however, is less appropriate for data that are skewed such as these. A better measure for skewed distributions is the median, or middle value, which is 20 years. Yet another measure is the mode, or the value that appears most frequently in the data. In this distribution the mode is ten years; six respondents reported that their business or organization was ten years old.



### COMPARE & CONTRAST

In 2021, the mode was 2 years, the median was 15 years, and the mean was 23 years.

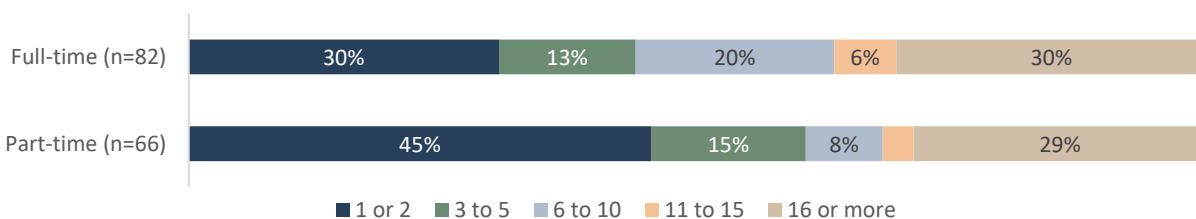


## Size of Organization

The survey asked respondents how many people they employed during peak season for *part-time*, *full-time*, and *other* positions and provided response categories for respondents to select. Of the 100 respondents, 82 provided a number category for full-time positions, and 66 provided a category for part-time positions. The remaining respondents either left the question unanswered or reported that they employed *none*.

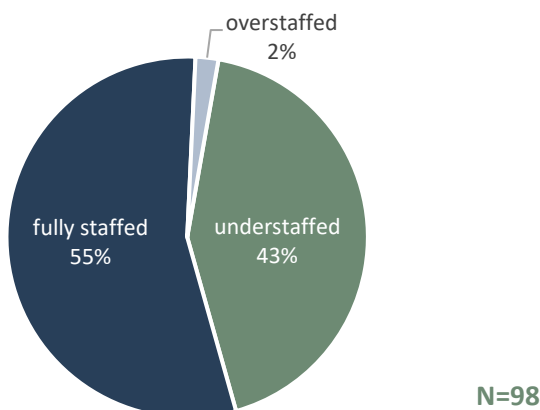
Organizations tended to either report in the smallest category provided (1 or 2 employees) or in the largest category (16 or more) for both part-time and full-time employees.

- Thirty percent (30%) of respondents said their organization employed just one or two **full-time employees**, and 30% said their organization employed 16 or more. A combined total of 39% reported employing between 3 and 15 full-time employees.
- Forty-five percent (45%) of respondents said their organization employed just one or two **part-time employees**, while 29% said their organization employed 16 or more. A combined total of 26% reported employing between 3 and 15 part-time employees.
- Seven respondents reported that their organization employed **other employees** (e.g., reps, contract workers, etc.).



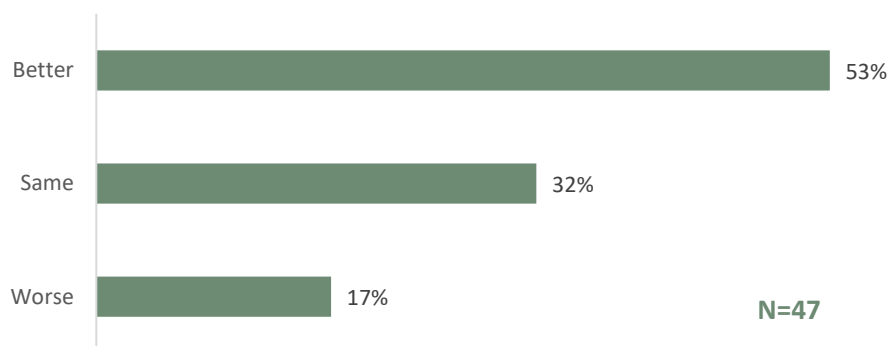
Note: Data points smaller than 5% are not labeled.

The survey asked respondents if they felt their organization was *understaffed*, *fully staffed*, or *overstaffed*. Ninety-six percent (98%) of respondents provided an answer. The majority, 55%, said that their organization was *fully staffed*; 43% said their organization was *understaffed*; and 2% said it was *overstaffed*.

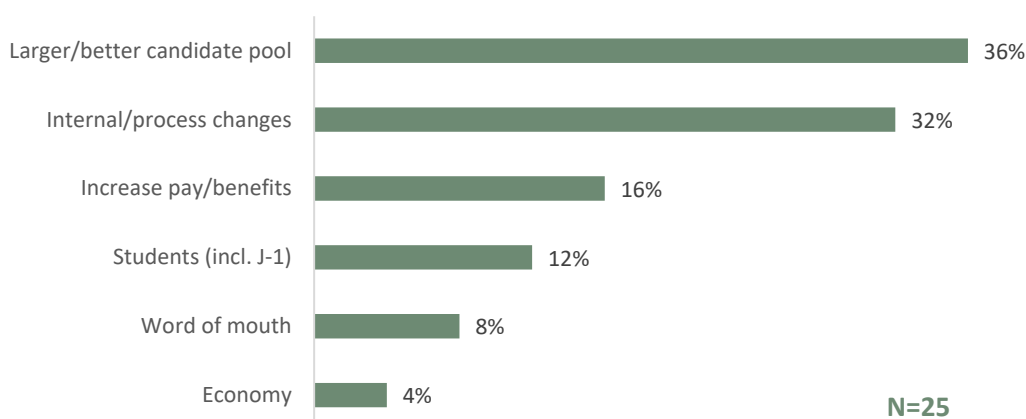


## Hiring Success

The survey asked respondents to describe how their hiring success changed in the past two years (e.g., *better*, *worse*, *about the same*), how they expected it to change in the next two years, and why. Forty-seven percent (47%) of respondents provided a narrative response to this question, and these responses were coded into three categories—*better*, *worse*, and *same*. The majority of responses (55%) were coded as *better*, 30% were coded as *same*, and 17% were coded as *worse*. (Note: One response was coded as both *better* and *worse*, so the total is greater than 100%.)



Responses that were coded as *better* were further coded to capture factors that contributed to that assessment. Thirty-six percent (36%) of the responses that were assessed as *better* (n=25) mentioned a *larger/better candidate pool*, and 32% mentioned *internal/process changes*. Sixteen percent (16%) mentioned *increase pay/benefits*.



## Number of New Hires

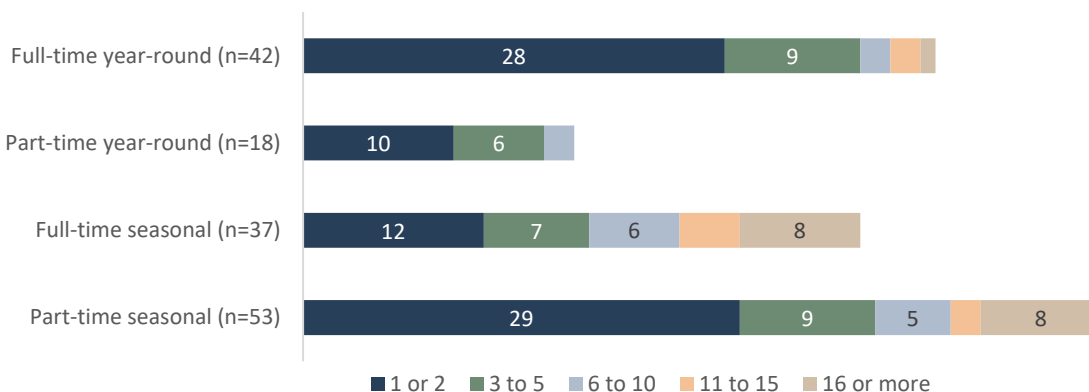
### By Type

The survey asked respondents to report how many new employees they expected they would need over the next 12 months for five types of positions (*full-time year-round*, *part-time year-round*, *full-time seasonal*, *part-time seasonal*, and *other*). They were presented with six categories in which to respond, including a category for *none*. Not every respondent gave a response for every position type. (Number of responses for each position type are displayed in the graphic below.)

The position type with the highest number of responses was *part-time seasonal*; 53 respondents out of 100 indicated that they expected they would need new employees for this position type. The response option chosen most frequently for *part-time seasonal* hires was *1 or 2*; 29 of the 53 respondents (55%) reported that they expected they would need to hire *1 or 2 part-time seasonal employees* over the next 12 months.

The next frequently chosen position type was *full-time year-round*; 42 respondents out of 100 indicated that they would hire for this position type. The response option chosen most often for this position was also *1 or 2*; 28 of the 42 respondents (67%) reported that they expected they would need to hire *1 or 2 full-time year-round employees* over the next 12 months.

Seven respondents reported expecting to need *other* types of workers (e.g., reps, contract workers, etc.).



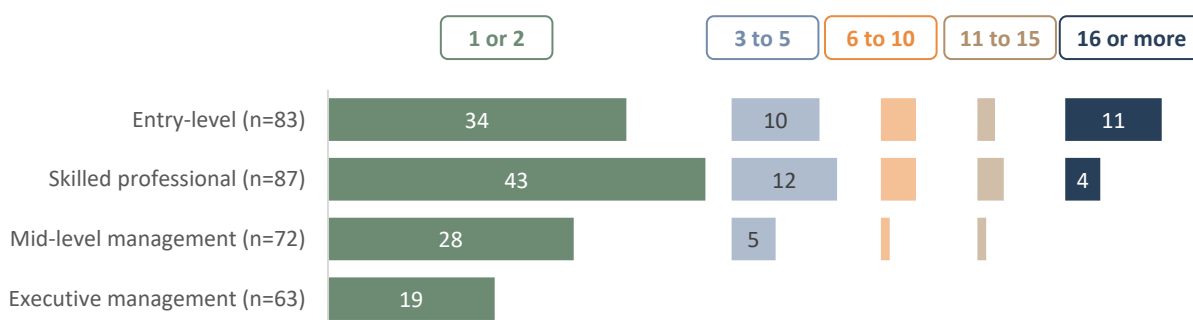
Note: Data points with counts less than 5 are not labeled.



## By Level

The survey asked respondents to report the approximate number of new employees their organization planned to hire in the next 12 months for four job levels (*entry-level*, *skilled professionals*, *mid-level management*, and *executive management*). They were presented with six categories in which to respond, including a category for *none*. Not every respondent gave a response for every job level. (Number of responses for each job category are displayed in the graphic below.)

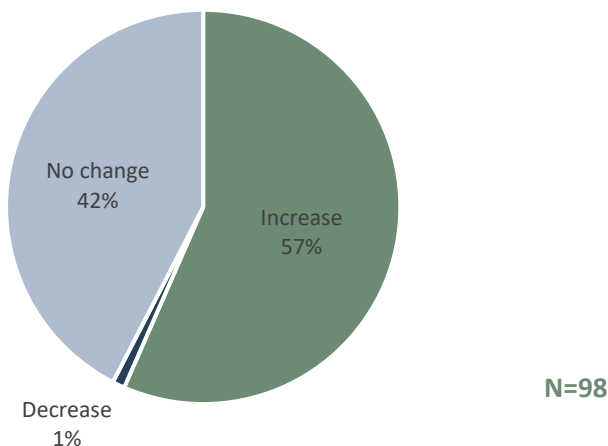
The job level with the highest number of responses was *skilled professional*; 87 respondents out of 100 indicated that they would hire for this job level. Regardless of job level, the response option that was selected with the most frequency was *1 or 2*. For instance, of the 87 respondents who reported in the *skilled professional* level, 43 (49%) said they would hire *1 or 2* of these employees.



Note: Data points with counts smaller than 5 are not labeled.

## Next Four Years

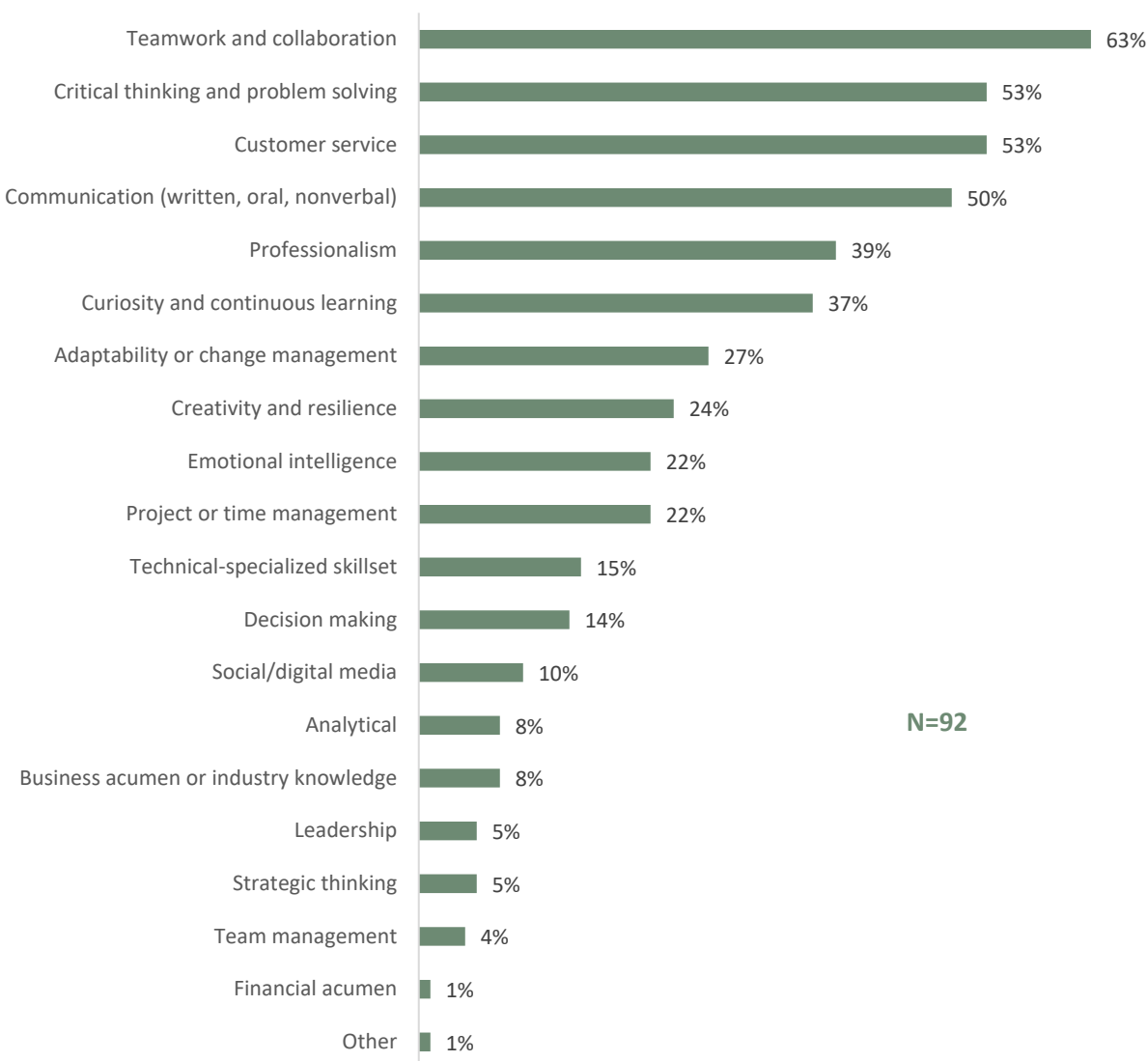
The survey asked respondents if they expected to see an *increase*, *decrease*, or *no change* in the hiring rate over the next four years. All but two respondents (98%) answered this question, and the majority (57%) indicated that they expected to see an *increase*. Forty-two percent (42%) indicated that they expected to see *no change*, and 1% indicated that they expected to see a *decrease*.



## Skillsets to Prioritize When Hiring

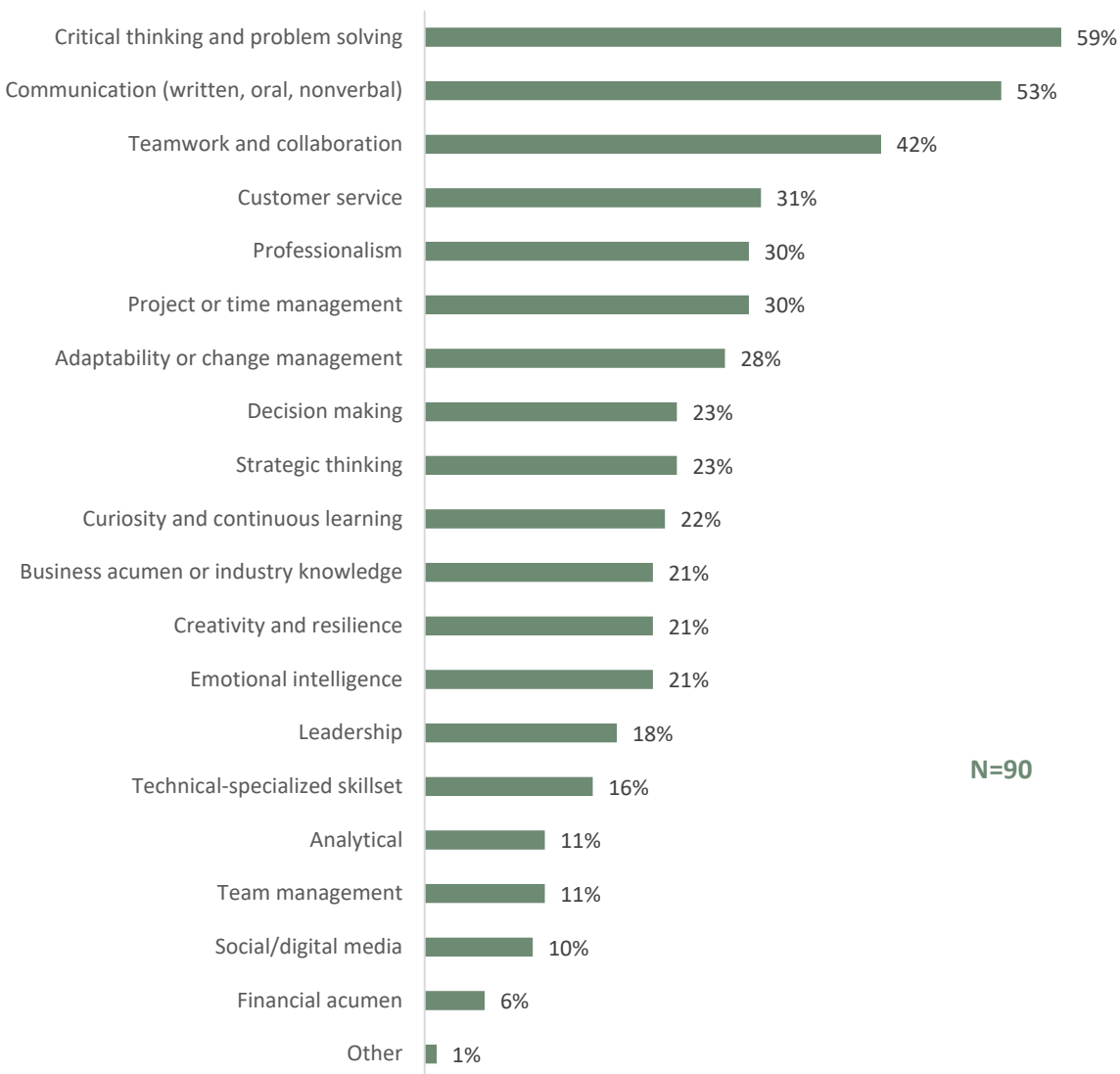
### Entry-Level Employees

Respondents were presented with twenty skillsets (including *other*) and asked to select up to five skillsets that their organization would prioritize when hiring entry-level employees. Ninety-two percent (92%) of respondents provided at least one skillset in response to this question. Three skillsets were chosen by the majority of respondents. *Teamwork and collaboration* was selected by 63% of respondents, *critical thinking and problem solving* and *customer service* were each selected by 53%. Additionally, *communication (written, oral, and nonverbal)* was selected by 50%. The remaining skillsets were chosen by between 1% and 39% of respondents.



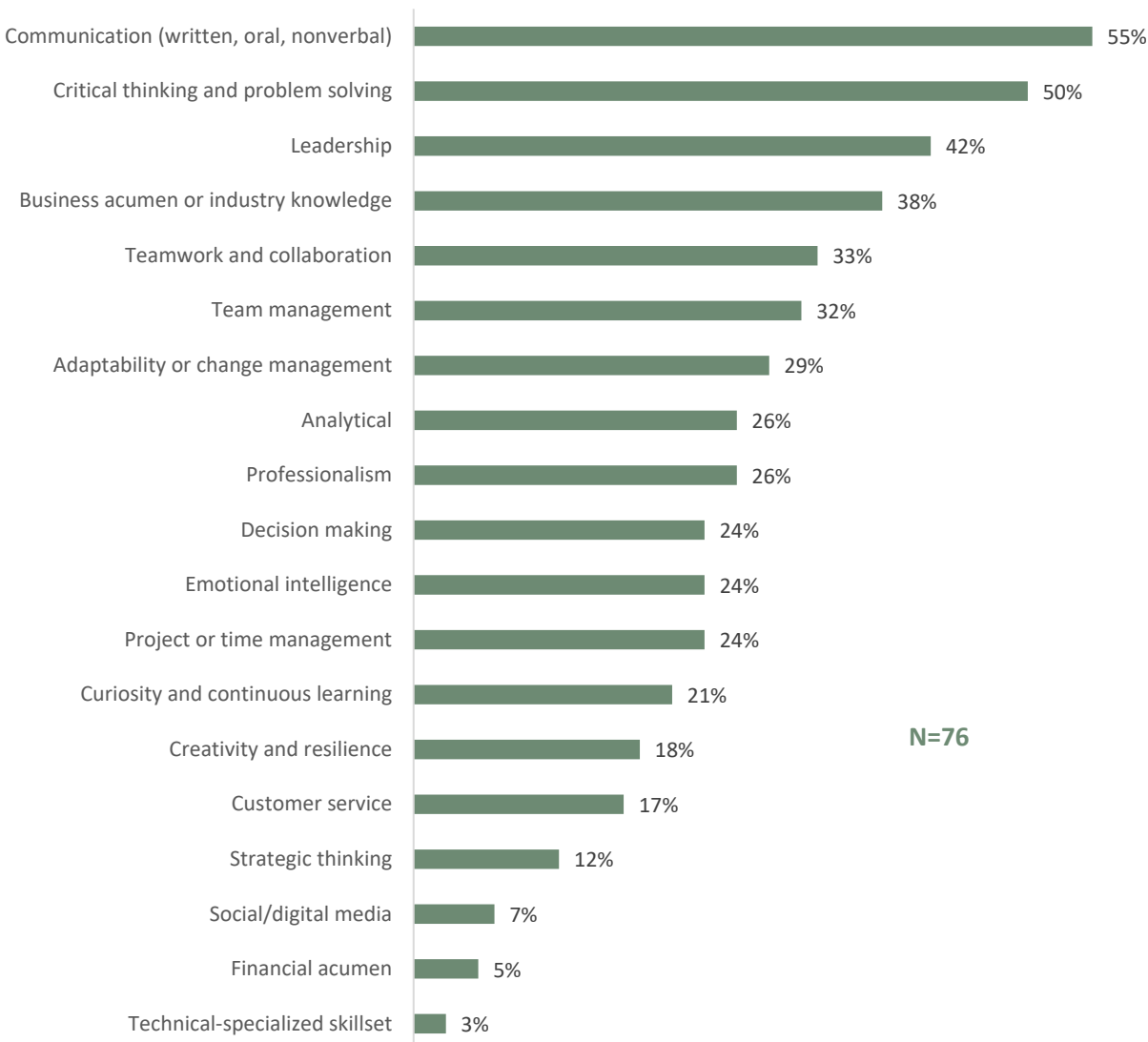
### Skilled Professional Employees

Respondents were presented with twenty skillsets (including *other*) and asked to select up to five skillsets that their organization would prioritize when hiring skilled professional employees. Ninety percent (90%) of respondents provided at least one skillset in response to this question. Two skillsets were chosen by the majority of respondents. *Critical thinking and problem solving* was selected by 59% of respondents, and *communication (written, oral, and nonverbal)* was selected by 53%. The remaining skillsets were chosen by between 1% and 42% of respondents.



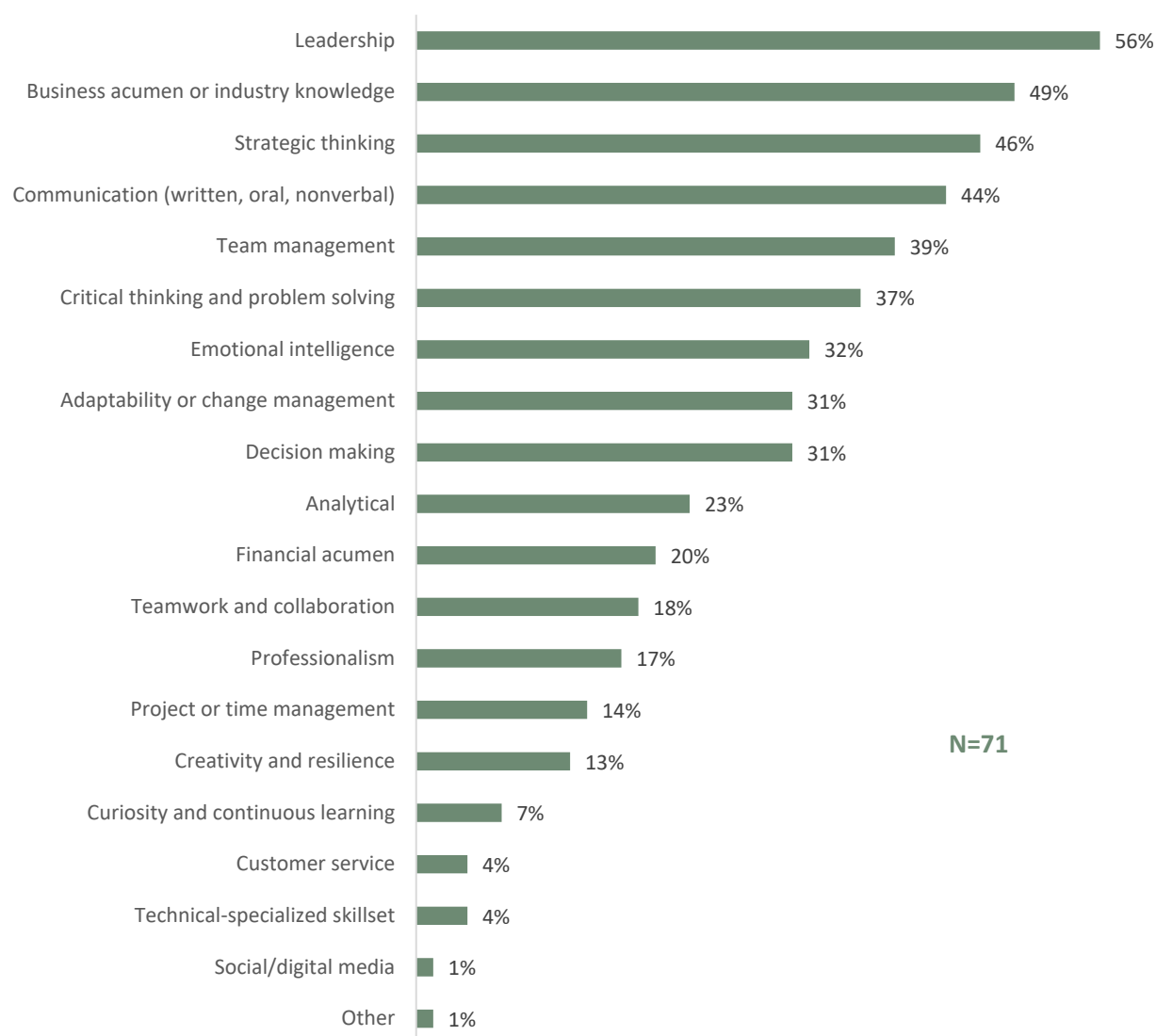
### Mid-Level Management Employees

Respondents were presented with twenty skillsets (including *other*) and asked to select up to five skillsets that their organization would prioritize when hiring mid-level management employees. Seventy-six percent (76%) of respondents provided at least one skillset in response to this question. Two skillsets were chosen by the majority of respondents. *Communication (written, oral, and nonverbal)* was selected by 55% of respondents, and *critical thinking and problem solving* was selected by 50%. The remaining skillsets were chosen by between 3% and 42% of respondents.



## Executive Management Employees

Respondents were presented with twenty skillsets (including *other*) and asked to select up to five skillsets that their organization would prioritize when hiring executive management employees. Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondents provided at least one skillset in response to this question. One skillset was chosen by the majority of respondents; this skillset, *leadership*, was selected by 56% of respondents. The remaining skillsets were chosen by between 1% and 49% of respondents.

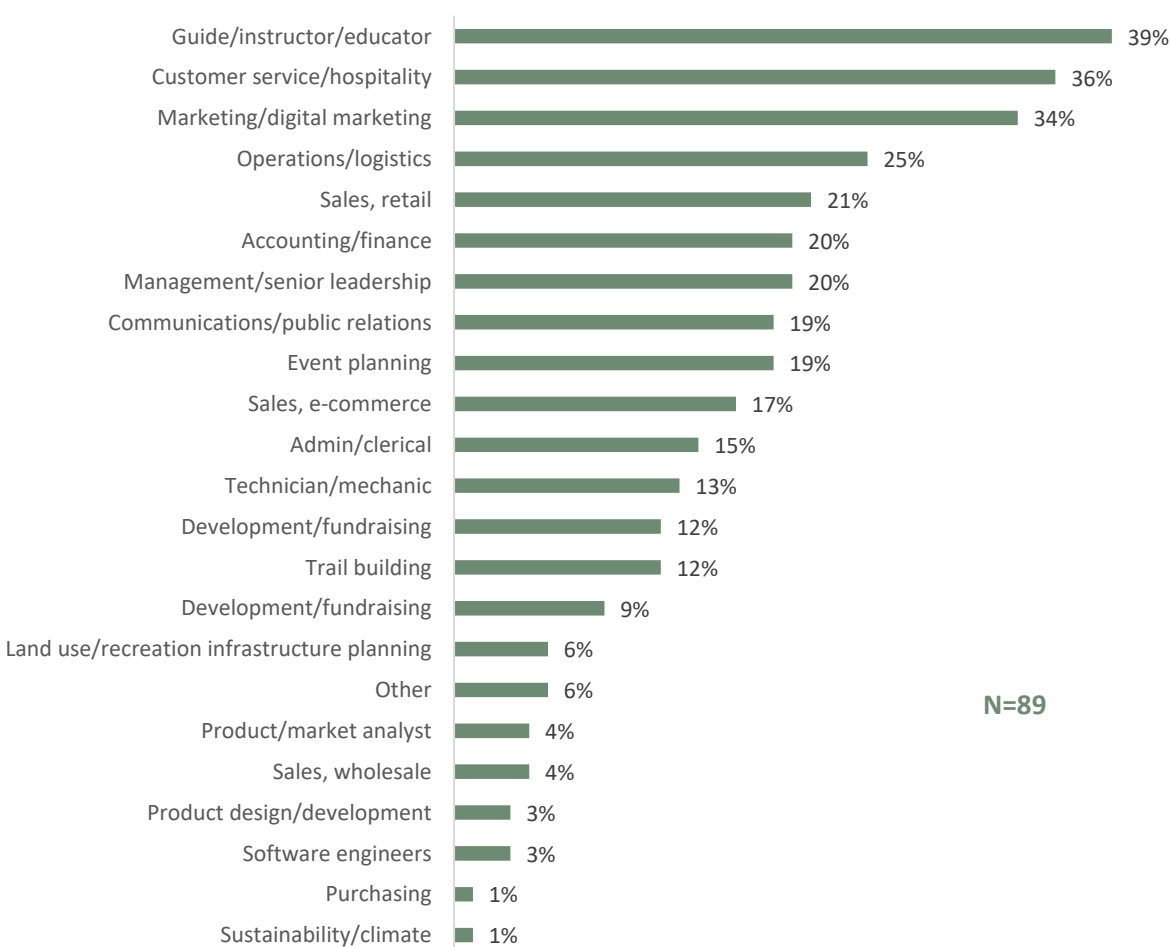




## Positions Needed

Respondents were presented with 22 types of positions (including *other*) and asked to choose the five types that would be the most needed for their business or organization over the next 12 months. Respondents who chose the *other* position were asked to specify the position, and these responses were reviewed, resulting in the creation of another type of position, namely *development/fundraising*.

Eighty-nine percent (89%) of respondents choose at least one type of position. The position chosen most frequently was *guide/instructor/educator*, with 39% of respondents selecting this, followed by *customer service/hospitality*, at 36%, and *marketing/digital marketing*, at 34%.



### COMPARE & CONTRAST

A similar question was asked in 2021, although the timeframe was longer (five years rather than one). Thus, this comparison is not an exact comparison. The top three position types above were likewise the top three position types in 2021, but their positions were switched. In 2021, *marketing/digital marketing* was selected by 48% of respondents, *customer service/hospitality* was selected by 38%, and *guide/instructor* was selected by 36%.

## Rank of Positions Needed

Respondents were asked to rank the five positions selected in the previous question. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of those who reported a position in the previous question provided at least one rank. Position types that were not selected were assigned a value of zero, while position types that were the most desired were assigned a value of five. (Note: Responses were flipped for analysis; the original survey question asked respondents to assign the most desired type a value of one.) The average of each position type's ranking is presented in the chart below beginning with the highest ranked position, *guide/instructor/educator*, at 1.55, followed by *customer service/hospitality*, at 1.36, and *marketing/digital marketing*, at 1.16.



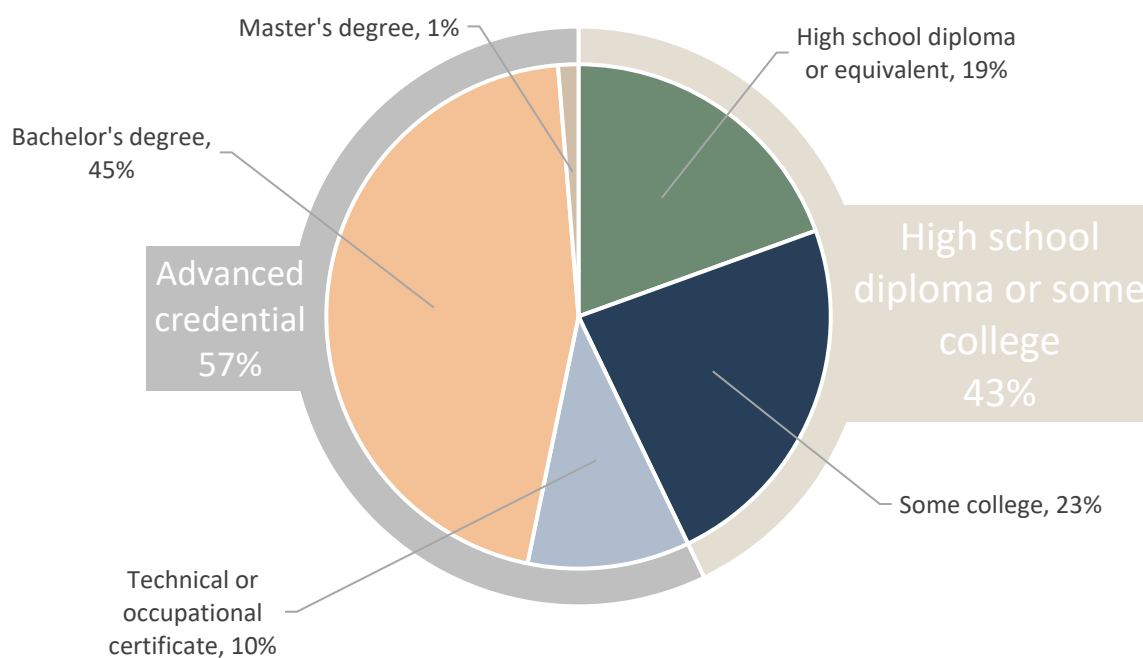
### COMPARE & CONTRAST

In 2021, *marketing/digital marketing* had a rank of 1.43, *customer service/hospitality* had a rank of 1.38, and *guide/instructor/educator* had a rank of 1.36.

## Education & Certification

### Preferred Education Level

The survey asked what the most preferred level of education was for employees. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of respondents answered this question, with the largest portion (46%) reporting that they preferred employees with a *bachelor's degree*. Responses to this question can be collapsed into two categories—employees with a credential beyond the high-school diploma (certificate or degree) and employees with just a high school diploma or some college. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of responses fell into the first category, requiring some type of advanced credential, while 43% fell into the latter category, requiring a high school diploma or some college.

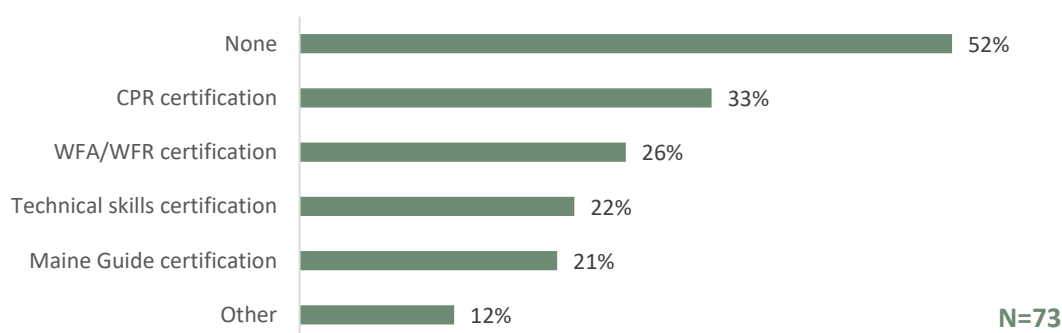


### COMPARE & CONTRAST

The current preferred education does not differ much from that of 2021. In the earlier survey, 55% of responses required some type of advanced credential, and 45% required a high school diploma or some college.

### Certifications Required

Survey respondents were presented with six types of certifications (including *other* and *none*) and were asked to report all the types required for the jobs for which they hired. Seventy-three percent (73%) of respondents gave a response to this question. Fifty-two percent (52%) of those who responded reported that *none* were required. The remaining respondents selected as many certifications as applied. The certification type with the highest response was *CPR certification* at 33%, followed by *Wilderness First Aid/Responder certification* at 26%, *technical skills certification* at 22%, and *Maine Guide certification* at 21%. Twelve percent (12%) reported an *other* type of certification (e.g., sports certification, chainsaw safety, captain's license, etc.).



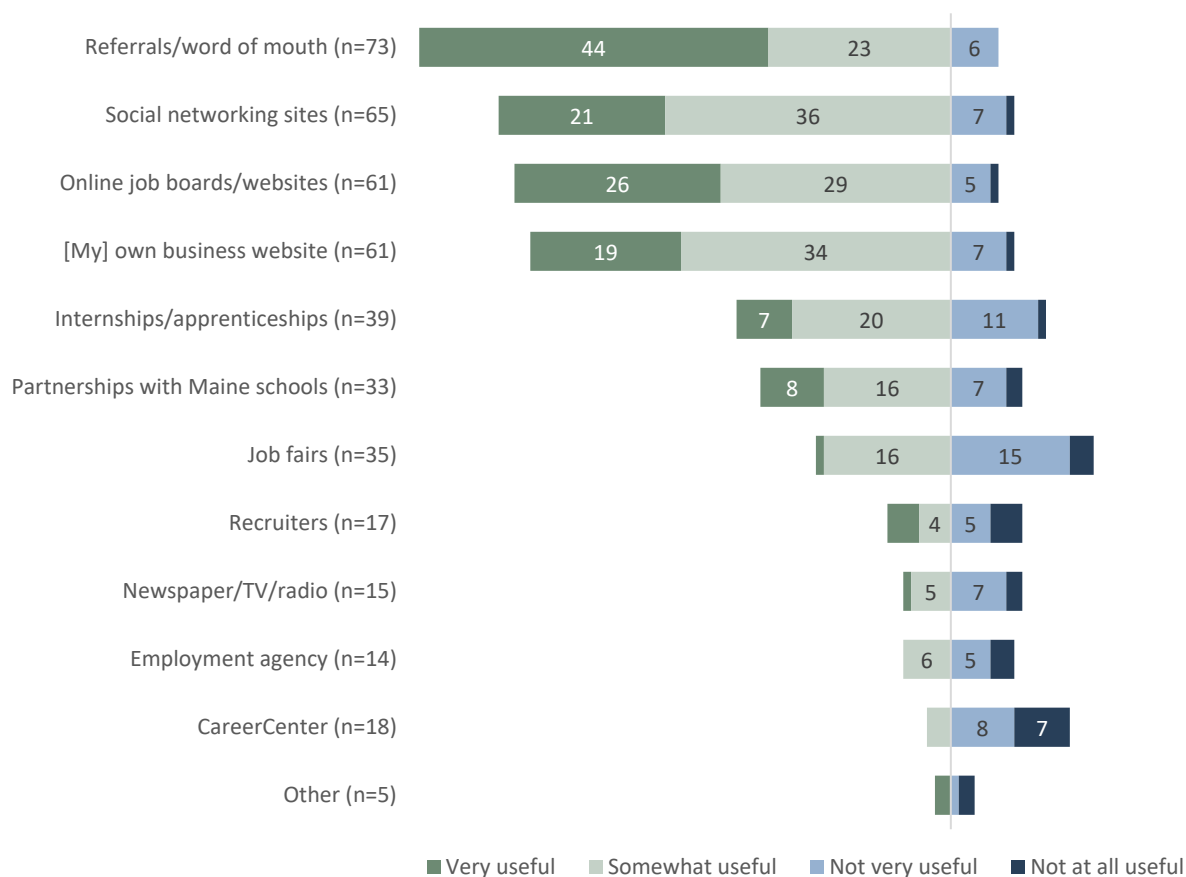
#### COMPARE & CONTRAST

The proportion of those requiring various certifications did not vary much between the 2021 survey and the 2025 survey.

## Recruiting & Retention

### Usefulness of Recruiting Methods

Respondents were asked how useful a variety of recruiting methods were to them. Eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents provided at least one response. *Referrals/word of mouth* received the most responses (n=73) as well as the most positive responses (n=67), as shown in the chart below. While the number of positive responses decreases with subsequent methods through the list below, responses are still weighted more heavily toward usefulness through *partnerships with Maine schools*. *Job fairs* and methods appearing below it were seen by most respondents as not useful.



Note: Data points with counts less than 5 are not labeled.

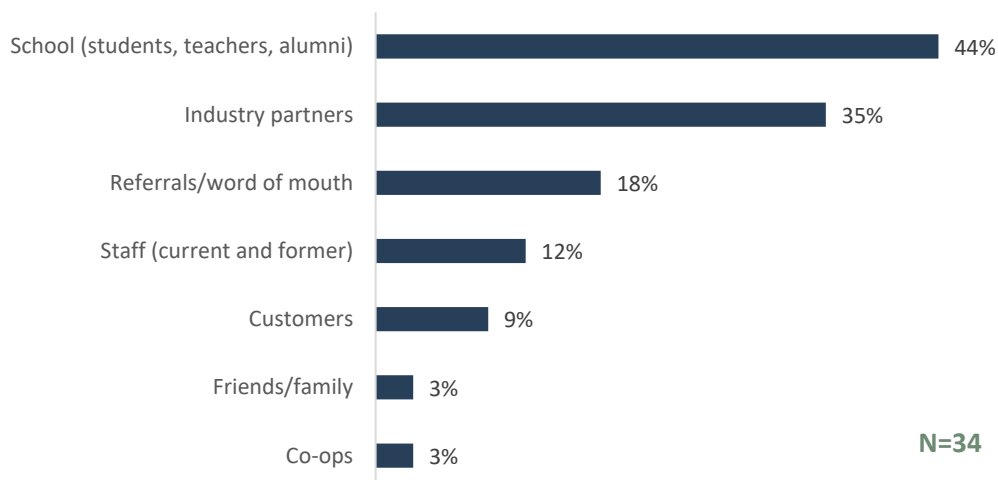


### COMPARE & CONTRAST

Responses to this question did not change much from 2021. The six methods that were deemed useful in the current survey were deemed so in 2021 also, and their order did not change.

### Talent Pools

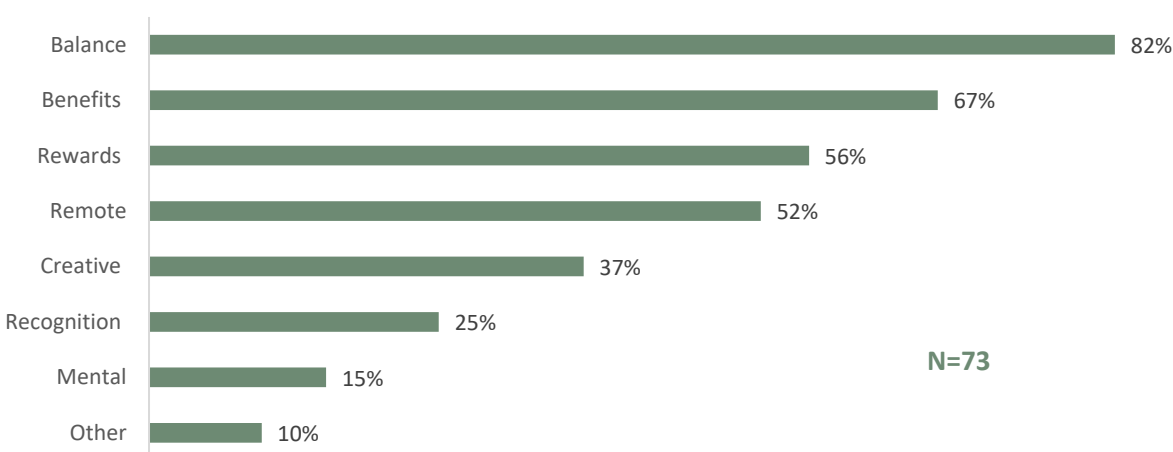
Respondents were asked what the typical talent pools (e.g., a specific college or program) were for their organization, if applicable. Thirty-four percent (34%) of respondents supplied a narrative response to this question, and these responses were coded into seven separate categories. The category with the highest number of responses was *schools (students, teachers, and alumni)*, at 44%. This was followed by *industry partners*, at 35%. The remaining categories had rates between 3% and 18%.



## Strategies

Respondents were presented with eight strategies (including *other*) for attracting and retaining employees and asked to select as many as their organization currently supported. Seventy-three percent (73%) of respondents reported at least one strategy. The strategy that was reported with the highest frequency was *flexible working hours/work-life balance*, with 82% of respondents selecting this strategy. This was followed by *employment benefits*, at 67%, *financial rewards*, at 56%, and *remote working options*, at 52%.

Ten percent (10%) of respondents cited *other* strategies, including *access to the good and services provided by the organization* (n=3) and *professional development* (n=2).



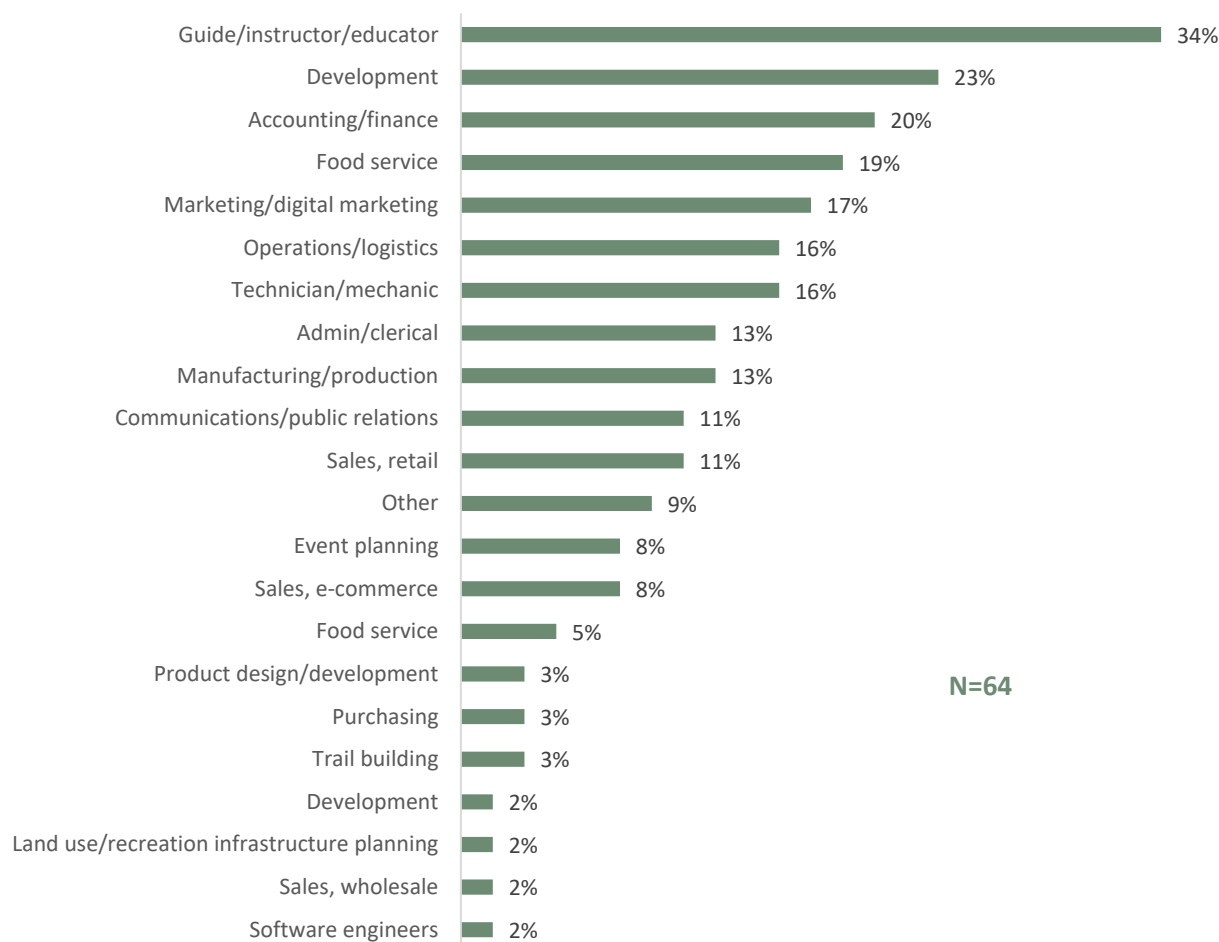
### STRATEGIES

- Flexible working hours/work-life **balance**
- Employment **benefits** (i.e., health insurance, retirement benefits, paid leaves, etc.)
- Financial **rewards** (i.e., discounts, bonuses, profit share, etc.)
- **Remote** working options
- **Creative** office environment (i.e., open concept office, onsite food, entertainment, etc.)
- **Recognition** (i.e., non-monetary awards, "employee of the month," etc.)
- **Mental** health support resources or services
- **Other**

## Difficulty Hiring

### Positions That Are Difficult to Fill

The survey presented respondents with 22 positions (including *other*) and asked them to choose up to five positions that they typically have difficulty filling. Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondents chose at least one position. The position reported most frequently was *guide/instructor/educator*. A little over a third of respondents (34%) reported that they typically have difficulty filling this position. Twenty-three percent (23%) of respondents said they typically had difficulty filling *customer service/hospitality* positions, and 20% said they typically had difficulty filling *accounting/finance* positions.



### COMPARE & CONTRAST

Responses to this question were different in 2021. *Manufacturing/production* was reported most frequently as a hard-to-fill position, at 29%, followed by *guide/instructor*, at 27%, and *marketing/digital marketing*, at 26%.

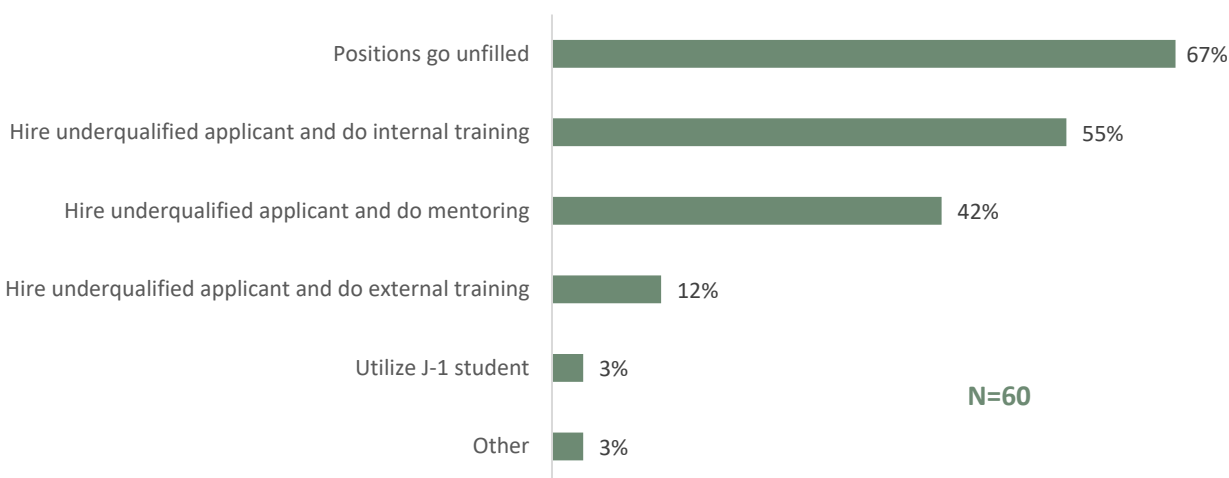


### Addressing Underqualified Applicants

Respondents were presented with six statements related to dealing with underqualified applicants. These statements included *I don't have difficulty filling positions due to underqualified applicants* and *other*. Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents reported that they did not, in fact, have difficulty filling positions due to underqualified applicants, and 14% did not respond to the question at all; the remaining 60% of respondents (n=60) provided at least one means of addressing the challenge associated with underqualified applicants.

The most frequently selected response was *positions go unfilled*; 67% of those who responded said this was how they dealt with underqualified applicants. An additional 55% said they *hire underqualified applicant and do internal training*, and 42% said they *hire underqualified applicant and do mentoring*.

Respondents who chose *other* were asked to specify how they dealt with underqualified applicants and these responses were reviewed, resulting in the creation of another option, namely *utilize J-1 students*.



### COMPARE & CONTRAST

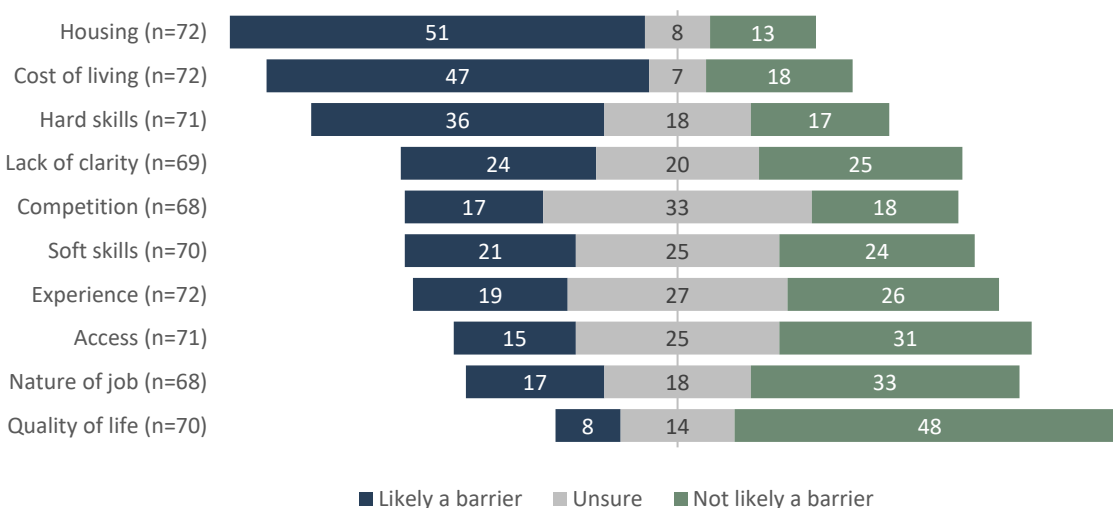
In 2021, the most frequently reported method for dealing with underqualified applicants was to *hire underqualified applicant and do internal training* (62%). The second most frequently reported method was *positions go unfilled* (42%).

## Barriers

### Barriers to Recruiting

Respondents were presented with 11 potential barriers (including *other*) for recruiting for their organization's hard-to-fill jobs and asked whether they thought each potential barrier would *not likely be a barrier*, *likely be a barrier*, or whether they were *unsure*. Not every respondent provided a response for every barrier. (Numbers for each barrier are provided in the graphic below.)

The potential barrier that was identified most frequently as a likely barrier was *housing options where job is located*. Fifty-one (51) respondents reported that they thought housing would, in fact, be a barrier. Another 47 reported that *cost of living where job is located* would be a barrier. Conversely, the potential barrier that was most frequently thought not to be an actual barrier was *quality of life where job is located*; 48 respondents said they did not think this would be a barrier to recruiting for their organization.



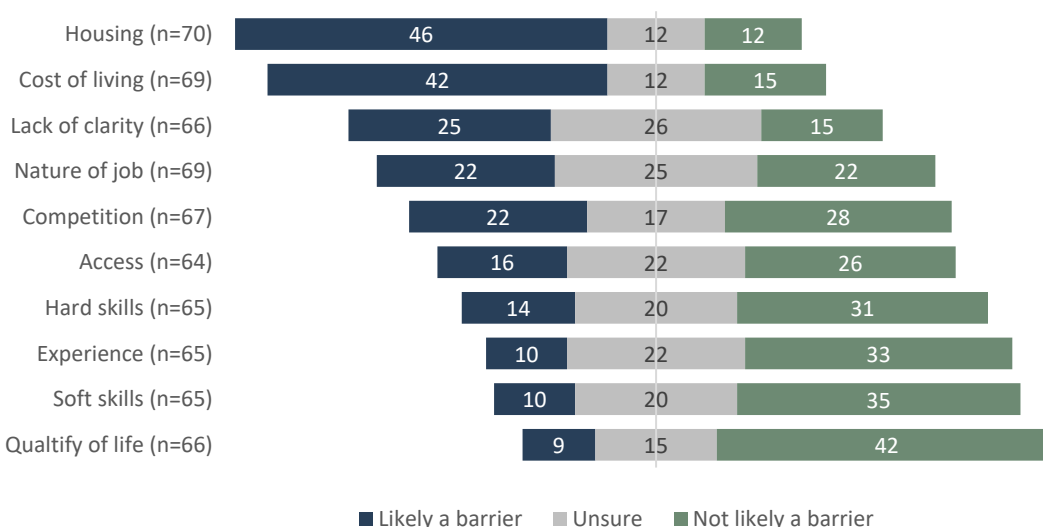
#### POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO RECRUITMENT

- **Housing** options where job is located
- **Cost of living** where job is located
- Lack of applicants with necessary **hard skills** (technical and know-how skills)
- **Lack of clarity** of career path or promotional opportunities
- **Competition** from other regions, industries or sectors of the industry
- Lack of applicants with necessary **soft skills** (skills associated with an individual's habits or interpersonal skills)
- **Experience** level/skill required
- **Access** to where job is located (transportation options in or to the job location)
- **Nature of job** (working conditions/schedule/unconventional hours)
- **Quality of life** where job is located

## Barriers to Retaining

Respondents were presented with 11 potential barriers (including *other*) for retaining their organization's hard-to-fill jobs and asked whether they thought each potential barrier would *not likely be a barrier*, *likely be a barrier*, or whether they were *unsure*. Not every respondent provided a response for every barrier. (Numbers for each barrier are provided in the graphic below.)

The potential barrier that was identified most frequently as a likely barrier was *housing options where job is located*. Forty-six (46) respondents reported that they thought housing would, in fact, be a barrier. Another 42 reported that *cost of living where job is located* would be a barrier. Conversely, the potential barrier that was most frequently thought not to be an actual barrier was *quality of life where job is located*; 42 respondents said they did not think this would be a barrier to retaining for their organization.

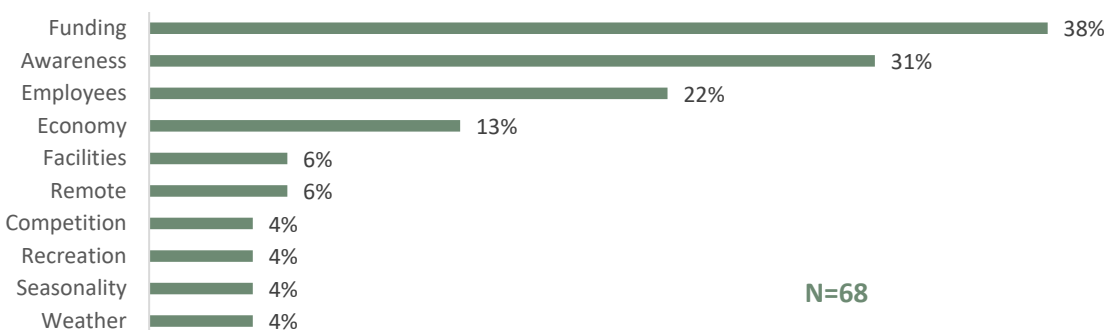


### POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO RETAINING

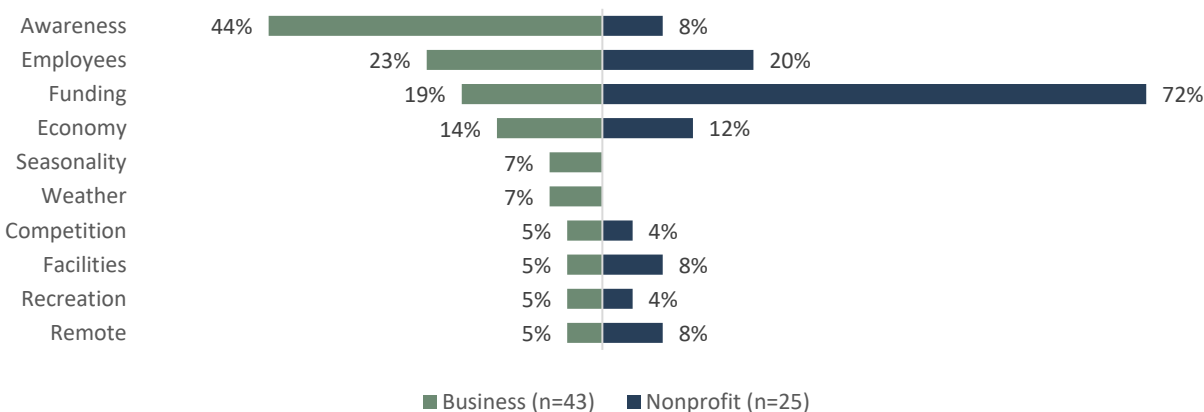
- **Housing** options where job is located
- **Cost of living** where job is located
- **Lack of clarity** of career path or promotional opportunities
- **Nature of job** (working conditions/schedule/unconventional house)
- **Competition** from other regions, industries or sectors of the industry
- **Access** to where job is located (transportation options in or to the job location)
- Lack of applicants with necessary **hard skills** (technical and know-how skills)
- **Experience** level/skill required
- Lack of applicants with necessary **soft skills** (skills associated with an individual's habits or interpersonal skills)
- **Quality of life** where job is located

## Biggest Barrier

The survey asked respondents what the biggest barrier was to their organization's overall growth. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of respondents supplied a narrative response to this question, and these responses were coded into 10 separate categories. The category with the highest number of responses was *funding/cash flow*, at 38%. This was followed by *awareness/interest*, at 31%, and *finding/retaining employees*, at 22%. The remaining categories had rates between 4% and 13%.



These rates varied, however, depending on whether the respondent's organization was a for-profit business or a nonprofit. The largest barrier for business respondents was *awareness/interest*, at 44%, while the largest barrier for nonprofit respondents was *funding/cash flow*, at 72%.

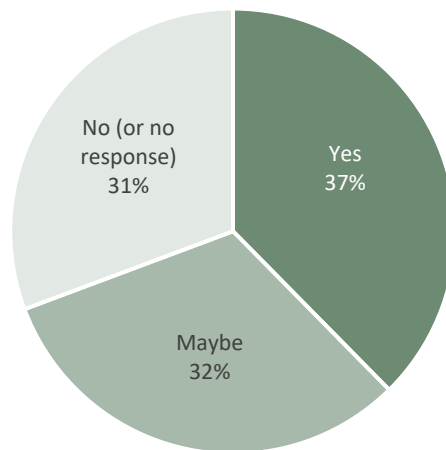


### BIGGEST BARRIER

- **Funding/cash flow**
- **Awareness/interest**
- Finding/retaining **employees**
- **Economy/economic policy**
- **Facilities**
- **Remote/rural location**
- Increased **competition**
- **Recreation** access/infrastructure/policy
- **Seasonality**
- **Weather** variability

### Interest in Employer Forums

Respondents were asked if they were interested in participating in employer forums with college/university programs or in helping move identified solutions forward in some other way. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of all respondents replied *yes*, with an additional 32% replying *maybe*. The remaining 31% either replied *no* or did not reply at all.



N=100



## Appendix: Survey



Welcome. This survey will assess workforce demands for Maine's outdoor industry—your immediate and future job needs as an outdoor business or organization in Maine. Your participation is voluntary—you don't have to do the survey, and your relationship with Maine Outdoor Brands, the Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation, and the University of Southern Maine will not be affected in any way whether you do it or not.

If you come to a question you don't want to answer, just go on to the next one. Survey responses will only be reported and shared in the aggregate; your individual responses will not be identified.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Liz Duffy at [liz@maineoutdoorbrands.com](mailto:liz@maineoutdoorbrands.com) or 207-464-0017.

Thanks in advance for your time.

**What is the name of your business or organization?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is the zip code of your primary location in Maine?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Roughly how many employees are employed at your organization during peak season?**

	None	1 or 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 or more
Part-time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Full-time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Do you feel your organization is ...**

- ☐ understaffed
- ☐ fully staffed
- ☐ overstaffed

**Roughly how many new employees do you expect you will need to hire over the next 12 months?**

	None	1 or 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 or more
Part-time seasonal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Full-time seasonal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Part-time year-round	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Full-time year-round	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)_____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Compared to the next 12 months, do you expect the 4 years following to see. . .**

- ☐ an increase in your hiring rate  
☐ a decrease in your hiring rate  
☐ no change in your hiring rate

This next section includes questions about your organization's employee hiring and training needs along with the skillsets necessary for specific job levels. Descriptions of job levels can be found below:

**Entry-level:** typically requires minimal professional work experience; common job titles include intern, apprentice, coordinator, administrative assistant, etc.

**Skilled professional:** typically requires some professional work experience and/or relevant education and training; common job titles include assistant manager, associate, specialist, etc.

**Mid-level management:** typically requires significant professional work experience and/or relevant education and training and sits at the intermediate leadership level within the organization responsible for team leading skilled professionals and reporting to executive management; common titles include (senior) manager, (assistant) director

**Executive management:** typically consists of heads of units or functions within the organization; common job titles include general manager, owner, founder, president, CEO, CFO, COO, VP, etc.

**Approximately how many new employees, in each of the following categories, does your organization plan to hire in the next 12 months?**

	None	1 or 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 or more
Entry-level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skilled professional	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mid-level management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Executive management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Please select up to 5 skillsets your organization will prioritize when hiring entry-level employees.**

- ☐ Adaptability or change management  
☐ Analytical  
☐ Business acumen or industry knowledge

- ☐ Communication (written, oral, nonverbal)
- ☐ Creativity and resilience
- ☐ Critical thinking and problem solving
- ☐ Curiosity and continuous learning
- ☐ Customer service
- ☐ Decision making
- ☐ Emotional intelligence
- ☐ Financial acumen
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Professionalism
- ☐ Project or time management
- ☐ Social/digital media
- ☐ Strategic thinking
- ☐ Team management
- ☐ Teamwork and collaboration
- ☐ Technical-specialized skillset (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select up to 5 skillsets your organization will prioritize when hiring *skilled professional* employees.**

- ☐ Adaptability or change management
- ☐ Analytical
- ☐ Business acumen or industry knowledge
- ☐ Communication (written, oral, nonverbal)
- ☐ Creativity and resilience
- ☐ Critical thinking and problem solving
- ☐ Curiosity and continuous learning
- ☐ Customer service
- ☐ Decision making
- ☐ Emotional intelligence
- ☐ Financial acumen
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Professionalism
- ☐ Project or time management
- ☐ Social/digital media
- ☐ Strategic thinking
- ☐ Team management
- ☐ Teamwork and collaboration
- ☐ Technical-specialized skillset (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select up to 5 skillsets your organization will prioritize when hiring *mid-level management* employees.**

- ☐ Adaptability or change management
- ☐ Analytical
- ☐ Business acumen or industry knowledge
- ☐ Communication (written, oral, nonverbal)
- ☐ Creativity and resilience
- ☐ Critical thinking and problem solving



- ☐ Curiosity and continuous learning
- ☐ Customer service
- ☐ Decision making
- ☐ Emotional intelligence
- ☐ Financial acumen
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Professionalism
- ☐ Project or time management
- ☐ Social/digital media
- ☐ Strategic thinking
- ☐ Team management
- ☐ Teamwork and collaboration
- ☐ Technical-specialized skillset (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select up to 5 skillsets your organization will prioritize when hiring executive management.**

- ☐ Adaptability or change management
- ☐ Analytical
- ☐ Business acumen or industry knowledge
- ☐ Communication (written, oral, nonverbal)
- ☐ Creativity and resilience
- ☐ Critical thinking and problem solving
- ☐ Curiosity and continuous learning
- ☐ Customer service
- ☐ Decision making
- ☐ Emotional intelligence
- ☐ Financial acumen
- ☐ Leadership
- ☐ Professionalism
- ☐ Project or time management
- ☐ Social/digital media
- ☐ Strategic thinking
- ☐ Team management
- ☐ Teamwork and collaboration
- ☐ Technical-specialized skillset (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please choose the 5 types of positions that will be the most needed for your business or organization over the next 12 months.**

- ☐ Accounting/finance
- ☐ Admin/clerical
- ☐ Communications/public relations
- ☐ Customer service/hospitality
- ☐ Event planning
- ☐ Guide/instructor/educator
- ☐ Land use/recreation infrastructure planning
- ☐ Management/senior leadership
- ☐ Manufacturing/production

- ☐ Marketing/digital marketing
- ☐ Operations/logistics
- ☐ Product design/development
- ☐ Product/market analyst
- ☐ Purchasing
- ☐ Sales, e-commerce
- ☐ Sales, retail
- ☐ Sales, wholesale
- ☐ Software engineers
- ☐ Sustainability/climate
- ☐ Technician/mechanic
- ☐ Trail building
- ☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please rank the positions in order of need, starting with 1 for the position you need most.**

	1	2	3	4	5
Accounting/finance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Admin/clerical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communications/public relations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Customer service/hospitality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Event planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guide/instructor/educator	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Land use/recreation infrastructure planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management/senior leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manufacturing/production	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marketing/digital marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Operations/logistics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product design/development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Product/market analyst	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Purchasing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sales, e-commerce	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sales, retail	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sales, wholesale	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Software engineers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sustainability/climate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technician/mechanic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trail building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify):	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**If you have difficulty filling positions due to underqualified applicants, how does your organization address this difficulty? (Select all that apply.)**

- ☐ Positions go unfilled
- ☐ Hire underqualified applicant and do internal training
- ☐ Hire underqualified applicant and do external training
- ☐ Hire underqualified applicant and do mentoring
- ☐ I don't have difficulty filling positions due to underqualified applicants
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please choose up to 5 positions that you typically have difficulty filling.**

- ☐ Accounting/finance
- ☐ Admin/clerical
- ☐ Communications/public relations
- ☐ Customer service/hospitality
- ☐ Event planning
- ☐ Guide/instructor/educator
- ☐ Land use/recreation infrastructure planning
- ☐ Management/senior leadership
- ☐ Manufacturing/production
- ☐ Marketing/digital marketing
- ☐ Operations/logistics
- ☐ Product design/development
- ☐ Product/market analyst
- ☐ Purchasing
- ☐ Sales, e-commerce
- ☐ Sales, retail
- ☐ Sales, wholesale
- ☐ Software engineers
- ☐ Sustainability/climate
- ☐ Technician/mechanic
- ☐ Trail building
- ☐ Other (please specify)

**How has your hiring success changed in the past two years? How do you expect it to change in the next two years? Better, worse, about the same? Please explain why.**

**How useful are each of the following methods of recruiting?**

	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful	Do not use this media
CareerCenter (Maine.gov)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employment agency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online job boards/websites (eg., MOB job board, JobsinME, Indeed, other associations' job boards)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social networking sites (eg., Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your own business website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job fairs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Partnerships with Maine schools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internships/apprenticeships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Referrals/word of mouth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful	Do not use this media
Newspaper/TV/radio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify):__	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**What are the most typical talent pools for your organization (a specific college or program e.g.), if applicable?**

**Which of the following do you think will be likely barriers for *recruiting* for your organization's hard-to-fill jobs?**

	Not likely a barrier	Unsure	Likely a barrier
Competition from other regions, industries or sectors of the industry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of applicants with necessary hard skills (technical and know-how skills)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of applicants with necessary soft skills (skills associated with an individual's habits or interpersonal skills)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of living where job is located	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing options where job is located	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of life where job is located	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature of job (working conditions/ schedule/unconventional house)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to where job is located (transportation options in or to the job location)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experience level/skill required	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of clarity of career path or promotional opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Which of the following do you think will be likely barriers for *retaining* your organization's hard-to-fill jobs?**

	Not likely a barrier	Unsure	Likely a barrier
Competition from other regions, industries or sectors of the industry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of applicants with necessary hard skills (technical and know-how skills)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of applicants with necessary soft skills (skills associated with an individual's habits or interpersonal skills)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of living where job is located	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing options where job is located	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of life where job is located	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature of job (working conditions/schedule/unconventional house)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to where job is located (transportation options in or to the job location)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Experience level/skill required	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of clarity of career path or promotional opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**What types of employee attraction and retention strategies does your organization support currently? (Select all that apply.)**

- ☐ Employment benefits (i.e., health insurance, retirement benefits, paid leaves, etc.)
- ☐ Financial rewards (i.e., discounts, bonuses, profit share, etc.)
- ☐ Recognition (i.e., non-monetary awards, "employee of the month," etc.)
- ☐ Flexible working hours/work-life balance
- ☐ Remote working options
- ☐ Mental health support resources or services
- ☐ Creative office environment (i.e., open concept office, onsite food, entertainment, etc.)
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Overall, what level of education is most preferred for the employees of your business or organization?**

- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ High school diploma or equivalent
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ Technical or occupational certificate

- ☐ Associate's degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Doctorate degree

**What certifications do you require for jobs for which you hire?** (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ WFA/WFR certification
- ☐ CPR certification
- ☐ Technical skills certification
- ☐ Maine Guide certification
- ☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ None

We are almost done! We just have a few questions about the make-up of your business or organization.

**How old is your business/organization? (Please enter the approximate number of years.)** \_\_\_\_\_

**To the best of your knowledge, which age range best describes the typical new hire at your business or organization?**

- ☐ 16-19 years old
- ☐ 20-24 years old
- ☐ 25-34 years old
- ☐ 35-44 years old
- ☐ 45-54 years old
- ☐ 55-64 years old
- ☐ 65 years and over

**What is the typical pay for an entry-level position at your organization? (If this varies by position, please use the average pay.)**

- ☐ Less than \$17/hr (equivalent to less than \$35K annually)
- ☐ \$17-\$23/hr (equivalent to \$35K-\$49.9K annually)
- ☐ \$24-\$31/hr (equivalent to \$50K-\$64.9K annually)
- ☐ \$32-\$36/hr (equivalent to \$65K-\$74.9K annually)
- ☐ \$37-\$48/hr (equivalent to \$75K-\$99.9K annually)
- ☐ \$48/hr or more (equivalent to \$100K or more annually)

**Please choose the industry that best describes your business or organization from the list below.**

- ☐ Accommodation and food services
- ☐ Arts, entertainment, and recreation (guide, outfitter, land manager) Conservation and stewardship
- ☐ Educational services Government Information/media
- ☐ Product and manufacturing
- ☐ Professional and business services (marketing, accounting, legal)
- ☐ Real estate and rental and leasing
- ☐ Retail trade
- ☐ Sales/dealers
- ☐ Wholesale trade
- ☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**What was your organization's revenue in the last fiscal year?**

- ☐ Less than \$250,000
- ☐ \$250,000 - \$500,000
- ☐ \$500,001 - \$1,000,000
- ☐ \$1,000,001 - \$3,000,000
- ☐ \$3,000,001 - \$5,000,000
- ☐ \$5,000,001 - \$20,000,000
- ☐ \$20,000,001 - \$50,000,000
- ☐ \$50,000,001 - \$100,000,000
- ☐ More than \$100,000,000
- ☐ Prefer not to say/unknown

**What is the biggest barrier to your organization's overall growth?**

---

**Maine Outdoor Brands (MOB) has made it a priority to strengthen the pipeline of talent into the outdoor industry in Maine. Are you interested in participating in employer forums with college/university programs or helping move identified solutions forward in some other way?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No

**Please provide us with your email address. This will prevent duplications of surveys, and will allow us to share the results of the survey with you directly. The individual responses will be kept confidential and the results will be reported in aggregate.**

---

**You have come to the end of the survey. Please click the right arrow to submit your responses.**

## About the Survey Research Center

The Survey Research Center provides technical expertise and assistance to support the generation, processing, and analysis of quantitative data in the social sciences, human services, and public opinion fields. The Center provides a wide range of research and technical assistance services to federal, state, and municipal governments, private nonprofit agencies, businesses, and University faculty and departments. Services include proposal preparation, market research, needs assessments, program evaluation, policy analysis, and information system design.

## About the Catherine Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy

The Catherine Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy at the Muskie School of Public Service is dedicated to developing innovative, evidence-informed, and practical approaches to pressing health and social challenges faced by individuals, families, and communities.

## About the Muskie School of Public Service

The Muskie School of Public Service is Maine's distinguished public policy school, combining an extensive applied research and technical assistance portfolio with rigorous undergraduate and graduate degree programs in geography-anthropology; policy, planning, and management (MPPM); and public health (MPH). The school is nationally recognized for applying innovative knowledge to critical issues in the fields of sustainable development and health and human service policy and management and is home to the Cutler Institute for Health and Social Policy.





Survey Research  
Center

Catherine Cutler Institute for  
Health and Social Policy

University of Southern  
Maine

**SURVEY**  
RESEARCH CENTER