

# WORKFORCE





**Copyright © 2025 St. Louis Community College**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of St. Louis Community College.

Printed in the United States of America.

Published by

St. Louis Community College

Workforce Solutions Group

Corporate College

3221 McKelvey Road

Bridgeton, MO 63044-2551

[stlcc.edu/workforce](http://stlcc.edu/workforce)

Although every effort has been made to ensure the integrity of the information contained herein, St. Louis Community College makes no representation or warranty as to the accuracy of such information. Furthermore, St. Louis Community College hereby disclaims any liability or responsibility to any person for loss or damages, including expenses, which may arise or result from the use of any information contained herein or following the procedures described herein but not limited to, fines or penalties for the violation of any federal, state or local regulations. No patent liability is assumed with respect to the use of the information contained herein.

Most references to manufacturers or their products are registered trade names and are to be treated accordingly.

Researched and produced by

St. Louis Community College Workforce Solutions Group

Visit [stlcc.edu/STLworkforce](http://stlcc.edu/STLworkforce) for more information.

# FOREWORD

**St. Louis Community College is here for you.**

St. Louis Community College (STLCC) has been a dependable pillar in the region for over 60 years, fostering students' growth in knowledge and skills to either transfer to a four-year university or directly enter the workforce. This commitment extends to learners of all ages.

**STLCC is here for you with new state-of-the-art facilities.** In 2025, STLCC is adding six new state-of-the-art buildings and upgrading many others. The STLCC Transformed initiative ensures our students receive the hands-on experiences they need to be ready for their next step. Our four campuses and additional locations across St. Louis City and County serve as community-embedded centers of learning.

We are expanding enrollment in our most popular programs as the new buildings open this year, including nursing, dental hygiene, welding, EMT, precision machining, automotive technology, CDL-A truck driving, and IT. These programs now feature upgraded labs and facilities to accommodate more students.

**STLCC is here to support your journey as a student.** STLCC supports students at every stage of their journey, offering classes, certificates, and degrees to help them advance. We also provide academic, financial, and personal support to ensure students succeed.

Online learning is a key part of our offerings, with a wide range of classes available to fit flexible schedules and support career growth. Whether students need a summer class or a full semester, our online options help them achieve their goals.

**STLCC is here to support businesses in the region.** We work with companies to create custom training for existing employees to grow in their current jobs or prepare for a new role within an organization. Additionally, we collaborate with employers to launch new programs and apprenticeships that attract and educate workers for a company. There are many ways a company can consider using its recruiting and training budgets to draw the workers a company needs.

While Americans' confidence in higher education has faced challenges in recent years, STLCC remains committed to providing quality education at an affordable price.

**STCC is here for you.**



**Jeff L. Pittman, PhD**  
Chancellor  
St. Louis Community College



**Phyllis Ellison, MBA**  
Associate Vice Chancellor  
St. Louis Community College  
Workforce Solutions Group

---

The illiterate of the 21st century  
will not be those who cannot read  
and write, but those who cannot  
learn, unlearn, and relearn.

Alvin Toffler

---

# Contents

Foreword	3
Methodology	6
St. Louis Economy	8
Employer Survey	17
Artificial Intelligence	41
Spotlight on Startups	43
Spotlight on Transportation	49
Acknowledgements	53





## METHODOLOGY

The 2025 State of the St. Louis Workforce report includes four distinct sections: The St. Louis Economy, a compilation of labor market information using public and proprietary sources and tools; the Employer Survey; and two Spotlight sections, focusing on Startups and Transportation.

### St. Louis Economy

This section includes an analysis of available data from public sources, including the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics and the United States Census Bureau, which describes the characteristics of the labor force and correlates unemployment with various labor force demographics. Analysis of real-time labor market demand is aggregated through the proprietary Lightcast™ tool, which searches web-based job boards to discern the level of demand for certain occupations, and the skills and certifications that employers are requesting.

### Employer Survey

The State of the St. Louis Workforce report utilizes first-person telephonic interviews of regional employers. Each of the 2025 survey interviews averaged 20 minutes to complete. During April, 2025, 600 local companies in 16 industry categories were surveyed. These companies covered the 23 two-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes that represent a composite picture of the St. Louis regional economy.

NAICS	Category Description	Businesses Surveyed	Percent
NAICS 23	Construction	42	7.0%
NAICS 31-33	Manufacturing	37	6.2%
NAICS 42	Wholesale trade	25	4.2%
NAICS 44-45	Retail trade	83	13.8%
NAICS 48-49	Transportation and warehousing	12	2.0%
NAICS 51	Information	9	1.5%
NAICS 52	Finance and insurance	37	6.2%
NAICS 53	Real estate and rental and leasing	22	3.7%
NAICS 54	Professional and technical services	58	9.7%
NAICS 56	Administrative and waste services	25	4.2%
NAICS 61	Educational services	9	1.5%
NAICS 62	Health care and social assistance	113	18.8%
NAICS 71	Arts, entertainment, and recreation	13	2.2%
NAICS 72	Accommodation and food services	77	12.8%
NAICS 81	Other services	36	6.0%
	Other small sectors and unclassified*	2	0.3%
	Total	600	100.00%

Survey respondents were asked 26 questions, some with multiple parts, related to hiring trends, job applicants, skill needs and training budgets. Companies interviewed for the survey were selected randomly within each of the 16 industry categories from a categorized list of the 42,192 businesses in the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) that employed five or more employees from the Reference USA employer database provided by the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC). The survey instrument is provided in the Appendix to this report.

### Spotlight on...

This year's report highlights two key aspects of our regional economy with additional data and analysis: startups and the jobs they create, and the transportation sector.

Spotlight on Startups explores the creation of first-time jobs in the St. Louis region. Through analysis supplied by MOSourceLink, this section showcases the number of new firms and the new first-time jobs that they create in the Missouri portion of the St. Louis MSA.

For this identification of new jobs, a new startup is identified with the first appearance of firm records in the employer file in the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). Individual records of wages paid for Unemployment Insurance serve as the trigger for identifying new jobs.

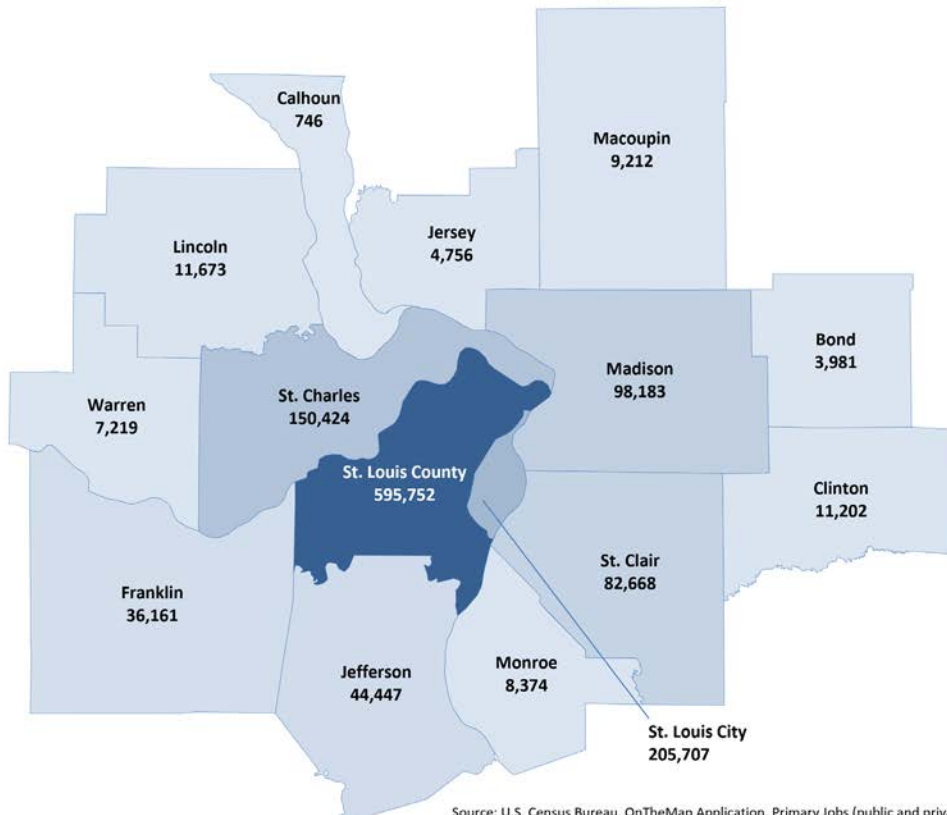
In this method, new startups are new establishments. Only employees that were hired for wages paid for Unemployment Insurance are counted as employees, whether full-time or part-time, and do not include those who are self-employed or contract employees.

The Spotlight on Transportation section focuses on the size of the industry in the region, the breadth of the impact of the Transportation industry, its workforce and the challenges it faces.

## ST. LOUIS ECONOMY

The cross-state St. Louis MO-IL Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) includes 15 counties in Missouri and Illinois with an estimated population of over 2.8 million, and a workforce of over 1.4 million.

**St. Louis MSA Job Count by County**



According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2023, the area had a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$226.5 billion in current dollars (not adjusted for inflation). This was a 7.1 % increase from \$211.5 billion in 2022. Private Sector businesses accounted for 92% of the region's output, while Government accounted for the remaining 8%.

The seven Missouri counties in the St. Louis MSA provide for 53% of Missouri's GDP.

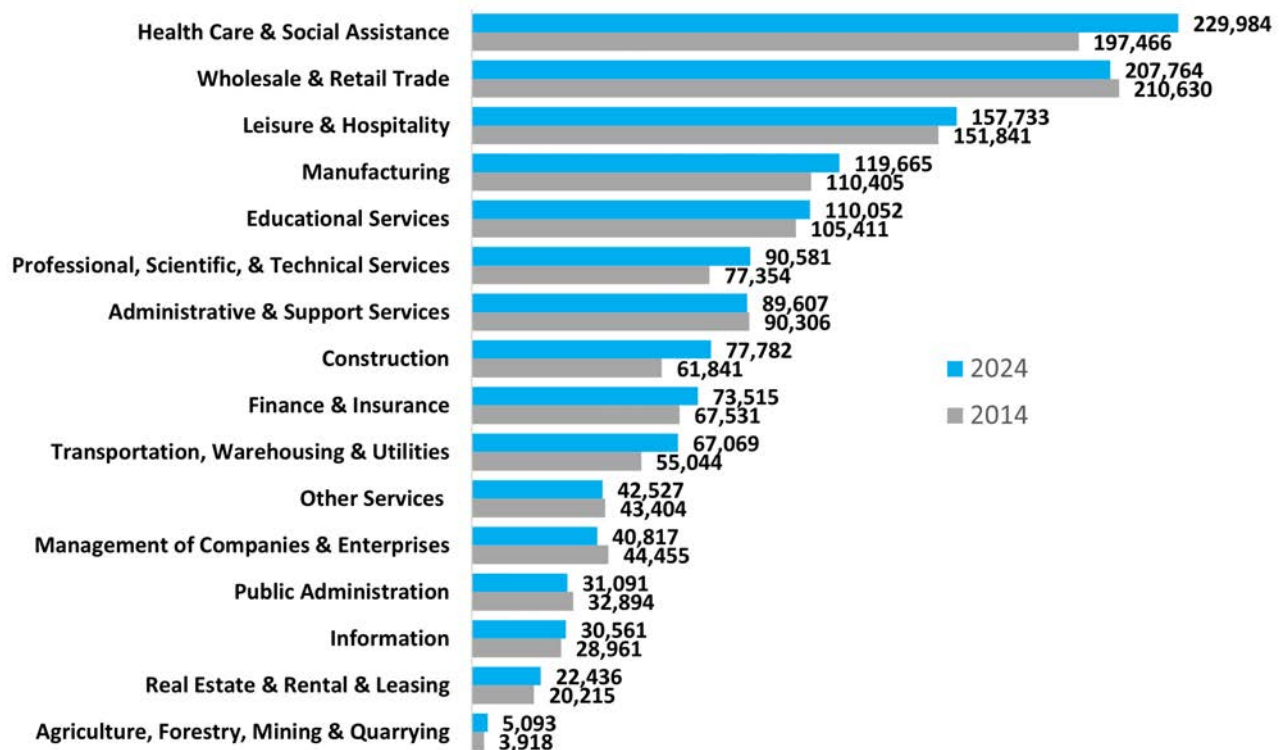
St. Louis City, St. Louis County and St. Charles County each grew by more than 2-4%, while most of the counties in the MSA remained near the same population or experienced a slight decrease in population.



## Employment

The St. Louis MSA has a diverse economy with a labor force of nearly 1.4 million that works in a wide range of industries. Health Care & Social Assistance makes up 16.5% of total employment, followed by Wholesale & Retail Trade (14.9%), and Leisure & Hospitality (11.3%). Health Care & Social Assistance employment has increased by over 32,000 workers or 16.5% over the last decade. Other industries with large increases over the last 10 years include Construction, increasing by nearly 16,000 employees (25.8%), and Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities, which increased by 12,000 employees (21.8%). Management of Companies & Enterprises decreased the most over the last 10 years, shrinking by 3,600 employees (-8.2%). Overall, the St. Louis workforce increased by over 94,000 employees (7.3%) from 2014 to 2024.

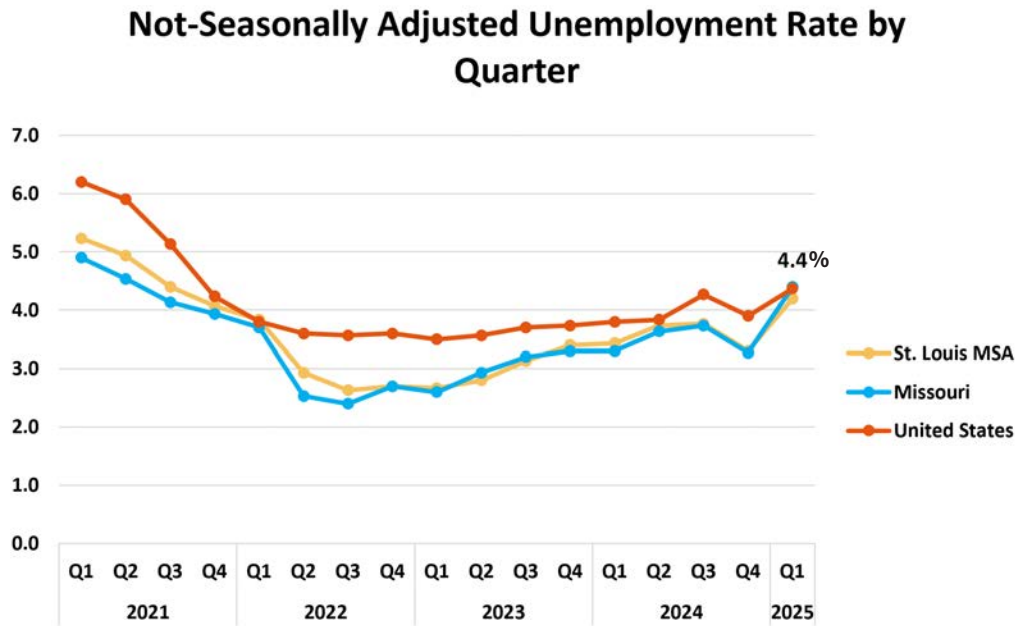
### St. Louis MSA Industry Employment



Source: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Averages

Unemployment

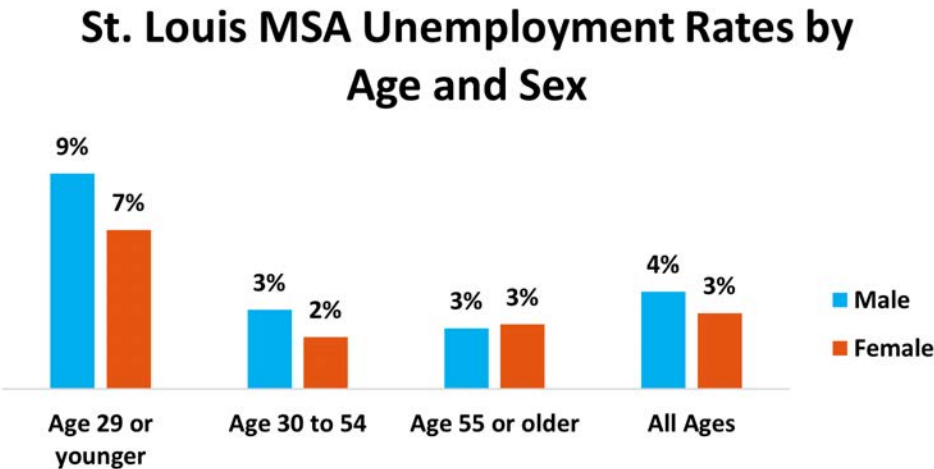
Unemployment rates in the St. Louis MSA have slowly increased over the past year, from 3.4% in April 2024 to 3.8% in May of 2025. Over the past year, unemployment rates for the St. Louis MSA have consistently been lower than the national rate, except for May 2024.



Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Unemployment Demographics

Unemployment rates vary greatly across the demographics of age and sex. The largest differences in unemployment rates from the 2023 U.S. Census Bureau continue to be between males and females in two younger (16-21 and 22-24) age groups. Unemployment rates between males and females were similar in the 35-59 years age groups. In 2023, the St. Louis MSA unemployment rate for all ages was 4% in males and 3.1% in females.

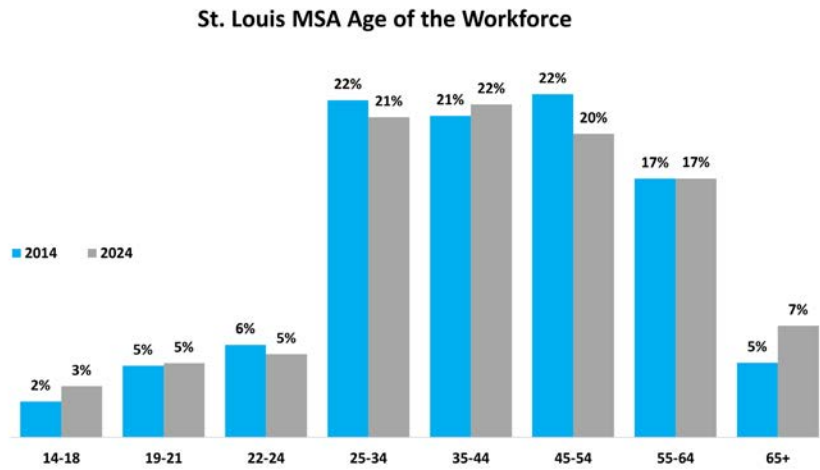


Source: 2023 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

## Workforce Demographics

In 2024, the 35-44 years age group had the largest share of the workforce at 21.7%.

The St. Louis age profile has changed over time. The share of workers in the oldest and youngest age groups has increased over the last 10 years, while the share of workers in the 45-54 years age group has decreased.

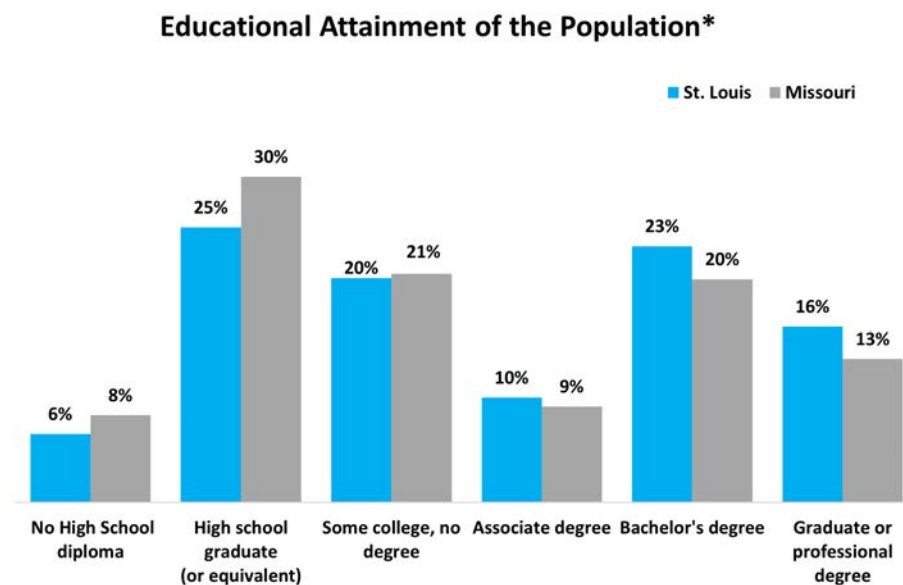


## Educational Attainment

Over one-half (51%) of the region's 25 years and older population have no post-secondary degree.

This is lower than the state rate of 59%. Thirty-nine percent of the St. Louis population has a bachelor's degree or greater, which is higher than both the state (33%) and national (36%) rates.

Only 6% do not have a high school diploma or equivalent, which is lower than both the state (8%) and national (10%) levels.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2023 1-year estimates.

\*Population age 25 and over

St. Louis MSA data for 2023 shows that unemployment rates decrease, and income increases with additional education levels. Workers with some college or a college degree have unemployment rates under 3%. Median earnings for those with some college or an associate’s degree are \$46,767 and increase to \$73,694 with a bachelor’s degree or higher. The median earnings continued to grow at all education levels over the past two years.

The highest unemployment rates and lowest wages belong to workers with less than a high school education. Unemployment rates are 2.7 percentage points higher than those with a high school diploma, and five times higher than those with a bachelor’s degree or higher. Median earnings for those workers are nearly \$10,000 lower than workers with a high school diploma, and less than half of those with a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Missouri shows similar trends, with workers who do not have a high school education having an unemployment rate of 5.9%, and those with a bachelor’s degree or higher having a rate of 1.5%. Young and/or less educated job seekers often have a more difficult time finding employment.

**Unemployment Rates and Earnings  
by Education Population 25 years and older**

	Unemployment Rates	Educational Attainment	Median Earnings
Missouri	5.9%	Less than high school graduate	\$31,777
	3.5%	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$37,420
	2.9%	Some college or associate's degree	\$43,300
	1.5%	Bachelor's degree or higher	\$66,921
St. Louis MSA	7.4%	Less than high school graduate	\$30,562
	4.7%	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	\$40,042
	2.9%	Some college or associate's degree	\$46,767
	1.4%	Bachelor's degree or higher	\$73,694

*\*Bachelors (\$61,418) and Graduate (\$72,423) degree medians for Missouri.*

*\*Bachelors (\$67,367) and Graduate (\$80,021) degree medians for St. Louis MSA.*

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 1-year estimates.*

## Commuting Profile

The St. Louis MSA employed over 1.1 million people in 2022. Most workers lived in the area, but 145,223 commuted into the MSA for jobs, while 111,828 of the residents commuted outside of the St. Louis MSA for work.

Forty-one percent of the workforce commuted less than 10 miles to work, while 11% traveled more than 50 miles.

## Current Job Demand

Job postings provide a way to measure current employment demand. Over the past year, there were over 338,000 online job postings in the St. Louis MSA. This is down from 346,000 online postings last year and a large drop from the 450,000 postings two years ago.

Of the online job postings for the St. Louis MSA from May 2024 to April 2025, the overall top-posted job was again Registered Nurses (25,840), followed by Retail Salespersons (8,970) and Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (6,910).

Four of the top online job postings were related to retail sales and customer service, and three were related to health care occupations.

Top Job Postings		
Now		
High School Education or Less and/or Short-Term Training		
SOC Code	Occupation Title	Online Job Ads
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	8,970
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	5,690
31-1120	Home Health & Personal Care Aides	4,030
Next		
Moderate/Long-Term Training to Associate Degree		
SOC Code	Occupation Title	Online Job Ads
53-3032	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	6,910
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	6,470
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	4,460
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing	4,420
29-2061	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	4,190
Later		
Bachelor's Degree or Higher		
SOC Code	Occupation Title	Online Job Ads
29-1141	Registered Nurses	25,840
15-1252	Software Developers	4,320

Source: Lightcast™, Online Job Ads May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025



## Skills and Qualifications

In the St. Louis MSA, communication was the top skill demand of employers, requested in over one-third (34%) of total job postings last year. Other common skills in demand included customer service, management, and sales. Registered nurse was the occupation with the most job postings, and nursing was the top requested specialized skill, followed by project management and merchandising. Microsoft® Office and its products such as Word®, Excel®, PowerPoint®, and Access® were the most requested software skills across all occupations and industries. Other top-requested software and programming skills included SQL, Python, and SAP applications.

Top Common Skills	Online Job Ads	% of Total Postings
Communication	114,610	34%
Customer Service	86,440	26%
Management	74,470	22%
Sales	52,230	15%
Operations	52,140	15%
Leadership	51,730	15%
Detail Oriented	43,830	13%
Problem Solving	42,850	13%
Planning	30,600	9%
Writing	28,750	8%

Source: Lightcast™, Online Job Ads May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025

Top Specialized Skills	Online Job Ads	% of Total Postings
Nursing	28,840	9%
Project Management	19,090	6%
Merchandising	18,050	5%
Marketing	17,310	5%
Auditing	15,990	5%
Selling Techniques	12,980	4%
Accounting	12,650	4%
Data Entry	12,300	4%
Warehousing	11,200	3%
Workflow Management	11,140	3%

Source: Lightcast™, Online Job Ads May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025

Top Software Skills	Online Job Ads	% of Total Postings
SQL (Programming Language)	4,900	1%
Python (Programming Language)	3,910	1%
SAP Applications	3,840	1%
Salesforce	3,370	1%
Amazon Web Services	3,200	1%
Operating Systems	3,180	1%
Epic EMR	3,170	1%
Application Programming Interface (API)	2,630	1%
Java (Programming Language)	2,550	1%
Microsoft Azure	2,310	1%

Source: Lightcast™, Online Job Ads May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025

Employers also request various qualifications, which are degrees, certificates, or licenses rather than specific skills. The top requested qualifications were a valid driver's license, followed by a registered nurse license. Seven health care related qualifications were among the top ten requested qualifications, including registered nurse and life support certifications.

Top Qualifications	Online Job Ads
Valid Driver's License	36,640
Registered Nurse (RN)	29,760
Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	18,090
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	10,240
Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	8,380
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	3,860
Security Clearance	3,690
Nurse Practitioner (APRN-CNP)	3,610
Secret Clearance	3,450
Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) Certification	3,270

Source: Lightcast™, Online Job Ads May 1, 2024 - April 30, 2025

## Projected Job Demand

Looking at what jobs will be in demand in the future helps ensure the workforce is prepared for the needs of tomorrow. Employment projections through the year 2032, developed by the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) in partnership with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, estimate the jobs expected to be in greatest demand over a ten-year period. The table shows the occupations, by typical education or training needed, with top projected job openings from 2022-2032 for the St. Louis Workforce Development Area (WDA).

Occupations with the most openings are determined by looking at openings created by new job growth, as well as those created through the need for replacement workers. Replacement openings are created by workers moving to another occupation or leaving the workforce entirely. The jobs with the most projected openings are home health and personal care aides, stockers and order fillers, and cashiers.

Several occupations, including registered nurses; home health and personal care aides; and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, were among the top occupations in terms of current job postings and projected future openings. This implies these occupations are in demand now and will be in demand in the future.

Jobs with the Most Projected Openings, 2022-2032		
St. Louis Workforce Development Area		
Now		
High School Education or Less and/or Short-Term Training		
SOC Code	Occupation Title	Annual Openings
31-1120	Home Health & Personal Care Aides	6,697
53-7065	Stockers & Order Fillers	4,108
41-2011	Cashiers	3,865
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	3,298
35-3031	Waiters & Waitresses	3,136
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	3,084
35-3023	Fast Food & Counter Workers	2,944
37-2011	Janitors & Cleaners	2,633
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	2,569
53-7062	Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	2,331
Next		
Moderate/Long-Term Training to Associate Degree		
SOC Code	Occupation Title	Annual Openings
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	2,319
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	1,776
53-3032	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,586
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Prep. & Serving Workers	1,326
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	1,156
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, & Auditing Clerks	979
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing	951
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office & Admin. Support Workers	931
47-2031	Carpenters	873
51-2090	Miscellaneous Assemblers & Fabricators	801
Later		
Bachelor's Degree or Higher		
SOC Code	Occupation Title	Annual Openings
11-1021	General & Operations Managers	3,142
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2,802
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	993
15-1252	Software Developers	842
13-1082	Project Management Specialists	728
13-1161	Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists	722
11-9199	Managers, All Other	712
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	657
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	649
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	646
<b>Source:</b> Long-Term Occupational Projections 2022-2032, St. Louis Workforce Development Area, MERIC		

## EMPLOYER SURVEY

The 2025 Employer Survey marks the 17th annual telephone survey conducted with companies throughout the St. Louis metropolitan area. The purpose of the survey is to assess hiring trends, business climate conditions, occupational skills, and workforce demands across the region. This year's survey included responses from 600 companies, spanning 16 employer categories and 23 industry segments as defined by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). These companies collectively represent a comprehensive profile of the region's industries and economic sectors.

The sample is consistent with previous years and represents a diverse cross-section of industry categories, company sizes, and geographic locations. Survey respondents were intentionally selected to ensure broad representation across the entire St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) (see "Methodology" section). As in prior surveys, the majority of respondents were small- to mid-sized businesses employing fewer than 50 individuals. Companies with less than five employees were excluded from the survey sample (see "Spotlight on Startups" section for information on new companies).

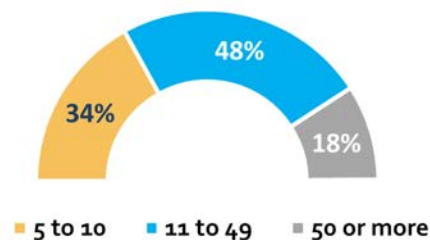
---

**82% of companies  
have fewer than  
50 employees.**

---

Each employer responded to a series of 26 survey questions, many of which included multiple components, designed to explore hiring forecasts, workforce challenges, and practices that either pose barriers to or create pathways for employment and career advancement. Notably, this year's survey introduced new questions addressing the use and impact of artificial intelligence (AI) in the workplace. Specific survey questions are provided in the "Appendix."

### Employment Size of Firms Surveyed



## Hiring Trends

National hiring trends present a mixed picture, reflecting both a gradual move toward a more balanced labor market and slower year-over-year job growth. The unemployment rate remained relatively steady (4.0%–4.2%) and job openings saw an uptick in April 2025—suggesting a labor market stronger than anticipated. However, these gains were tempered by May’s employment report, which showed the smallest monthly job increase in over two years. Prevailing economic and political factors have contributed to employer caution and a hiring rate below pre-pandemic levels. National, sector-specific trends reveal ongoing strength in health care and social assistance, transportation and warehousing, and financial activities—with health care and social assistance emerging as the fastest-growing sector in early 2025.

On the local level, between May 2024 and May 2025, the St. Louis MSA recorded simultaneous increases in labor force participation and unemployment. During this period, the labor force reached 1,489,700, representing a 2.1% year-over-year increase, equivalent to 30,500 people. Employment also grew with the number of employed individuals reaching 1,436,600, representing a .5% increase, equivalent to 7,400 people. The unemployment rate rose a modest .2% from 3.4% to 3.6%, suggesting that the rate of labor force growth outpaced the availability of new employment opportunities. This divergence may reflect ongoing economic uncertainty and employer caution, contributing to a measured pace of hiring across the region.

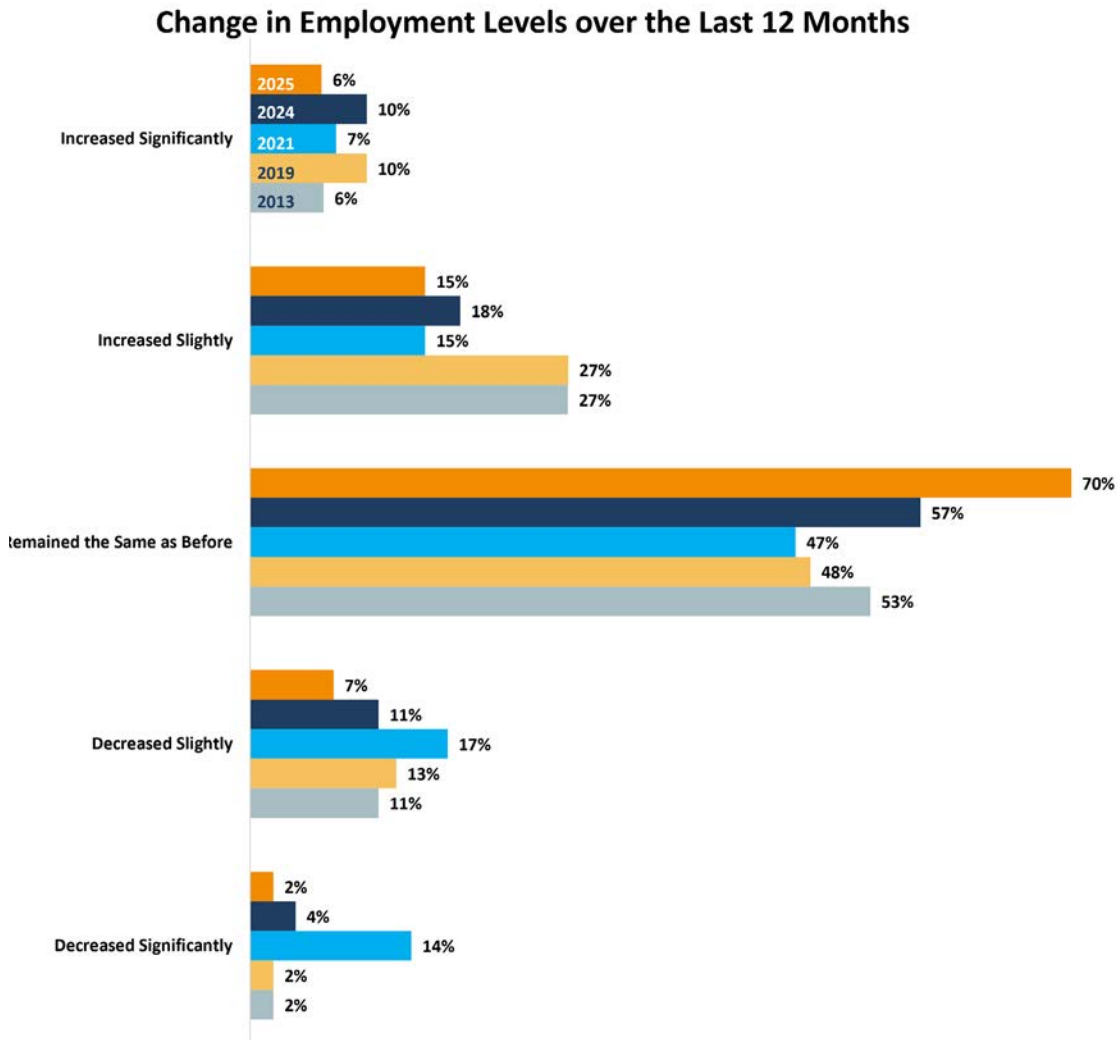


## Employment in the Past Year

Employment levels remained steady among surveyed employers with 70% maintaining the same workforce size as the previous year. By comparison, in recent years the percentage of employers reporting unchanged employment levels has ranged from 47% to 57%.

Fewer companies reported increases or decreases in employment levels this year. Only 21% of employers reported increased employment in the 2025 survey, down from 28% in 2024. Just 9% of surveyed companies reported decreased employment levels, marking the lowest rate since 2013.

The lack of significant change in employment levels over the last 12 months could signal a period of labor market stability or of stagnation. Contributing factors may include economic uncertainty, less turnover, or shifts in operational strategies like automation or outsourcing. Employers may have recalibrated staffing levels to meet post-pandemic demands and are now maintaining those levels until there is a clearer understanding of the impact of government changes on taxes, foreign trade tariffs and domestic subsidies in specific industries.

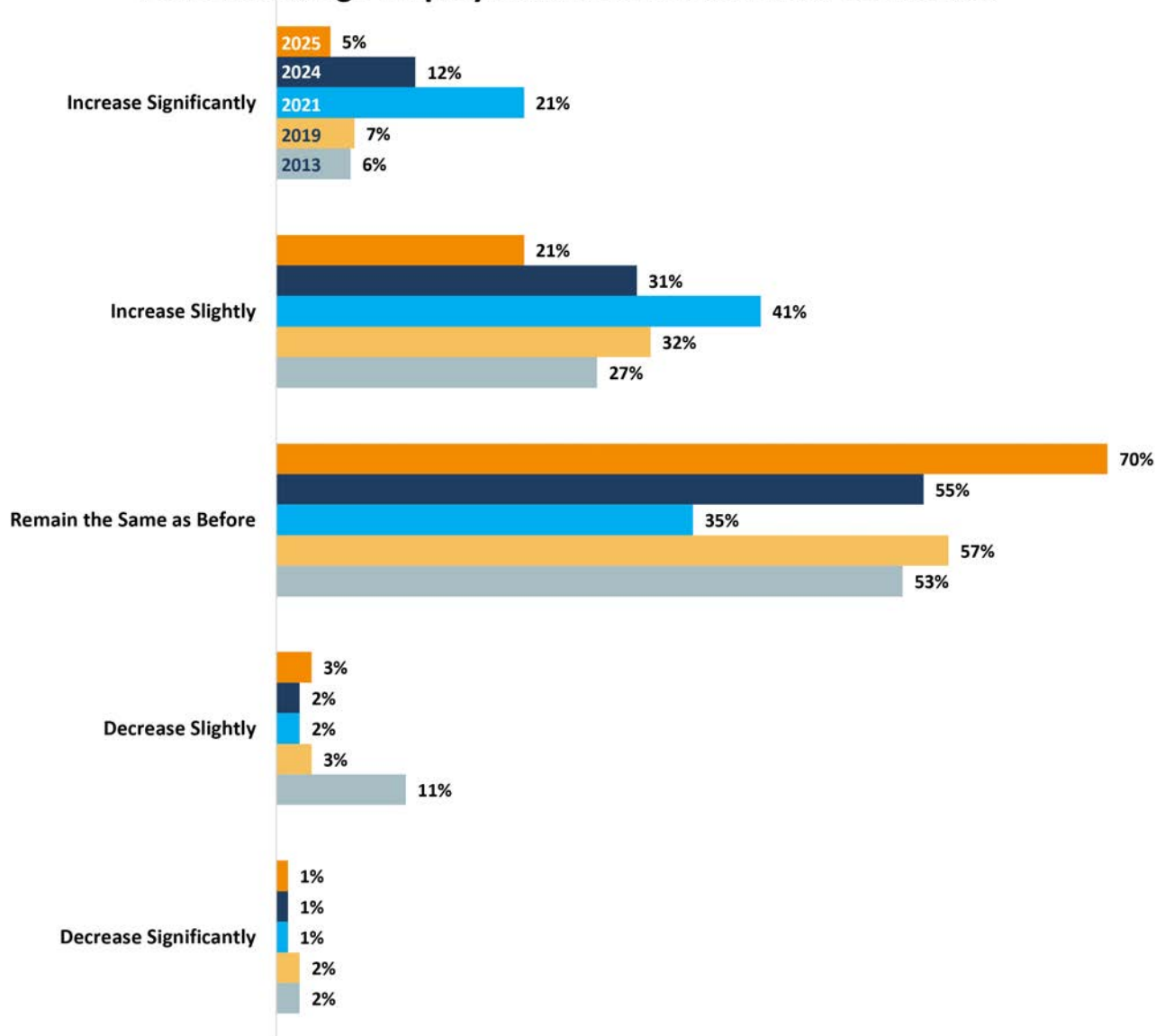


## Employment Forecast for the Next Year

Looking ahead to 2026, 70% of respondents reported plans to maintain their current hiring levels. However, there is a discernible increase in caution around workforce projections. Unlike in previous years—when employers often expressed optimistic hiring intentions that were not fully realized—current projections are notably more conservative and fall below projections reported during pandemic years of 2020 and 2021.

This shift in sentiment may reflect a range of factors, including: ongoing economic uncertainty, productivity gains resulting from a more highly skilled workforce, and/or the integration of technology and automation.

### Plans to Change Employment Levels in the Next 12 Months

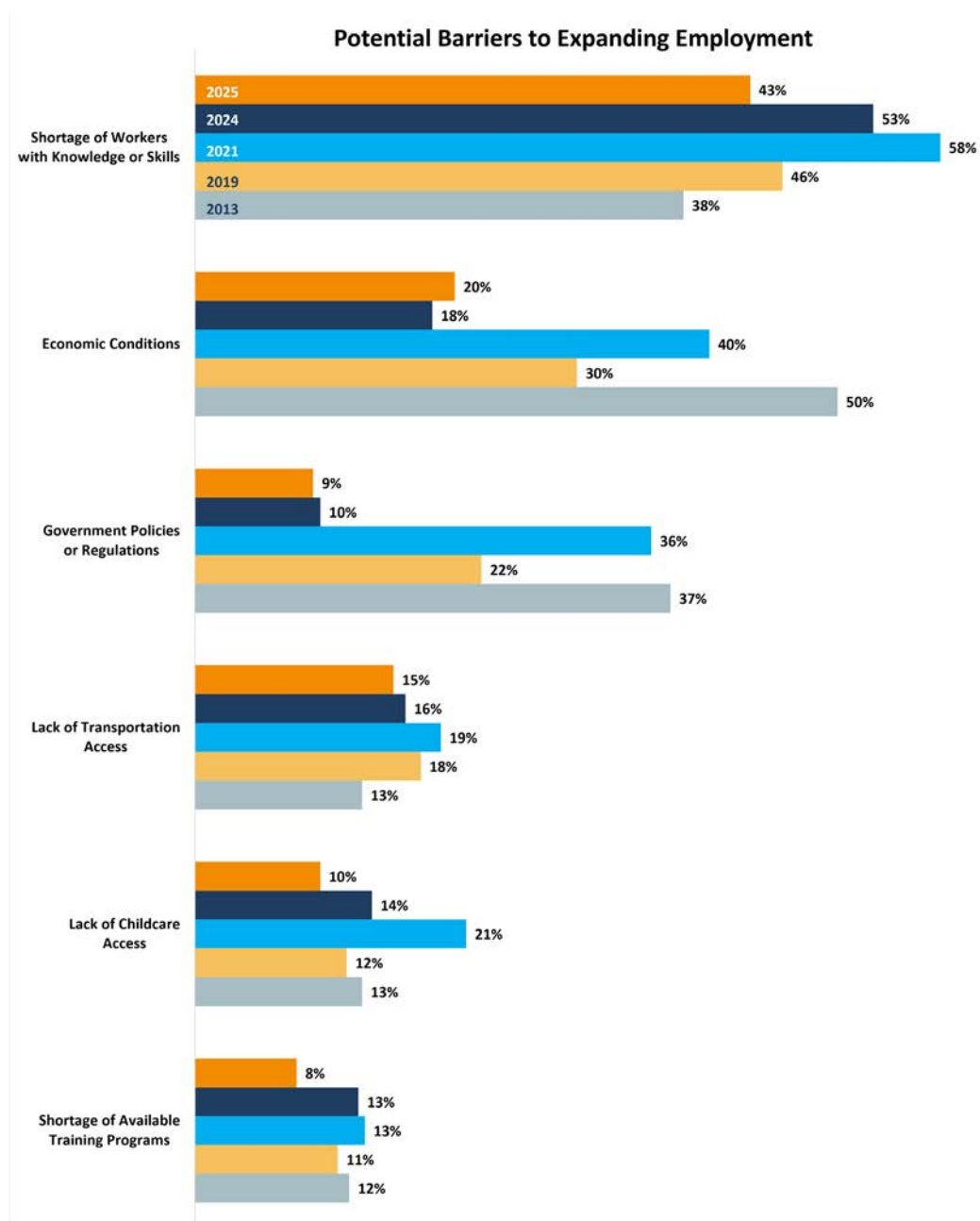


## Expanding Employment

The State of the St. Louis Workforce survey queried employers about a range of barriers to expanding employment.

### Barriers and Skill Gaps

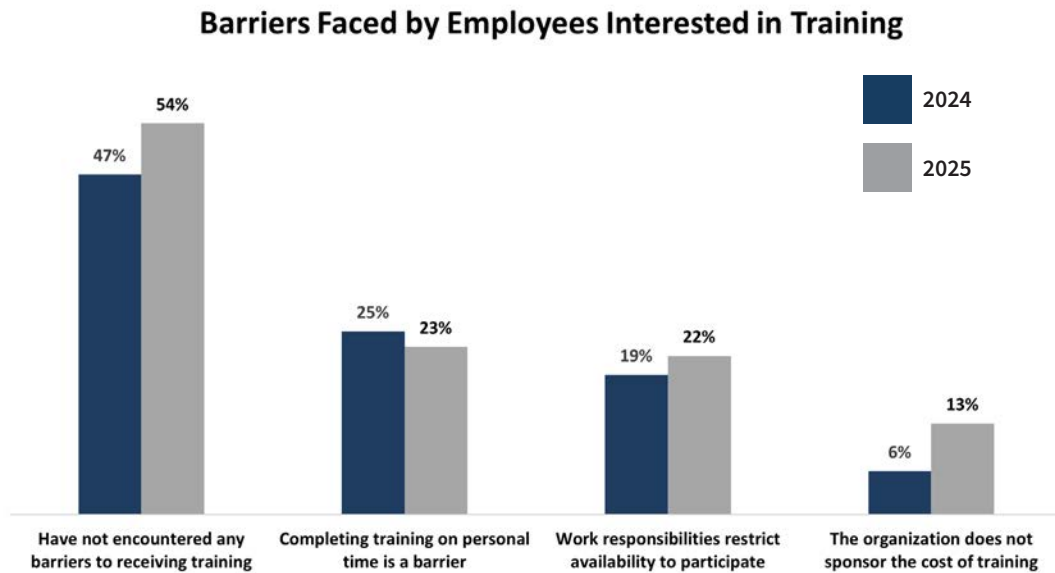
A shortage of workers with knowledge or skills remains the most frequently cited barrier to employment expansion among surveyed employers; however, the share of employers reporting this challenge declined from 53% (2024) to 43% (2025). At the same time, concerns over broader economic conditions have steadily increased over the previous three years, emerging as the second most significant barrier to hiring, followed by a lack access to transportation for employees. A shortage of available training programs remains a lower-tier barrier.



## Employment Training

In a series of questions introduced in the 2024 survey, employers were asked to identify potential barriers faced by employees interested in training. In 2025, more than half of respondents indicated that most of their employees have not encountered any barriers to receiving training.

The survey focused on three specific barriers: completing training on personal time, work responsibilities restricting availability to participate, and the organization not sponsoring the cost of training. While there were modest changes in personal time and work-related barriers, the most notable change was employers who indicated that their organizations do not cover the cost of training, which doubled in 2025.



## Investing in Employees

Employers were asked to discuss their level of investment in employee training. In 2025, there was a significant increase in the proportion of employers who reported no spending on training, rising from 24% in 2024 to 42% in 2025.

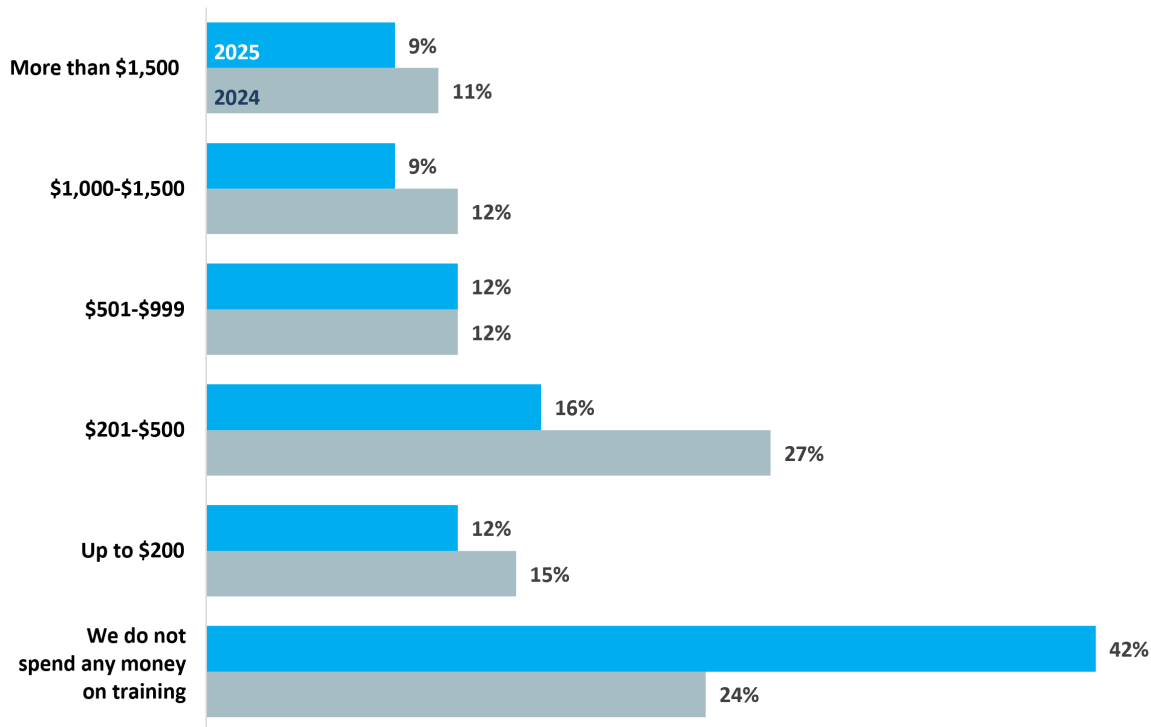
Spending levels across all training investment categories also declined compared to the previous year, a trend suggesting that despite a skills shortage, fewer employers appear to be investing in solutions to address them. Only 30% of employers surveyed spend more than \$500 per worker on training each year.

---

**42% of employers surveyed spend no money on training employees.**

---

### Annual Amount Spent on Training per Employee

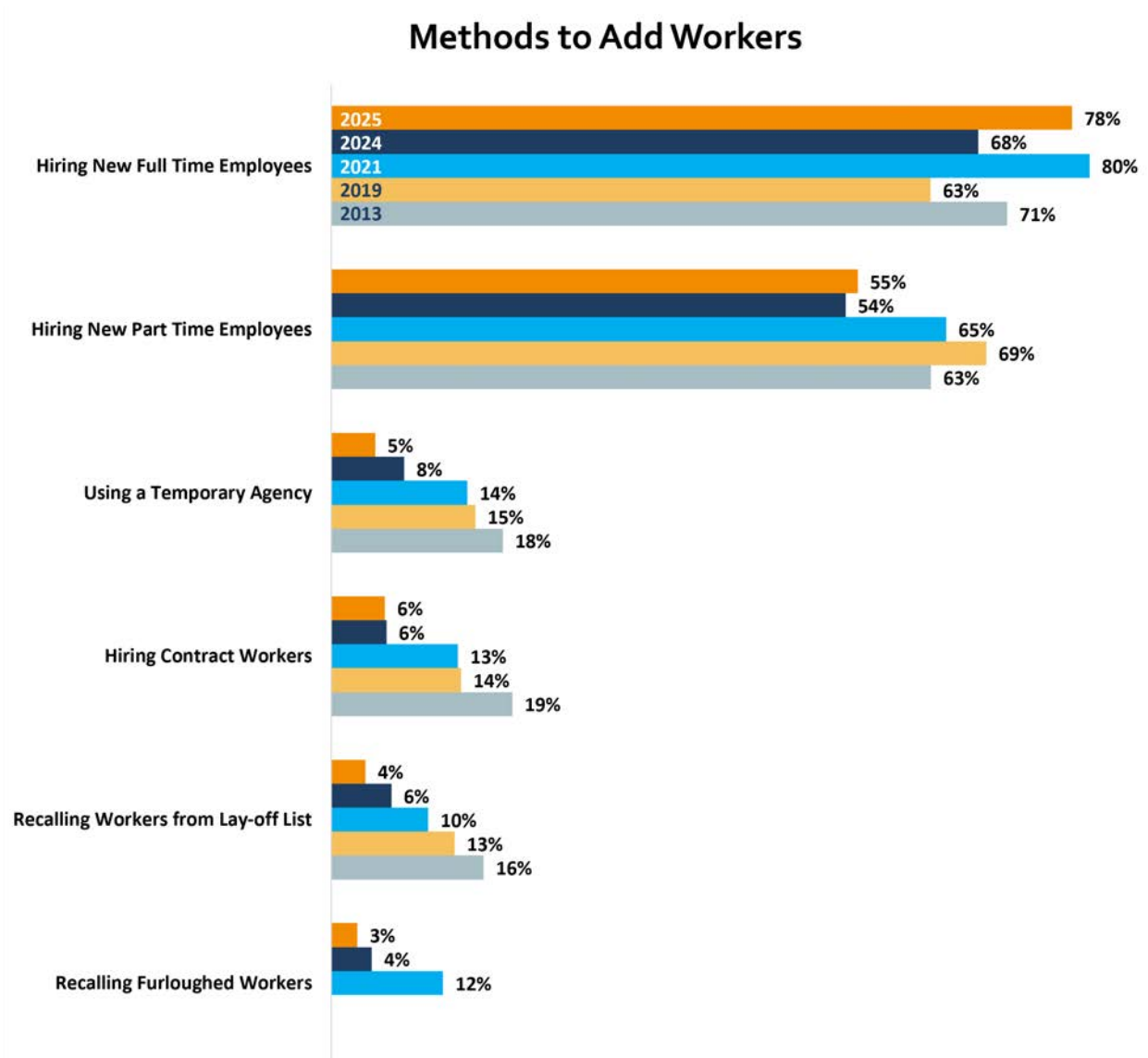




## Adding Employees

Hiring new, full-time employees continues to be the predominant workforce expansion strategy among surveyed employers. In 2025, 78% identified full-time hires as their preferred method for adding workers, an increase from 68% in the previous year.

Hiring new, part-time employees also showed relative robustness, with 55% of employers indicating its continued use. Other hiring strategies—using a temporary agency, hiring contract workers, recalling workers from lay-off lists, and recalling furloughed workers—remained largely unchanged and consistently low over the past several years.

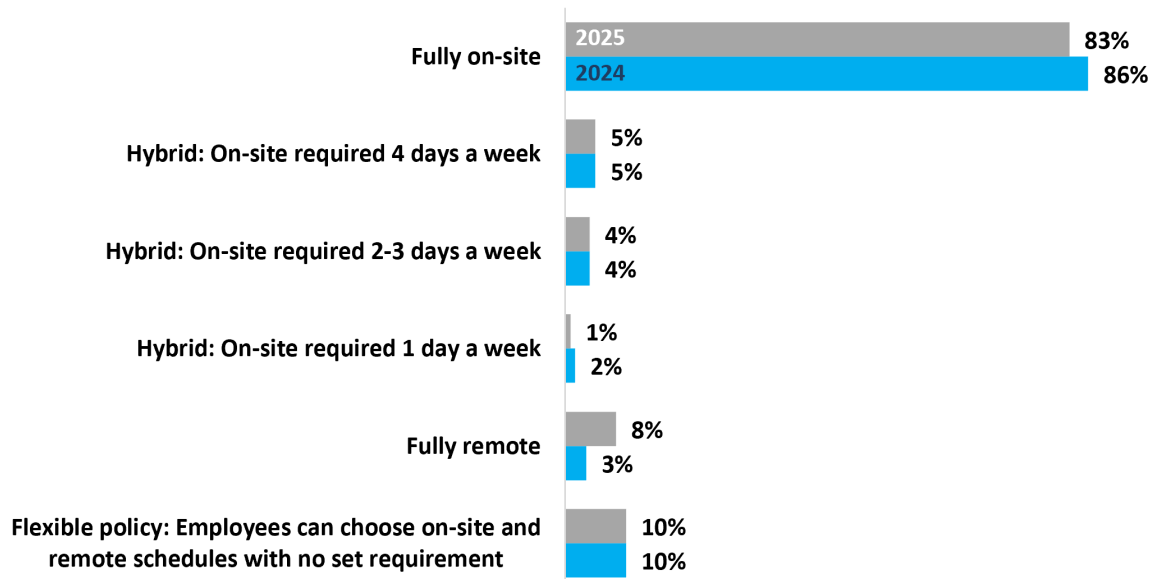


## Remote Work

In 2020, the pandemic prompted companies to reassess which jobs could be performed remotely without compromising productivity. Five years later, most employers have returned to or maintained pre-pandemic work arrangements. In 2025, fully on-site work policies continued to dominate, with 83% of employers reporting such arrangements—down slightly from 86% in 2024. Although still a minority, the proportion of employers offering fully remote work increased over the past year, increasing from 3% to 8%. Hybrid and flexible work arrangements, encompassing a range of remote and on-site combinations, remained minimal and steady. For perspective, prior to the pandemic, it is estimated that 6% of employees worked remotely in any way.

**83% of companies surveyed expect employees to work in the office full time.**

### Employers Remote Work Policy



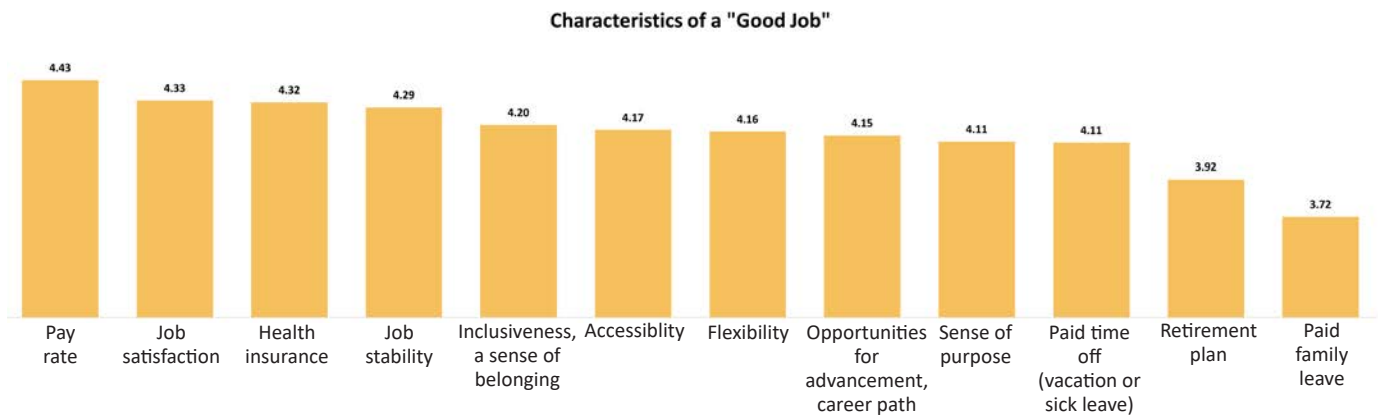
Remote work arrangements have become well-established with fewer anticipated changes compared to previous years. In 2025, 90% of surveyed employers reported no expected changes to their remote work policies within the next 12 months, an increase from 87% in 2024. Additionally, the percentage of employers anticipating an increase in remote workers has declined each year since 2022. This trend suggests that organizations have largely settled into their preferred workplace models.

### Characteristics of a “Good Job”

Employers consistently have identified job stability, job satisfaction, pay rate, and a sense of belonging as the most important characteristics of a good job. In 2025, however, health insurance replaced a sense of belonging in the top four priorities cited by employers. The lowest-ranked characteristics—retirement plans and family paid leave—have also remained relatively consistent over time.

One of the most significant shifts in recent years has been the ranking of paid time off (vacation or sick leave), which rose from ninth place in 2023 to fifth in 2024, but declined to tenth place in 2025.

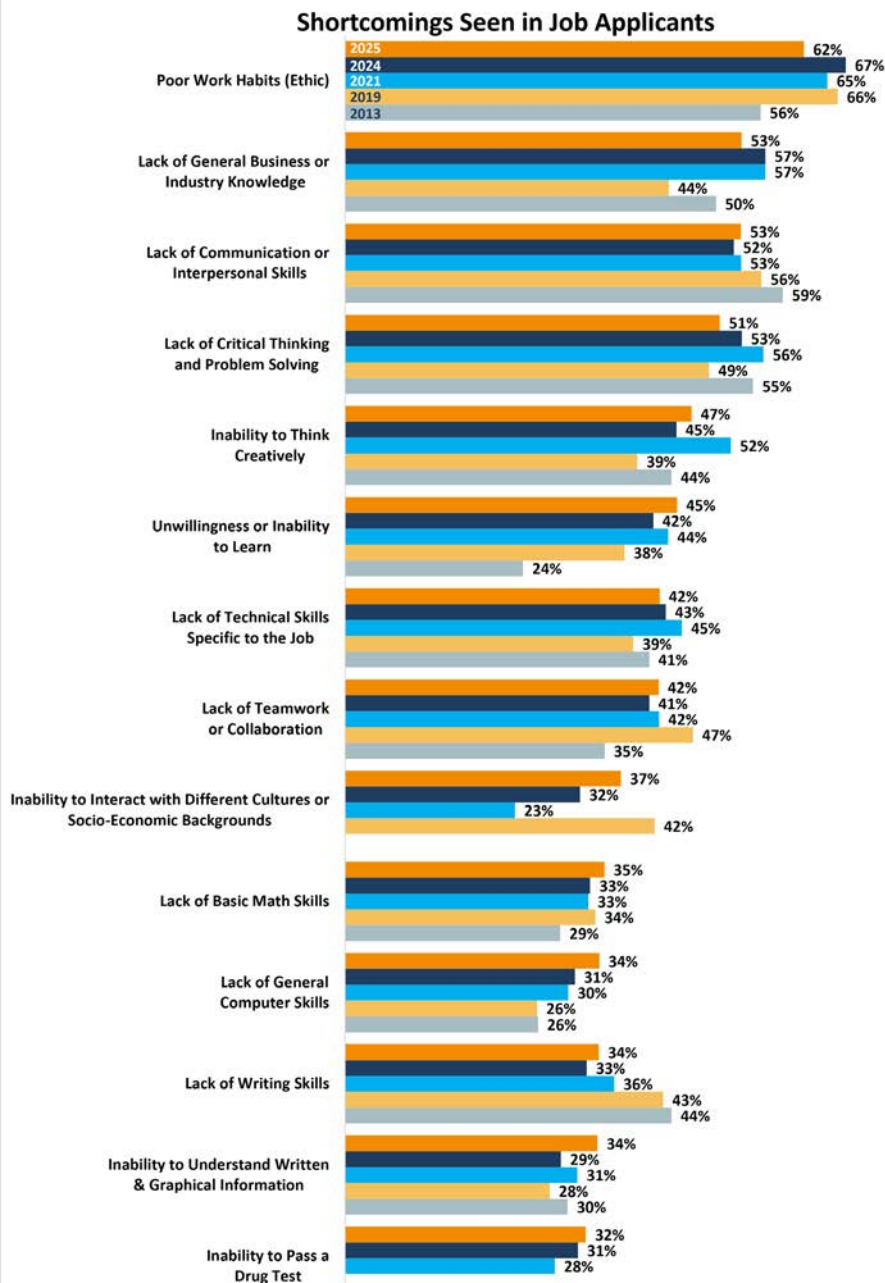
It is important to note that these findings reflect the employer’s perspective on what constitutes a good job. Research conducted during the pandemic indicated that employee priorities had evolved, particularly in response to the unique stresses and risks experienced during that time. According to a Federal Reserve survey of workers affected by the pandemic, employees increasingly value flexibility, career advancement opportunities, and compensation that aligns with their responsibilities. These evolving worker preferences may not yet be fully reflected in employer perceptions.



## Shortcomings Seen in Job Applicants

A consistent decline in concerns over poor work habits among job applicants—from 79% in 2015 to 67% in 2024 to 62% in 2025—is an encouraging trend. Despite the improvement, it remains a frequent concern of employers. Other shortcomings noted by more than half of surveyed employers include: lack of industry-specific knowledge (53%), insufficient communication or interpersonal skills (53%), and/or limited critical thinking abilities (51%).

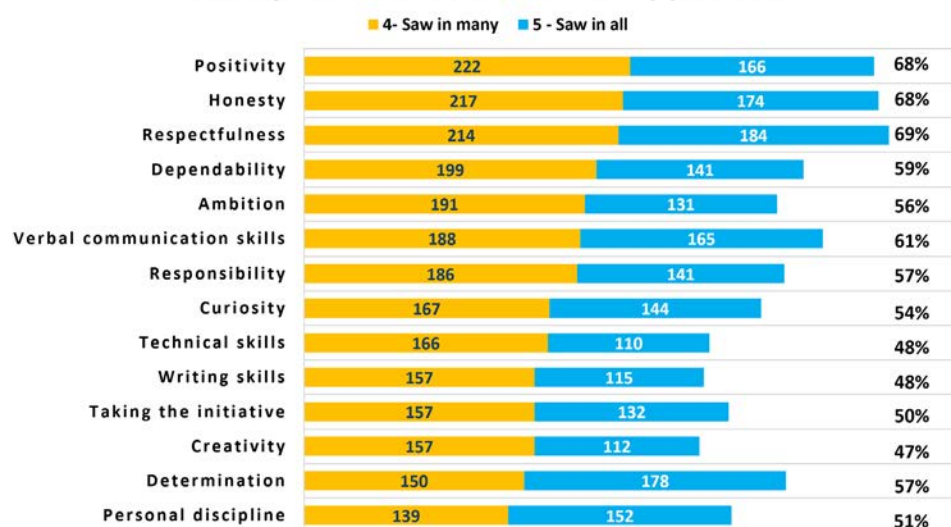
Applicants lacking basic skills such as writing, computer literacy, reading comprehension, and math have ticked modestly upward for three consecutive years. One of the most significant changes in recent years, however, is the concern that applicants are increasingly unable to engage effectively with individuals from different cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds—cited by 37% of employers in 2025, up from 23% in 2021.



## Strengths Seen in Job Applicants

In contrast to the noted shortcomings among job applicants, employers reported a broad improvement in soft skills over the past year, with notable gains in ambition, curiosity, and initiative—each increasing by at least 10 percentage points. Foundational traits such as honesty and respectfulness continued to rank among the top three most commonly observed characteristics in many or all applicants, with positivity emerging as a new addition to this leading group.

### Strengths Seen in More Job Applicants



## Shortage of Applicants

The slight easing of unemployment rates in St. Louis is balanced with the continued expansion of companies. Skilled workers in most fields are hard to find, though there is less of a hiring frenzy or motivation to increase wages that was seen a few years ago. The number of businesses in the survey reporting a shortage of skilled applicants has dropped from 63% in 2022 to 38% in 2025.

The number of available job seekers is not in perfect alignment with the skill needs in the region, with some industries experiencing a larger gap in skilled workers. The health care sector continues to struggle with turnover and retention. It takes years to replace workers that may have exited the industry or to fill new jobs created by an aging workforce moving into retirement.

The IT industry, on the other hand, saw a significant drop in job postings since late 2023. There is speculation that some companies were keeping blanket IT posts up, even when they were not actively hiring because it was so difficult to find IT skills. The decrease in job postings may be influenced by these being removed from online job boards.

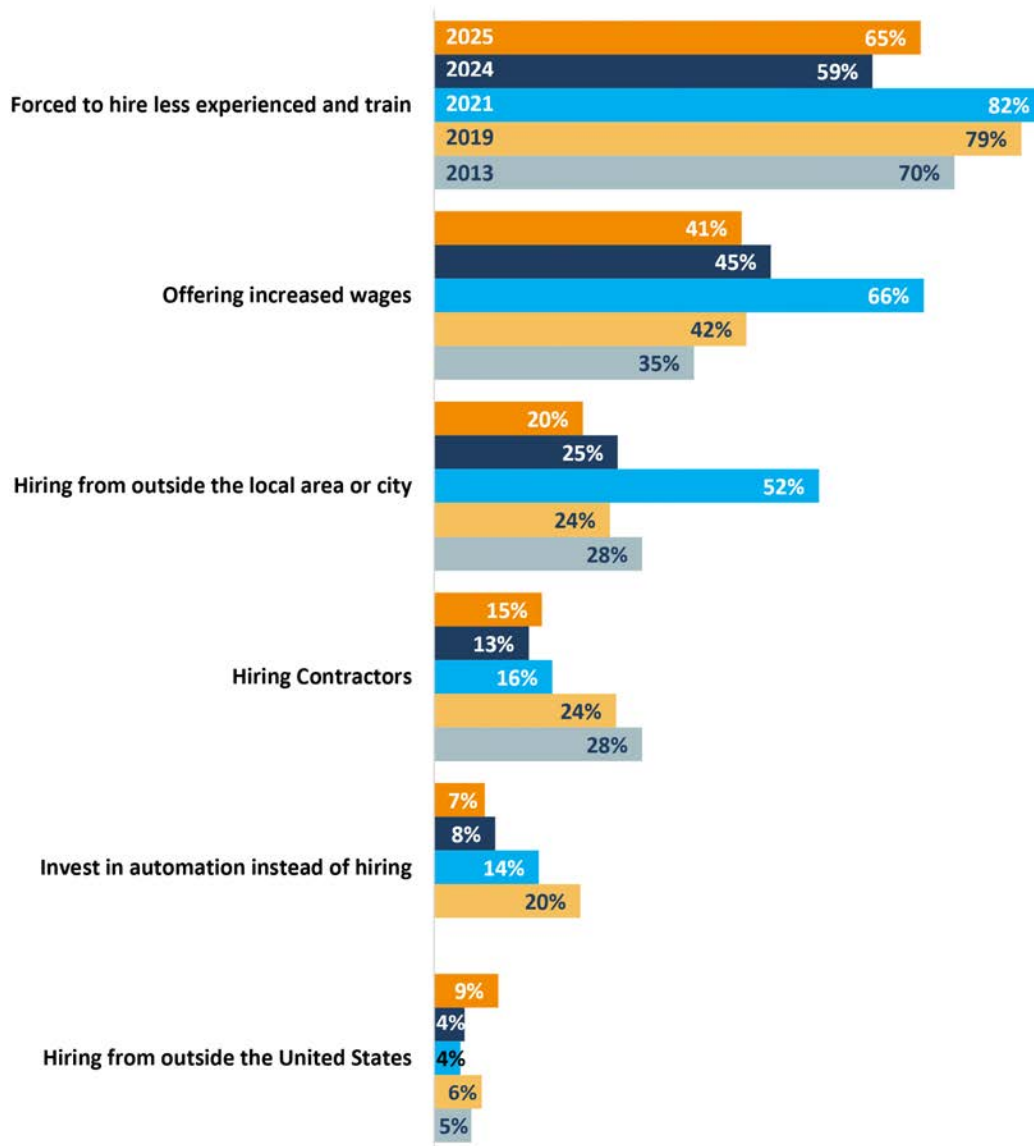
Between the use of AI and a shrinking demand for IT jobs, companies appear to still be significantly reevaluating their IT hiring needs. Companies are balancing a different need for IT skills; every employee is expected to have basic IT skills, with a smaller need for highly specialized technology skills. Additionally, larger IT companies continue to quietly lay off workers, creating a pool of available talent for small and mid-size firms across the industry.

## Measures Taken

Employers have continued to adapt their hiring strategies in response to ongoing skill shortages. In 2025, 65% of employers reported being forced to hire and train workers who were less experienced, which represents a six-point increase from the previous year. Employers offering increased wages as a way to fill positions remains the second most common strategy at 41%, despite a sharp and steady decline since 2021 (66%).

Recruitment from outside the local area also continued a downward trend, falling to 20% in 2025. In contrast, hiring from outside of the United States doubled in 2025 (albeit still nominal at 9%), and for the first time, surpassed investment in automation as a preferred measure to address skill shortages.

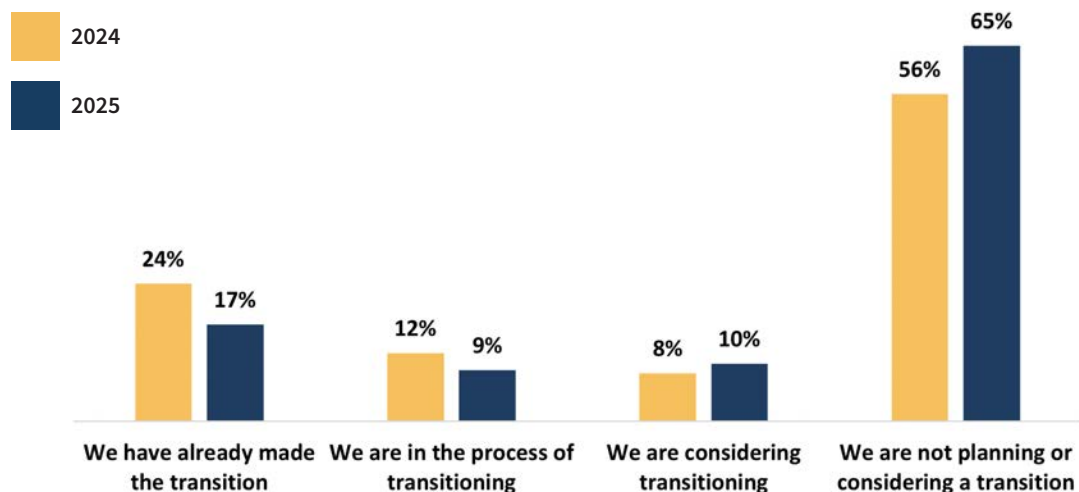
### Measures Taken to Meet the Skill Shortages of Applicants



## Transition from Degree-Focused Hiring

In 2025, 65% of employers reported that they are neither planning nor considering a transition away from a degree-focused hiring approach. This year, fewer employers indicated they have either completed a transition to skills-based hiring or are currently in the process of doing so.

### Employers Transitioning To a Skills-Based Hiring Approach



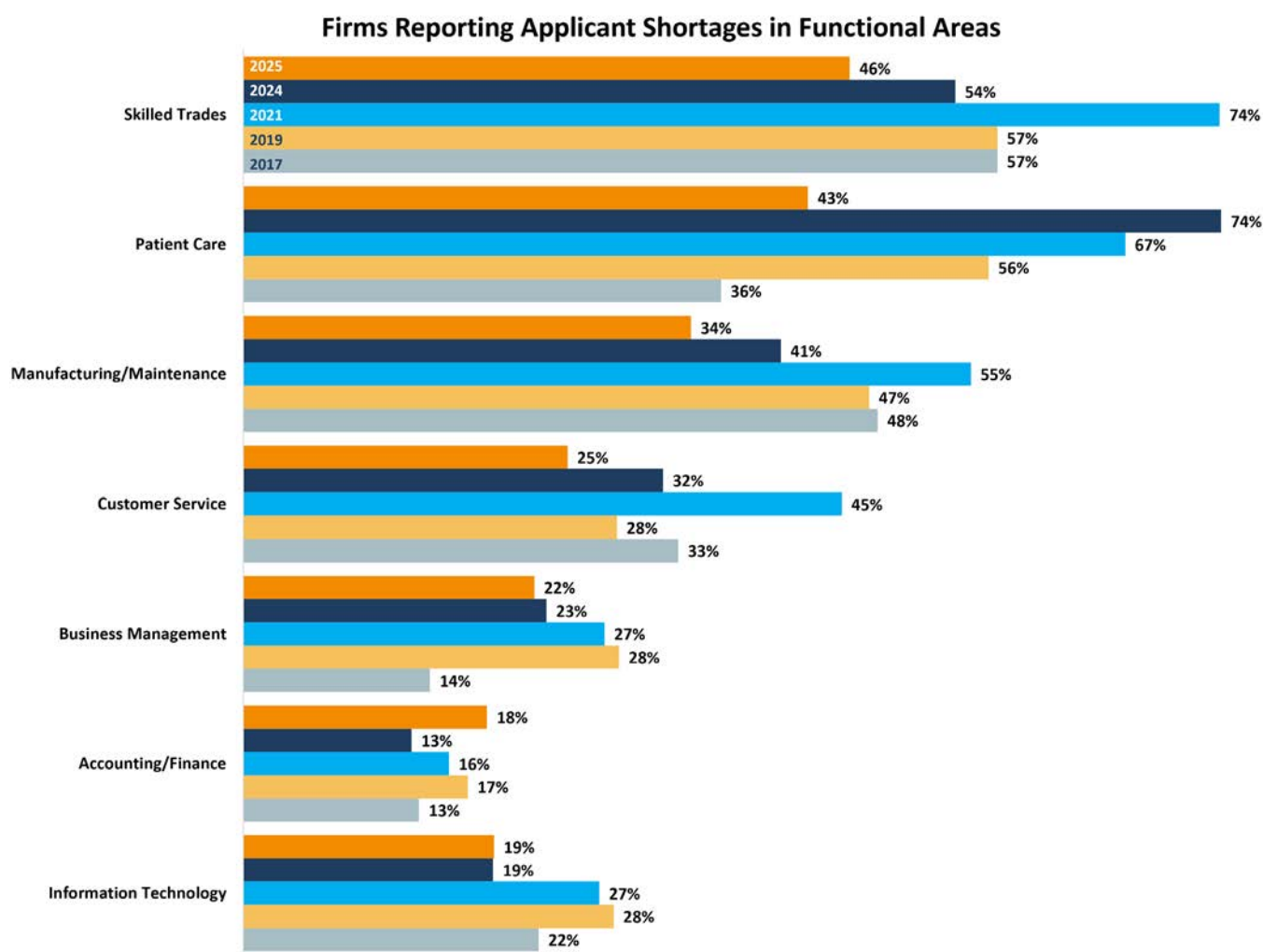


## Skills Shortages in Functional Areas

Since 2017, the survey has tracked employer-reported applicant shortages across seven functional business areas: skilled trades, patient care, manufacturing/maintenance, customer service, business management, accounting/finance, and information technology.

In the 2025 survey, five of the seven categories showed a decline from last year in reported applicant shortages. The only category to increase was accounting/finance, rising from 13% (2024) to 18% (2025). Information technology remained unchanged at 19%.

Skilled trades continued to have the highest level of applicant shortages, with 46% of employers reporting difficulties. The most significant year-over-year improvement occurred in patient care, where reported shortages dropped sharply from 74% (2024) to 43% (2025). This category in particular has experienced considerable fluctuation in recent years.

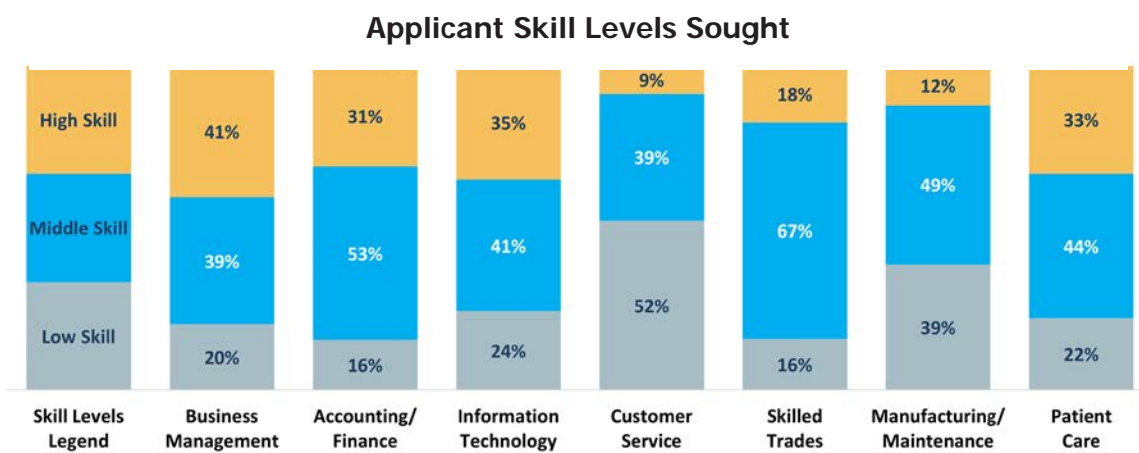


## Skill Levels Sought

To assess the skill levels required to address workforce shortages, employers were asked to categorize their needs as high-skill, middle-skill, or low-skill across seven functional business areas. The most significant shifts in skill level demand were observed in business management, patient care, and manufacturing/maintenance.

In 2025, business management surpassed information technology as the sector with the highest demand for high-skilled applicants, rising sharply from 23% (2024) to 41% (2025). Patient care followed closely, with its share of employers seeking high-skilled applicants increasing from 20% (2024) to 33% (2025).

Conversely, notable declines were reported in the need for low-skilled applicants within skilled trades and manufacturing/maintenance sectors. Both areas experienced decreases of more than 10 percentage points.



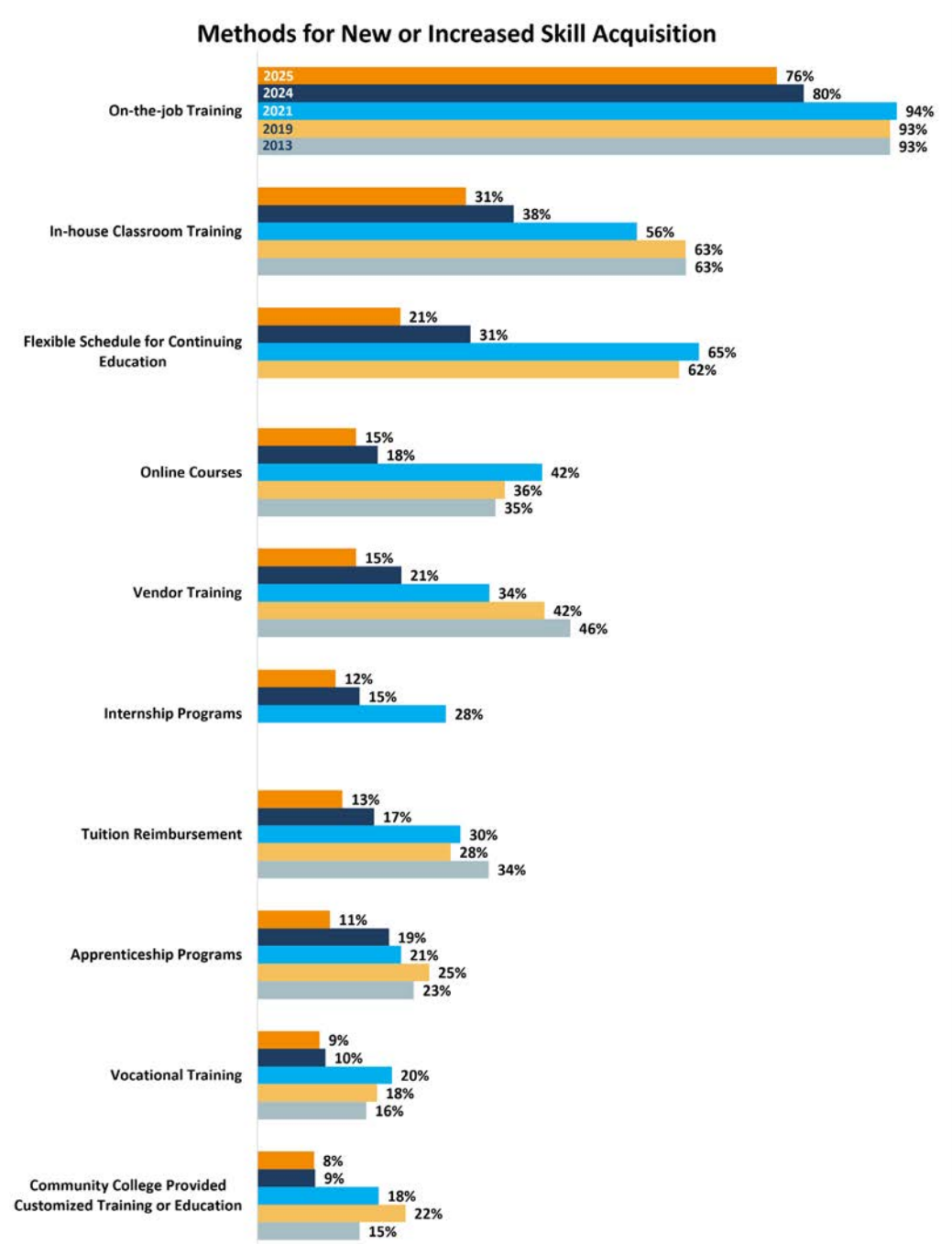
## Methods of Skill Acquisition

On-the-job training remains the most commonly utilized method that surveyed companies reported using to facilitate new or enhanced skill acquisition; however, its prevalence has declined in recent years. In 2021, on-the-job training peaked at 94%; this figure fell to 76% in 2025.

In-house classroom training remains the second most widely used method, albeit at a significantly lower rate. In 2025, 31% of employers reported using this approach, down from 38% in the previous year.

Overall, 2025 marked the first year since 2021 in which all reported methods of skill acquisition showed a downward trend. The most pronounced decline was observed in the use of flexible schedules for continued education, which dropped from 31% (2024) to 21% (2025). Community colleges that provided customized training or education saw the smallest decline, but continued as the least utilized methods for improving skillsets.

Given the drop in use of reported training methods over the last decade, and the stagnation of training options during the pandemic, additional questions were added to the survey for further explanation. Training and reskilling workers will continue to be a key facet of economic growth, as employers strive to retain and support their workers, and as workers acquire new skills or upgrade their skills to remain employable and explore new options.



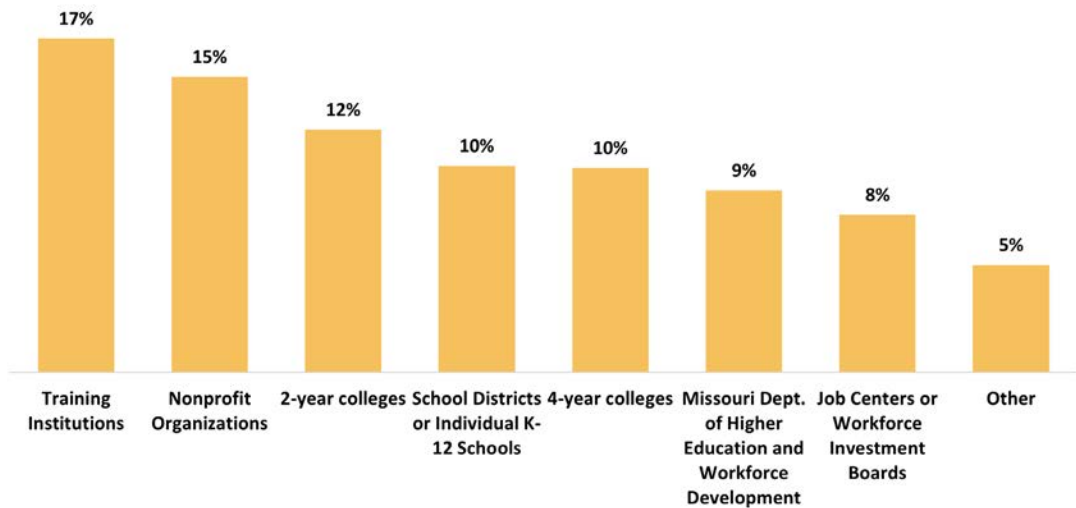
## Sourcing Talent

In recent years, employers have adjusted their hiring strategies in response to traditional talent sources lacking sufficient returns. As a result, many organizations have turned to partnerships to address workforce challenges, the composition and effectiveness of which continues to evolve. In 2025, talent sourcing percentages shifted broadly across partner categories, with nearly every one experiencing a decline in reported usage.

Training institutions overtook nonprofit organizations as the most frequently cited partner type, followed by two-year colleges, which advanced from fifth to third place. Four-year colleges, once the top partnership choice for employers, continued a downward trend. After falling from the leading position in 2023, they declined by an additional five percentage points in 2025 and are now tied with K–12 school districts with only 10% of employers seeking to partner with them.

Job centers and workforce investment boards, along with the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD), remained the least utilized among the options. These state- and locally-funded entities offer support services—including job matching, business counseling, and skill assessments—to employers through local job centers. Employers in Missouri can locate these services at [jobs.mo.gov](https://jobs.mo.gov).

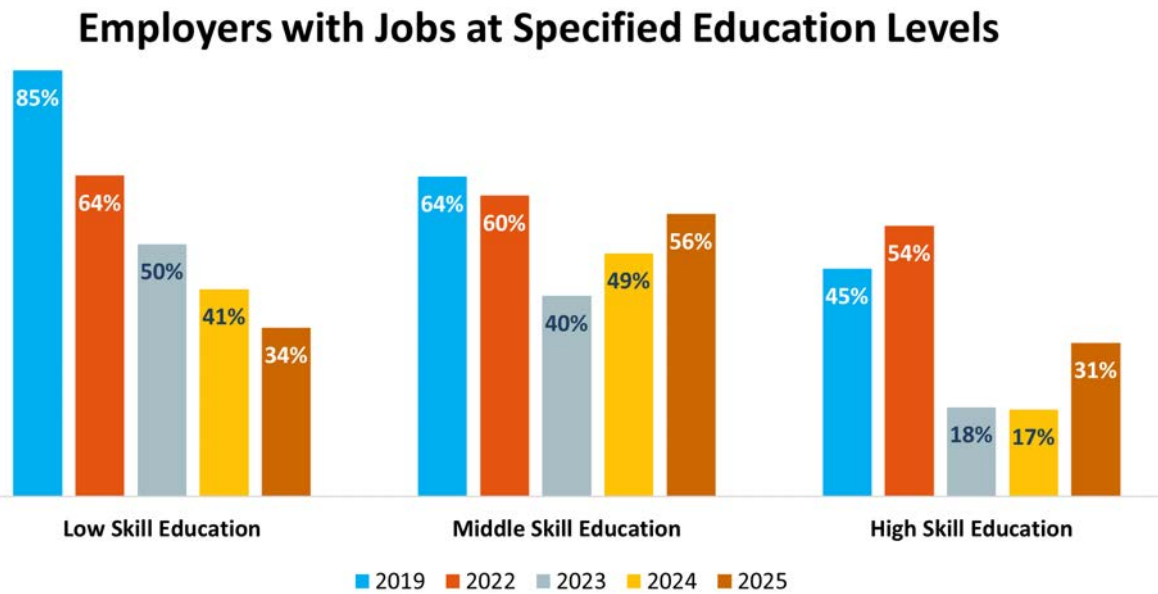
**Current Partnerships to Source Talent**



Education Requirements

While demand for low-skill positions (requiring a high school diploma or less) has steadily declined since 2019, employer requirements for middle- and high-skill positions have demonstrated notable fluctuation in recent years.

The proportion of employers seeking high-skill workers (positions requiring a four-year degree or higher) declined sharply between 2019 (54%) and 2023 (18%), but then rebounded in 2025 (31%). Middle-skill positions (requiring education or training beyond high school but less than a four-year degree) showed less extreme flux in the same time period. The number of employers with middle-skill positions increased from 49% in 2024 to 56% in 2025. Meanwhile, the prevalence of low-skill job openings has declined by more than 50% since 2019.



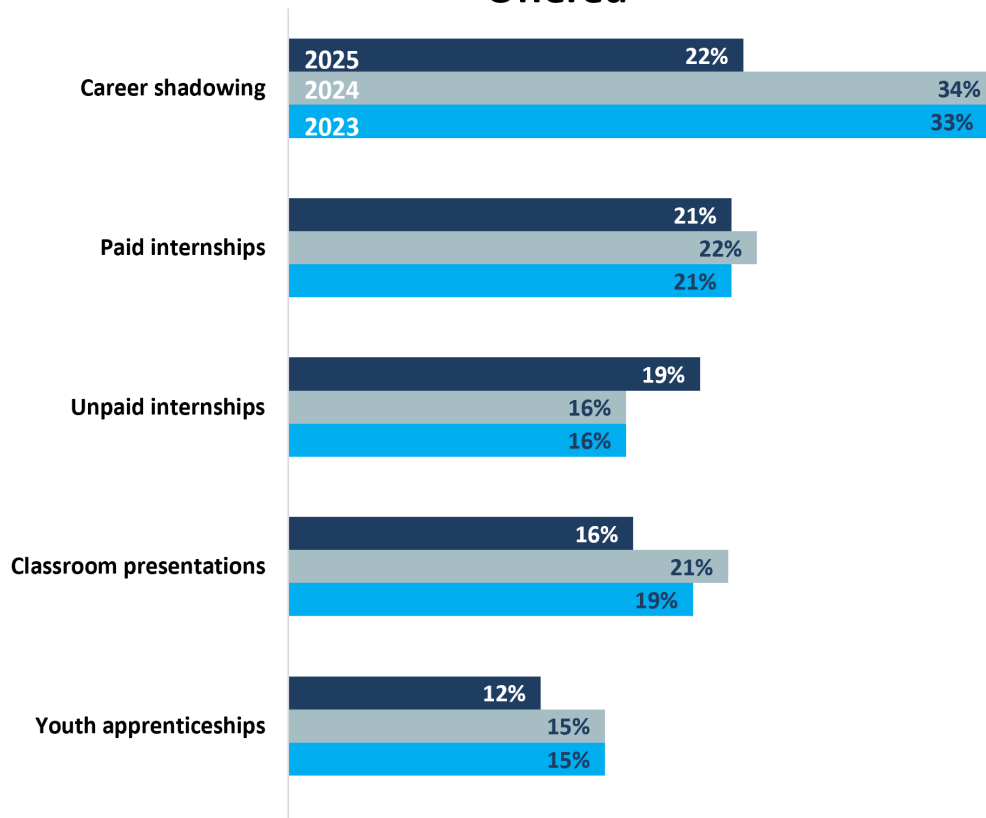
## Experience Opportunities for Young Adults

Experiential learning opportunities offer students and young adults valuable exposure to real-world work environments.

After two years of relatively similar responses, 2025 survey data trended downward in nearly every category except for unpaid internships. Career shadowing remained the most frequently cited method of offering work-based learning experiences to students and young adults, although its prevalence declined significantly from 34% in 2024 to 22% in 2025.

Programs like these are instrumental in shaping career pathways for students and young adults, but they require time and resources to implement, factors that may be challenging for employers that are already short staffed. Nonetheless, access to work-based learning remains a critical investment in the development of the region's future workforce.

### Young Adult Work-based Learning Experiences Offered



## Employment Barriers

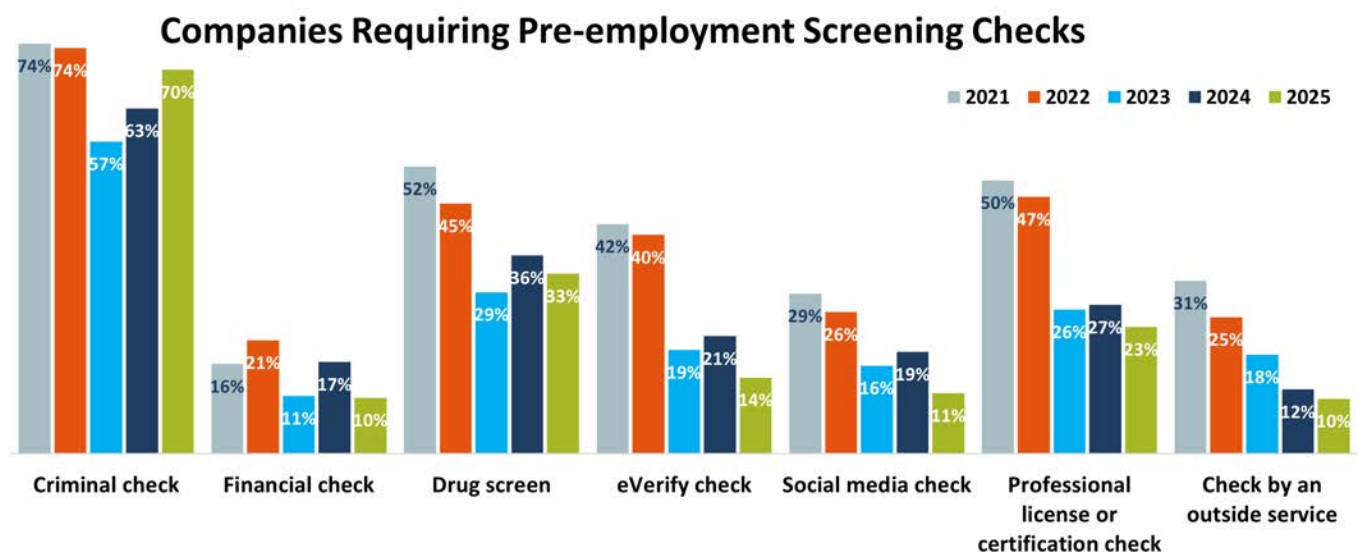
The survey examines a range of barriers to employment, including background checks and criminal convictions. While these screening tools may be designed to protect a company, they also eliminate job candidates who could be qualified and may have been convicted of lesser, non-violent offenses. Missouri releases 97% of incarcerated offenders back into the community. While the three-year recidivism rate dropped from 42.9% in 2019 to 28.9% in 2024, it remains that over one quarter of all released from incarceration will return to prison.

Each year, more than 128,000 people are booked into local jails in Missouri. That is a rate of 713 individuals per 100,000. (In contrast, Canada books 109 per 100,000.) This removes a large number of workers from the workforce, even for short stays or while awaiting trial. While the number of incarcerated individuals is higher in the urban areas of our state, the rate of incarceration is much higher, and rising, in the rural counties. Missouri has the third highest rate of prison admissions in the country. A felony conviction follows that individual for the rest of their life, permanently impacting options for employment, housing, and more, perpetuating a cycle of joblessness, under employment and poverty

**70% of companies require criminal background checks.**

## Pre-employment Screening Checks

Companies have been gradually deprioritizing pre-employment screening checks as critical components of their candidate evaluation process. Since 2021, the overall use of these measures has declined by approximately 17%. An exception to the overall decline is the use of criminal background checks, which increased from 63% (2024) to 70% (2025). Criminal checks remain the most utilized form of pre-employment screening.



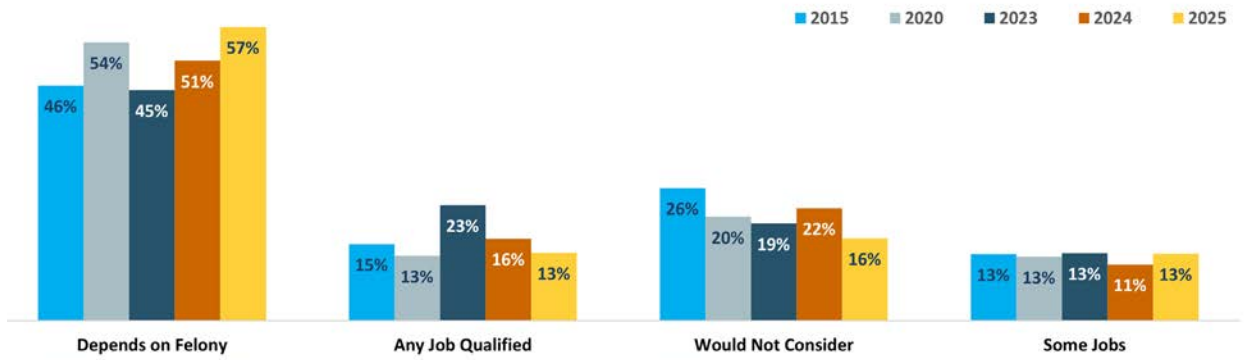


## Justice-Involved Individuals

In 2025, approximately one in six employers (16%) reported that they would not consider hiring an applicant with a felony conviction, even if the individual had completed their sentence and/or probation. This figure has declined over the three years prior as well as in comparison to data reported a decade ago.

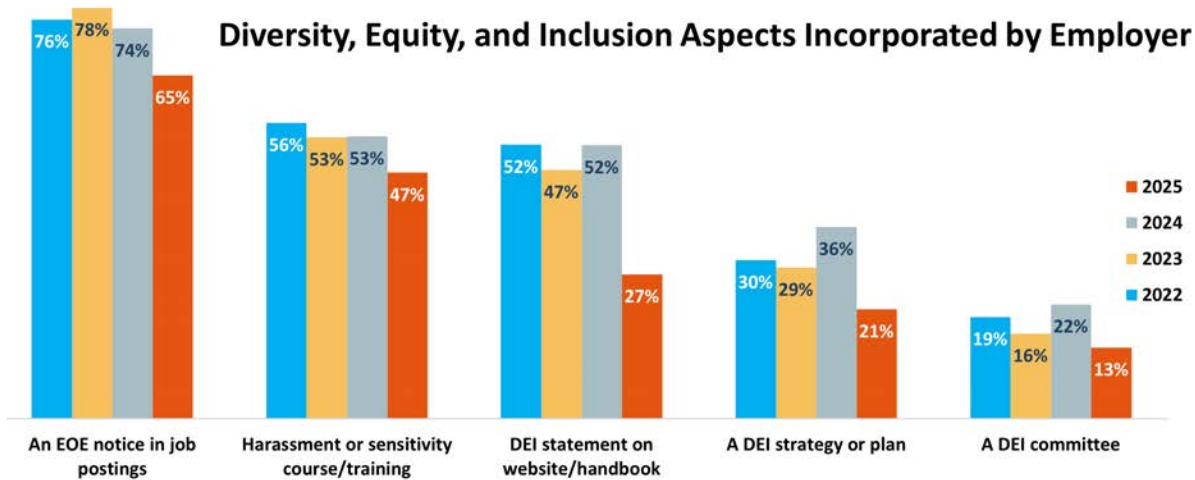
Generally, employer perspectives on this issue have remained relatively unchanged since the survey was introduced in 2015. However, there has been a consistent increase in the proportion of employers willing to hire, depending on the nature of the felony. This response has grown steadily over the past three years, from 45% to 57%. Conversely, the percentage of employers who stated they would hire an individual with a felony conviction for any position for which the applicant is qualified has declined during the same period, suggesting a shift toward a more conditional approach to hiring justice-involved individuals.

### Employer Positions for Justice-involved Individuals

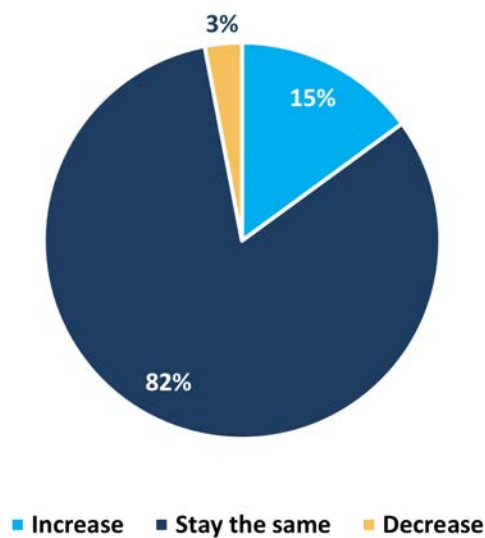


## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives are programs and policies that aim to promote representation and encourage participation of employees from all walks of life. In other survey questions, employers identified a sense of belonging as among the most important characteristics of a good job. However, survey responses show a general reduction in DEI-related efforts among employers. It is important to note that only 3% of employers reported plans to further scale back their DEI initiatives in the coming year.



## Anticipated Changes in DEI Efforts for the Upcoming Year

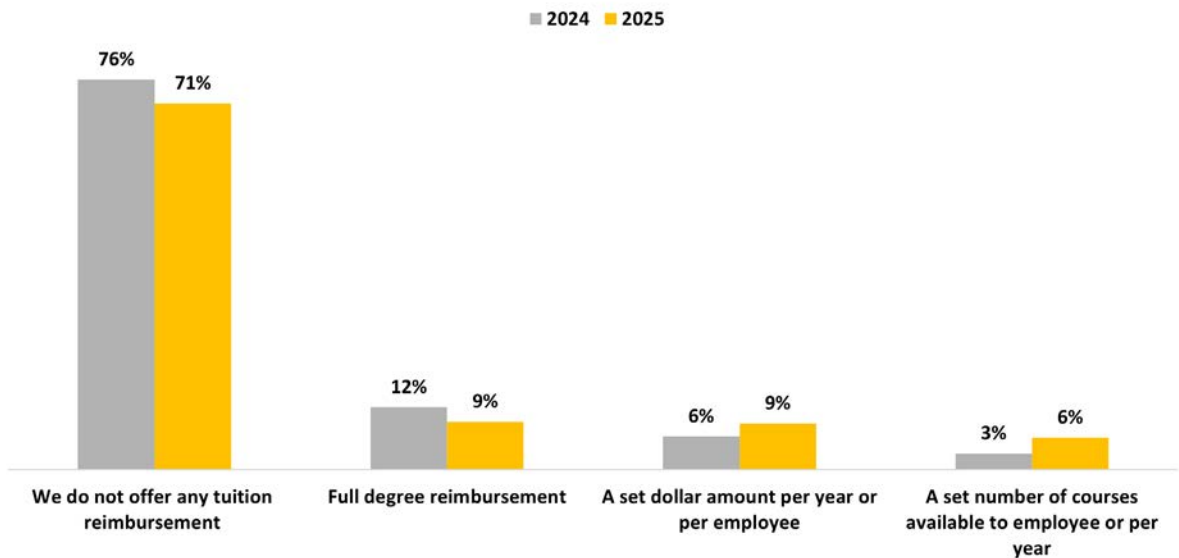


## Type of Tuition Reimbursement Provided

The majority of employers continue to report that they do not offer financial assistance for college degrees. In 2025, 71% of employers indicated no financial support is provided, a slight improvement from 76% in 2024.

While full tuition reimbursement has declined, other forms of financial assistance have shown modest growth, including: employers offering a set dollar amount per employee, those covering a set number of courses, and others providing alternative forms of financial support. These trends suggest a gradual shift toward more limited, targeted forms of educational assistance rather than comprehensive tuition reimbursement.

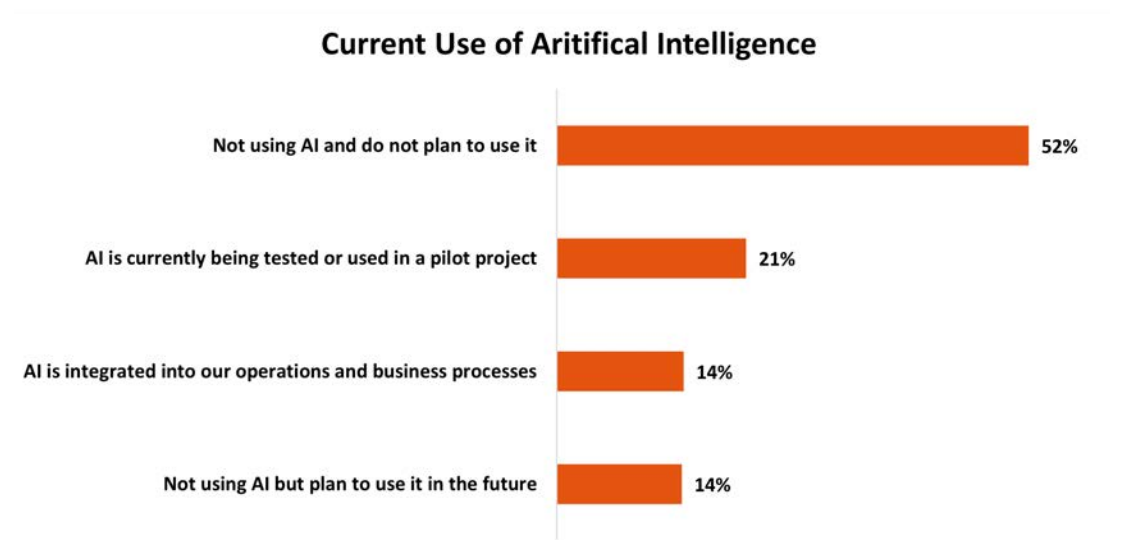
### Type of Tuition Reimbursement Employers Provide



# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

## Current Use of AI

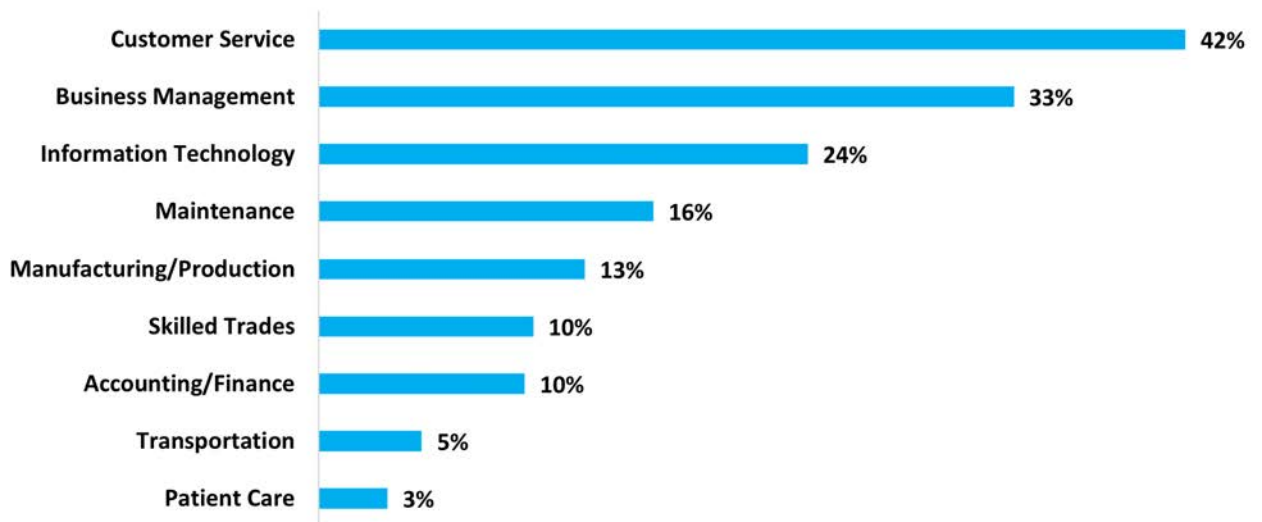
Just over half of companies reported they are not using AI nor do they have immediate plans to do so. An almost equal number of companies are testing, already using, or planning to use AI. Pilot projects and future adoption plans suggests a gradual but steady shift toward broader AI utilization. Companies not yet engaged may face increasing pressure to explore AI in order to remain competitive as its adoption becomes more widespread.



## Operational Uses of AI

Companies are most actively adopting AI in customer-facing and managerial functions, where automation and data-driven decision-making can provide immediate operational benefits. Customer service is the most common area, with 42% of companies reporting its use in this function, and business management follows, with 33% of companies integrating AI into management processes. In contrast, AI integration in sectors requiring physical tasks, high precision, or direct human interaction remains comparatively limited. These trends highlight both the expanding influence of AI across industries and the varying pace of adoption based on sector-specific requirements and challenges.

### Areas of Company Using Artificial Intelligence(AI)



## Benefits of Using AI

Understanding what benefits companies hope to achieve from using AI provides a glimpse into the creative uses of this emerging tool. Applications cover a wide range of uses and are not concentrated in only one or two dominant areas.

### Benefits of Using Artificial Intelligence





## SPOTLIGHT ON STARTUPS

The number of new startups created in St. Louis rebounded in 2024, after a major dip in 2023 for both new startup creation and new job creation. This trend of strong increases in 2022 and 2024, with a significant decline in 2023 is also seen at the state and national levels.

Higher interest rates, inflation, and uncertain economic growth may have had significant impacts on starting new businesses in 2023. By 2024, entrepreneurs had adjusted their models to account for those changes and got back to the business of starting companies.

In the most challenging economic times, people start businesses to feel a sense of control over their lives and their future. This may feel counterintuitive, as many workers associate corporate jobs as a secure option for a reliable salary and benefits. For workers that are creators and problems solvers, however, combining those skills with entrepreneurship may be the better option.

Over the past two years, there has been an increase in layoffs. Some have been large layoffs noted in the media, particularly in the tech industry. There have also been a number of quiet layoffs; individual or small numbers of separations that avoid the headlines. In 2025, layoffs in the federal sector and resulting from NIH and other research grants ending added a very different mix of people to the unemployment line, most very unexpectedly out of work.

From past experience in St. Louis, the expectation is that around 10% of workers with strong skills that are laid off will start a new business. These are usually midcareer professionals that have experience and skills, see the opportunities in their industry, and also know the problems and gaps that need to be addressed. To put perspective to this, a 10% reduction in the Department of Defense workers based in St. Louis would lay off 2,500 workers. If 10% choose to start a company, there will be 250 new startups in the region.

---

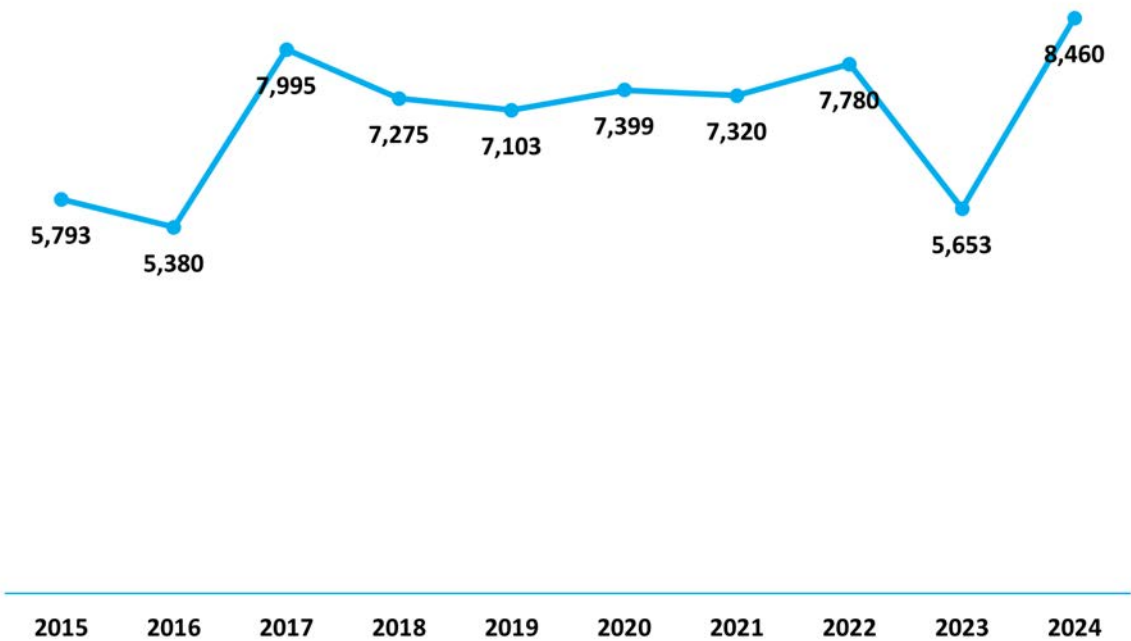
**St. Louis  
startups  
created  
15, 612  
first-time  
new jobs  
in 2024.**

---

Startup Creation

This report identifies a first-year startup as a firm hiring its first employee, looking at a unique point in time when a solo entrepreneur takes the step of hiring workers. For 2024, 8,460 startups in the St. Louis area took that step. Every single job noted is a brand new position that did not exist the previous year.

St. Louis Region First-time Startups by Year



Total startups rose from 5,793 in 2015 to 8,460 in 2024, a 46% increase over the period. This growth was driven by surges in health care, construction, and professional, scientific and technical services startups.

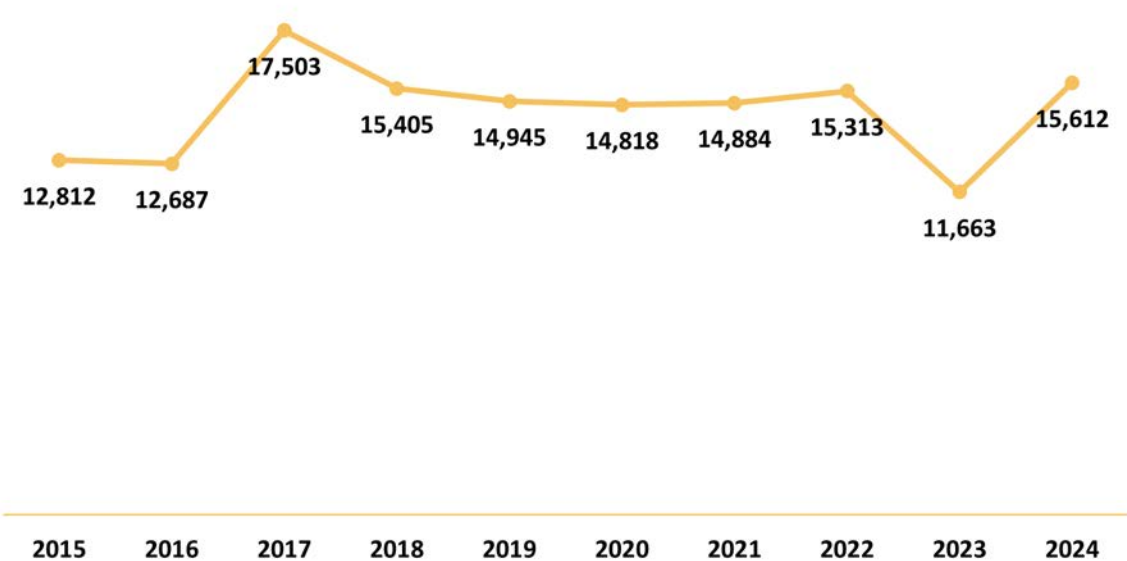


Job Creation by First-Time Employers

The 8,460 new startups in the region created 15,612 new jobs in 2024. This was a significant rebound from the 11,663 jobs created in 2023 and continues a five-year trend of new jobs in the 14,800-15,600 range from 2018 to 2022.

For the last decade, startups in the area created a total of 145,642 new first-time jobs. For the same period, the St. Louis MSA grew by approximately 91,000 jobs. Startups were responsible for the net gain in new jobs, a scenario that plays out across the country and was documented by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, based in Kansas City.

St. Louis Region Jobs Created by First-time Startups by Year

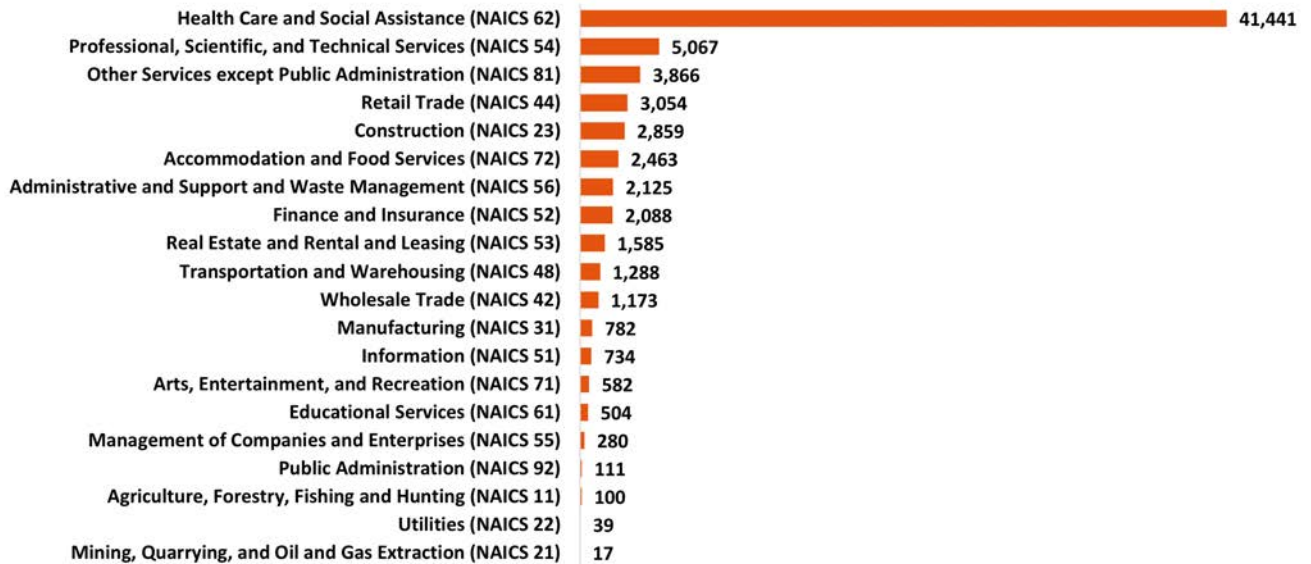


While about 20% of new businesses will fail in the first year, and an additional 35% will fail within four years, the remaining businesses will continue to grow and create more new positions that make up for the losses of those firms that failed.

## Startups by Industry Sector

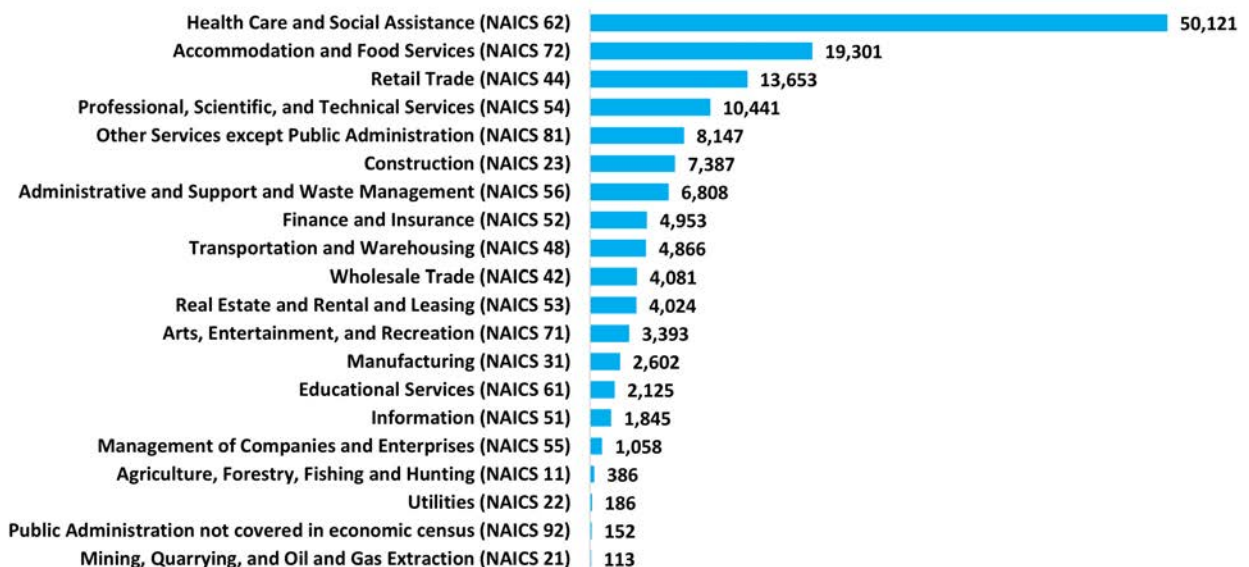
The St. Louis health care industry is the largest industry sector for the St. Louis MSA, and both the number of new startups and new jobs reflects the dominance of the industry in the region. In 2024, health care and social assistance added 5,585 startups. Professional, scientific and technical services added 510 startups. Every industry continues to add startups each year, even those that are capital intensive like mining and utilities.

### St. Louis Region Startups by Industry (2015-2024)

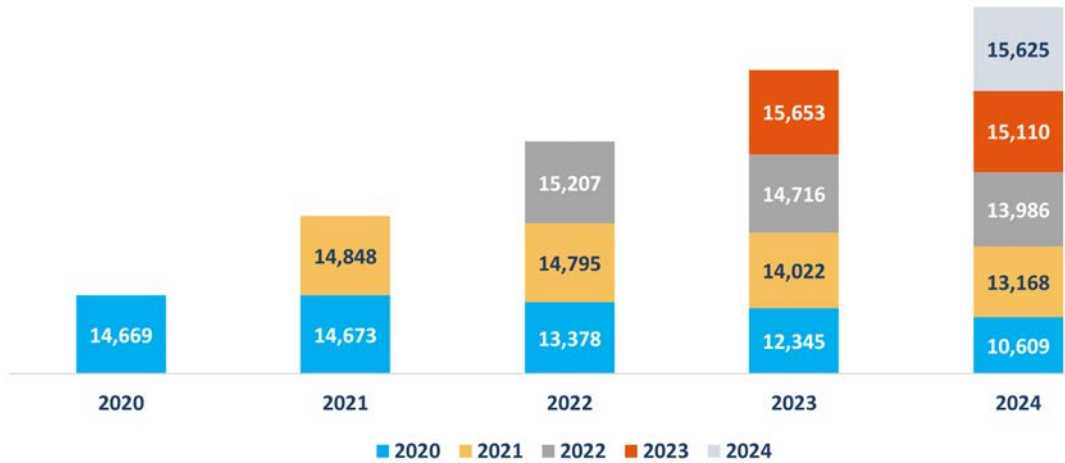


The number of startups and jobs created by startups rebounded from 2023. Health care and social assistance new first-time jobs experienced growth of 6,225 jobs or 14.2% over last year. Accommodation and food services grew by 13.4%. Retail trade new first-time jobs grew by 10.9%. Professional, scientific and technical services added 970 new jobs, a 10.2% increase over 2023.

### St. Louis Region Jobs Created by Startups (2015-2024)



## Cumulative Job Contributions from St. Louis Region Startups



The data on each startup is tracked year-to-year, indicating which startups have closed their businesses and which continue. Due to the high number of failures, the first couple of years after launching result in a decline of jobs from that cohort. Over time, the companies that remain in business continue to grow, resulting in an increase in jobs.

Every company in the St. Louis region starts out this way: an entrepreneur with an idea. Eventually, top performers with a little luck and hard work grow to be major employers. Entrepreneurship support requires that we play the long game and support companies through each stage of growth. That investment of time and support results in large companies in the region who will be major employers for our workforce.

## Indicators for 2025 Startup Growth

Uncertainty, unanticipated change, and unemployment will trigger a new level of entrepreneurial development in the St. Louis region in 2025 and 2026. This may result in small businesses and tech startups that can launch fairly quickly and often grow from personal funds and revenue. It will also result in science and technologically sophisticated businesses that take years and significant investment to develop.

The recent layoffs could have a significant impact on the future rate of entrepreneurial activity in the St. Louis region. Historically, layoffs from Boeing in the 1990s resulted in approximately 10% of those workers creating new companies. The recent layoffs of scientists and researchers, technology workers, nonprofit professionals, and defense and defense-related civilian workers have put a mix of people into the job market that are creative, highly skilled and adept problem solvers. The IT workers may have opportunities elsewhere in the tech industry, but many of the researchers and nonprofit professionals do not have similar roles available because the loss of grant funding impacted every organization. Those workers may be courted by other countries that are offering attractive packages of jobs, labs, research funding, housing and more. They could also decide to take control of their own destiny and start a company.

St. Louis has experienced a significant decline in the number of entrepreneur support organizations over the last decade. Several mentoring programs for early-stage startups have shuttered. Social events for connecting entrepreneurs with each other and with resources in the community dwindled during the pandemic. Few accelerators that provide cash investment remain; most have invested their funds and have not raised new rounds of capital. Venture capital has shifted towards investing in later stage companies.

From the small business perspective, recent federal funding cuts resulted in a loss of 43% of the Small Business Administration's workforce. Additionally, the SBA's SCORE mentoring program lost 60% of its funding.

It is not necessary to replace exactly what was supporting entrepreneurs in the region previously. It is, however, essential that the region take stock of the supports needed to nurture the next wave of startups. Making the investment and supporting those organizations will be critical for the long-term growth of the St. Louis region.

A vibrant welcoming startup community will keep and attract entrepreneurs and small business owners to the St. Louis region. If those startups grow and are successful, they will generate revenue, attract investment, hire workers, and grow the regional economy. If they do not find support here, they will shift to other cities that can provide the resources they need and the sense of community they desire.



## SPOTLIGHT ON TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an important industry for the St. Louis region, anchored by four key modes of transporting goods: water, rail, air and highway. Being home to major infrastructure in each of these areas allows movement of a significant amount of goods to, from, and through the St. Louis MSA. Transportation serves other significant industries for exports in advanced manufacturing, metals, food & agtech and chemicals. The 67,069 transportation jobs facilitate these industries, which would flounder without access to substantive means to move their exports or supplies.

The key strengths of the four modes of transportation contribute to the overall category of Transportation and it is worth understanding the details of each.

### Ports

The ports and barge industries within the St. Louis Regional Freightway are based centrally along the Mississippi River, within close proximity to America's agricultural heartland, major Midwest populations and manufacturing centers. The port system includes both the Port of Metropolitan St. Louis and portions of the Port of Kaskaskia, IL, along a 70-mile stretch (8%) of the 855 miles from Minneapolis, MN to the Ohio River near Cairo, IL, comprised of over 200 private terminals.

This strategic location on the Mississippi River is the northernmost lock and ice-free port on the river and offers substantial fleet operations. The region's port system is not only one of the country's largest inland ports, but also the most efficient. These 70 miles of the St. Louis Port system carry almost a quarter of the river's total freight. The St. Louis region's barge industry routinely handles approximately 369,000 tons per mile, while the average tons per mile across the other eight inland port districts is 92,863. Essentially, the St. Louis Metro Ports collectively move almost four times the average tons per mile, as compared to the other eight inland port districts in the U.S.

In addition to their importance to agriculture, handling a total of 14.45 million tons in inbound and outbound agriculture shipments in 2021, St. Louis Metro Ports handle large volumes of other products. In 2021, they moved more than one million tons each of 10 different products, including agricultural products, sand and gravel, crude petroleum, cement and concrete, petroleum coke, asphalt, tar and pitch, and coal and lignite. With 15 million tons of non-agriculture products moving through the region's ports, the system isn't dependent on a single industry.

---

### St. Louis Region:

4th Largest Inland Port

2 International Airports

6 Class I Railroads

4 Major Interstates

---

## Air

The St. Louis region includes two international cargo airports (St. Louis Lambert International Airport and MidAmerica St. Louis Airport) and several other regional airports with amenities beneficial to freight movement, including financial benefits from Foreign Trade Zones and Enterprise Zones, access to adjacent developable land, additional modes of transportation, cold storage for perishable goods, and 24/7 operations 365 days a year.

## Rail

The nearly \$80-billion freight rail industry is operated by six Class I railroads (railroads with operating revenues of \$490 million or more), 22 regional and 584 local/short line railroads. The St. Louis region is one of the largest rail hubs in the U.S., linking these six Class I railroads with local and short line railroads. BNSF Railway Company, Canadian National Railway Company, CSX Corporation, CPKC, Norfolk Southern Corporation and Union Pacific Railroad allow the region's freight access to 145,000 route miles of rail across the country.

The region serves all corners of the U.S. without the need for railroad interchange. The barge/rail transload services provide supply-chain options for shipments to and from both Houston and New Orleans.

The region's cost-effective rail service and modal flexibility provide national reach, carrier reliability, reduced travel times and competitive transportation costs. Rail service offers ancillary benefits that other modes of transportation cannot, including reductions in road congestion, highway fatalities, fuel consumption, greenhouse gases, cost of logistics, and public infrastructure maintenance costs.

Unlike roadways, U.S. freight railroads are owned by private organizations who are responsible for their own maintenance and improvement projects. Compared with other major modes of transportation, railroad owners invest one of the highest percentages of revenues (19%) to maintain and add capacity to their system, spending nearly \$25 billion annually.

In April 2025, the top exports of Missouri were delivery trucks (\$315 million), nitrogen heterocyclic compounds (\$84.1 million), explosive ammunition (\$82.5 million), coal briquettes (\$78.2 million), and refined copper (\$48.8 million). Missouri exports mostly to Canada, Mexico, Israel, Japan and Brazil.

## Highways

St. Louis is a significant highway hub, acting as a crossroads for major interstate routes. Four major interstates (I-44, I-55, I-64, and I-70) intersect in or near the city, making it highly accessible for freight and passenger travel. The highway infrastructure is a strong complement to the other modes of transportation in the region.

## Significant Partner Industries

### Advanced Manufacturing

With a significant workforce concentration in aerospace, automotive, and machinery and equipment manufacturing, the region has the existing labor pool needed to support growing companies seeking a location to grow their business. Key subsectors include aerospace, automotive, furniture, machinery and equipment, and HVAC and commercial equipment.

### Metals

The St. Louis MSA is distinguished as the second-leading region in the United States for minerals and ores exports, with a primary focus on metals and metal products. Missouri stands out as one of only ten states possessing potentially economically viable rare earth element deposits. These minerals, found in the Earth's crust, are essential components in a variety of modern technologies, including smartphones, wind turbines, electric vehicles, and military equipment.

In 2022, the St. Louis metro area exported over \$2.9 billion in minerals and ores, securing its position as a major exporter. The region's prominence in the export market is driven by the abundance of minerals and ores, coupled with robust processing industries. Key sectors include iron & steel mills, foundries, forging & stamping, and coating, engraving, heat treating & allied activities. Overall, the combination of natural resources and industrial capabilities positions the St. Louis region as a significant player in the metals export market.

### Food and AgTech: Ag Coast of America

A 15-mile stretch of the Mississippi River has gained recognition as the Ag Coast of America. It is home to 16 barge-transfer facilities that can handle more than 150 barges a day – the highest level of capacity on the Mississippi River. Currently, 50% of U.S. crops and livestock are produced within a 500-mile radius of the St. Louis region, including 80% of corn and soybean acreage.

The St. Louis region's strategic location on the river, infrastructure assets and multimodal connectivity enable it to play a crucial role in moving those commodities. The workforce related to these industries is equally significant. There are nearly 3.5 times as many animal food manufacturing employees as similar sized metros. Additionally over 1,000 plant scientists work in the St. Louis region, one of the highest concentrations of plant scientists in the world.

### Chemicals

The St. Louis region ranks among the top 25 metro areas in the U.S. for chemical exports, with significant sub-sector clusters in pharmaceutical, soap and cleaning compounds, petroleum and coal products, and fertilizer and agricultural chemicals. The regional chemical industry benefits from a skilled workforce that can support manufacturing and research and development, with the presence of established chemical companies and research facilities.



## Changes in the Transportation and Warehousing Sector

From 2014 to 2024, the total employment across these transportation and warehousing subsectors increased by 23%, rising from 47,742 to 58,544 jobs. The largest percentage of growth is seen in warehousing and storage, with more than a 100% increase. Couriers and messengers also showed significant growth, rising by 58%.

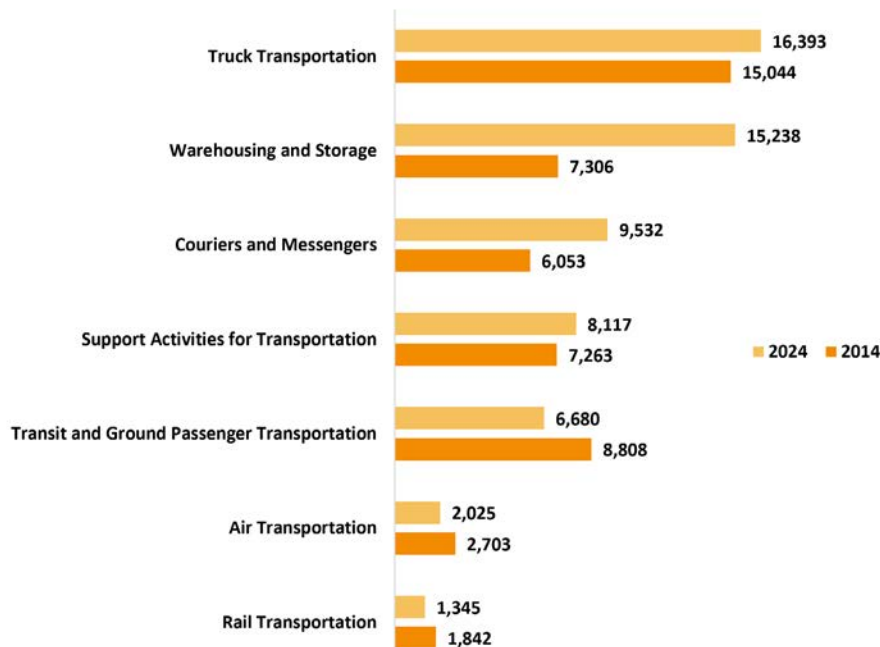
In contrast, employment in air transportation, transit and ground passenger transportation, and water transportation experienced a decline, decreasing by 20% for a loss of 2,884 jobs.

The top geographic centers for employment in transportation and warehousing are St. Louis County (22,132 workers) and Madison County, Illinois (10,334). St. Charles County (9,882) came in a close third, with St. Louis City (6,246) and St. Clair County (5,187) rounding out the top five largest counties for employment in the sector. These five counties account for 92% of the transportation and warehousing employment in the 15-county St. Louis MSA.

St. Charles County experienced a 148% increase in transportation and warehousing workers from 2014 to 2024. Madison County grew by 61% and Franklin County grew by 49%.

Several other counties experienced large decreased in employment in the sector over the same decade: St. Louis City lost 23% of its workers in the sector, a loss of 1,841 jobs. St. Clair County lost nearly 10% of its workers in this industry, a loss of 545 employees.

### St. Louis MSA Transportation and Warehousing Employment by Subsector



Source: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, 2014 (Q1-Q4), 2023 (Q3, Q4), 2024 (Q1, Q2).



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We sincerely thank the 600 companies that took the time away from their businesses to participate in the survey interview.

We also thank the *St. Louis Business Journal* for their support as our media partner.

We offer our deep appreciation to D'Andre Braddix, EdD of St. Louis Community College, for his talk on Gen Z and the modern workplace.

Thank you to Rhonda Hamm-Niebruegge of St. Louis Lambert International Airport, Ron Hines of United Parcel Service and Mary C. Lamie, PE of Bi-State Development for sharing their insights on the transportation industry.

Thank you to MOSourceLink for their contributions and analysis of the startup data for the St. Louis region.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of Probolsky Research for their administration of the employer survey as well as the data collection and tabulation.

The 2025 State of the St. Louis Workforce report was made possible by the collaborative efforts of staff from the St. Louis Community College Workforce Solutions Group and the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC), the research unit of the Missouri Department of Economic Development.

---

### SAVE THE DATE:

2026 STATE OF THE ST. LOUIS  
**WORKFORCE**  
August 5 | 9 a.m. | STLCC–Meramec

---

## State of the St. Louis Workforce Speakers and Panel

The State of the St. Louis Workforce event on August 6, 2025, featured D'Andre Braddix, EdD from St. Louis Community College. His talk focused on understanding Gen Z's impact on the modern workplace. The event panel, with Dr. Pittman moderating, discussed what's ahead for the transportation industry workforce in St. Louis and the impact it has on the region. Visit [stlcc.edu/STLworkforce](https://stlcc.edu/STLworkforce) to access a link to the event recording and to download the report.



### **D'Andre Braddix, EdD**

**St. Louis Community College, Ombudsperson**

D'Andre Braddix, EdD, has more than 20 years of leadership experience in higher education. He is currently STLCC's Ombudsperson, where he builds connection between faculty and students, promotes fairness, and fosters a collaborative and respectful educational environment.



### **Rhonda Hamm-Niebruegge**

**St. Louis Lambert International Airport, Director of Airports**

Rhonda Hamm-Niebruegge is the Director of St. Louis Lambert International Airport and chair of the St. Louis Airport Commission. She has more than 25 years' experience in aviation management, largely based in St. Louis, including as managing director of American Airlines' St. Louis operation and as vice president of TWA's North American operations. Recently, she served as chairperson of the Airport Oversight Committee of the Airport Cooperative Research Program, a research program supported by the FAA.



### **Ron Hines**

**United Parcel Service, Director of Operations**

Ron Hines is director of operations at UPS with more than 19 years' experience in planning and directing operation strategies, including scheduling, logistics, safety compliance and supply chain management. He manages more than 1,200 employees, achieving significant reductions in safety incidents and increasing operational efficiency and revenue. He holds an MBA from Fontbonne University and serves on the board of the St. Louis Crisis Nursery.



### **Mary Lamie, PE**

**Bi-State Development, Executive Vice President of Multi Modal Enterprises**

Mary Lamie, PE, is the Executive Vice President of Multi Modal Enterprises at Bi-State Development, where she oversees a number of business enterprises, including the Gateway Arch operations of key assets, the St. Louis Downtown Airport and the St. Louis Regional Freightway. She has more than 30 years' experience in the transportation industry and has been recognized for her work by the U.S. Department of Transportation and U.S. Department of Agriculture.



### **Jeff L. Pittman, PhD**

**St. Louis Community College, Chancellor**

Jeff Pittman leads STLCC Transformed, a multi-year, multi-campus, \$500 million initiative that ensures the College continues to meet the region's ever changing and ever-increasing workforce development demands. His work continues STLCC's tradition of providing quality, affordable and accessible education and workforce training for all St. Louis area residents in support of area businesses.



### **Phyllis Ellison, MBA**

**St. Louis Community College, Associate Vice Chancellor, Workforce Solutions Group**

Phyllis Ellison leads the College's corporate and workforce development programs, personal enrichment education and professional development initiatives that meet the training and skill development needs of regional businesses.

# Appendix:

## State of the St. Louis Workforce Employer Survey 2025

The employer survey was conducted as phone interviews on weekdays starting March 14, 2025 - April 6, 2025.

Only complete surveys are used in this report.

### Initial Question Employees

First, including yourself, how many employees does your company CURRENTLY employ in your area?

Less than 5 (Thank & Terminate)	01
5 to 10	02
11 to 49	03
50 or more	04
(Do not read) Refuse - Thank & Terminate	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure - Thank & Terminate	98

1. Over the past 12 months, would you say your employment levels have increased significantly (by 15% or more), increased slightly (by less than 15%), remained the same as before, decreased slightly (by less than 15%), or decreased significantly (by 15% or more)?

Increased significantly, by 15% or more	01
Increased slightly, by less than 15%	02
Remained the same as before	03
Decreased slightly, by less than 15%	04
Decreased significantly, by 15% or more	05
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

2. Looking ahead over the next 12 months, how does your business PLAN to change your employment levels? Would you say your employment levels will increase significantly (by 15% or more), increase slightly (by less than 15%), remain the same as before, decrease slightly (by less than 15%), or decrease significantly (by 15% or more)?

Increase significantly, by 15% or more	01
Increase slightly, by less than 15%	02
Remain the same as before	03
Decrease slightly, by less than 15%	04
Decrease significantly, by 15% or more	05
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

3. If you were to add employees in the next 12 months, which of the following methods would you use?

(Read list; enter code for each method would use; enter all that apply.)

Recalling furloughed workers	01
Recalling workers from a lay-off list	02
Hiring new full-time employees	03
Hiring new part-time employees	04
Hiring contract workers	05
Using a temporary agency	06
(Do not read) Not applicable - Not wanting to add employees	95
(Do not read) Would not use any listed method	96
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

4a. Please tell me if you have encountered the following barriers to expanding your employment level.

(Rotate barriers; ask "Any other barrier?" last)

Shortage of workers with knowledge or skills	01
Shortage of available training programs	02
Economic conditions	03
Government policies or regulations	04
Lack of information regarding the occupation	05
Lack of access to transportation to get to work	06
Lack of access to child care	07
Any other barrier? (If "Yes" - Record)	08
(Do not read) Have not encountered any barriers to expanding employment level	95
(Do not read) Not applicable - Not expanding employment level	96
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

4b. (Re: each barrier named on Q.4a)

Please tell me how large of a barrier each is to your business using a 1-to-5 scale where 1 is "insignificant" and 5 is a "critical barrier." You may also use any number between 1 and 5. And, if an item is not applicable to your business, please tell me so.

96 - Not applicable

97 - Refuse

98 - Don't know/Not sure

Shortage of workers with knowledge or skills	—
Shortage of available training programs	—
Economic conditions	—
Government policies or regulations	—
Lack of information regarding the occupation	—
Lack of access to transportation to get to work	—
Lack of access to child care	—
Other barrier	—

5a. What is your company's current policy on remote work?

(Read list; enter code for each applicable policy type; enter all that apply.)

Fully on-site	
(Employees are required to work on-site everyday)	01
Fully remote	
(Employees work remotely with no on-site requirement)	02
Flexible policy	
(Employees can choose on-site and remote schedules with no set requirement)	03
Hybrid: On-site required 4 days a week	04
Hybrid: On-site required 2-3 days a week	05
Hybrid: On-site required 1 day a week	06
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

5b. Under your current work policy, what percentage of employees work under each of the following arrangements? Answers MUST total 100%

Fully on-site	
(Employees are required to work on-site everyday)	___
Fully remote	
(Employees work remotely with no on-site requirement)	___
Flexible policy	
(Employees can choose on-site and remote schedules with no set requirement)	___
Hybrid: On-site required 4 days a week	___
Hybrid: On-site required 2-3 days a week	___
Hybrid: On-site required 1 day a week	___
(Do not read) Refuse	___
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	___

5c. Do you expect the number of your remote workers to increase, stay the same, or decrease over the next 12 months?

Increase	01
Stay the same	02
Decrease	03
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6. Next, I am going to read some possible shortcomings of job applicants and ask if you have or have not seen these characteristics in a significant number of applicants during the last 12 months. I would then like you to rank the importance of that shortcoming to your business on a 1 to 5 scale where 1 is "not at all important" and 5 is "very important."

6a-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with "Poor work habits" (including attendance, punctuality, and attention to job).

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants	01
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6a-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) 98 - Don't know/Not sure	
Poor work habits	___

6b-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of general knowledge about business or industry."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants	01
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6b-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) 98 - Don't know/Not sure	
Lack of general knowledge about business or industry	___

6c-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants	01
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6c-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) 98 - Don't know/Not sure	
Lack of ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds	___

6d-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of communication or interpersonal skills."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants	01
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6d-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) 98 - Don't know/Not sure	
Lack of communication or interpersonal skills	___

6e-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of willingness to learn or inability to learn."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants	01
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6e-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) 98 - Don't know/Not sure	
Lack of willingness to learn or inability to learn	___

6f-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of teamwork or collaboration."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants	01
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6f-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) 98 - Don't know/Not sure	
Lack of teamwork or collaboration	___

6g-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of general computer skills."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants	01
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6g-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) 98 - Don't know/Not sure	
Lack of general computer skill	___

6h-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of critical thinking and problem solving."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants	01
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6h-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) 98 - Don't know/Not sure	
Lack of critical thinking and problem solving	___

6i-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with an "Inability to think creatively or 'out of the box.'"

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants	01
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

6i-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) 98 - Don't know/Not sure  
Inability to think creatively or 'out of the box' —

6j-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of writing skills."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants 01  
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants 02  
(Do not read) Refuse 97  
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98

6j-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98  
Lack of writing skills —

6k-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of basic math skills."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants 01  
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants 02  
(Do not read) Refuse 97  
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98

6k-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98  
Lack of basic math skills —

6l-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with a "Lack of technical skills specific to the job."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants 01  
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants 02  
(Do not read) Refuse 97  
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98

6l-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98  
Lack of technical skills specific to the job —

6m-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with an "Inability to understand written and graphical information."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants 01  
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants 02  
(Do not read) Refuse 97  
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98

6m-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98  
Inability to understand written and graphical information —

6n-1. Please tell me if you have or have not noticed a significant number of applicants with an "Inability to pass a drug test or has a substance abuse issue."

Have seen this characteristic in job applicants 01  
Have not seen this characteristic in job applicants 02  
(Do not read) Refuse 97  
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98

6n-2. On the 1 to 5 scale, how important is this applicant shortcoming to your business?

(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98  
Inability to pass a drug test or has a substance abuse issue —

7. Now we would like you to share the strengths you have seen in job applicants during the last 12 months. Please rank each strength on a 1 to 5 scale where 1 is "did not see this strength in any applicants" and 5 is "saw this strength in all applicants."

(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98

7a. Determination  
7b. Personal discipline  
7c. Creativity  
7d. Respectfulness  
7e. Honesty  
7f. Curiosity  
7g. Verbal communication skills  
7h. Writing skills  
7i. Technical skills  
7j. Taking the initiative  
7k. Responsibility  
7l. Positivity  
7m. Ambition  
7n. Dependability

8a. Are you experiencing a shortage of skilled applicants for your organization?

Yes 01  
No (if "no" skip to question 8) 02  
(Do not read) Refuse 97  
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98

8b. (If experiencing shortage of skilled applicants per Q.8a)

Please tell me the skill level required to meet your skill shortages. Approximately what percentage of the SHORTAGES you are experiencing require high-skill applicants (those with a 4-year degree or higher); middle-skill applicants (training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree); and low-skill applicants (high school or less). What percent of positions require ...

Answers MUST total 100%  
Refuse 97  
Don't know/Not sure 98  
High-skill, requiring a 4-year degree or higher —  
Middle-skill, training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree —  
Low-skill, requiring high school or less —

8c. (If experiencing shortage of skilled applicants per Q.8a)

Please tell me if you are taking any of the following measures to meet the skill shortages of applicants.

Hiring from outside the St. Louis area 01  
Hiring from outside the United States 02  
Hiring contractors 03  
Forced to hire less experienced workers and then train them 04  
Invest in automation instead of hiring 05  
Offering increased wages due to shortage of experienced workers 06  
(Do not read) Not taking any of listed measures 96  
(Do not read) Refuse 97  
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98

9. What is your business' plan to transition from a degree-centered hiring approach to a more skills-based approach for hiring new talent (e.g., eliminating Bachelor's degree requirement)?

We have already made the transition 01  
We are in the process of transitioning 02  
We are considering transitioning 03  
We are not planning or considering a transition 04  
(Do not read) Refuse 97  
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure 98



10. Which of the following methods do you use to assist current workers to address your company's need for new or increased skills? (Read list; enter all that apply.)

In-house classroom training	01
On-the-job training	02
Vendor training	03
Apprenticeship programs	04
Internship programs	05
Community college provided customized training or education	06
Vocational training	07
Tuition reimbursement	08
Online courses	09
Provide flexible schedule for outside continuing education	10
(Do not read) Not applicable – Do not need new or increased skills	95
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

11a. What do you think your employees' attitudes are, in general, toward upskilling/reskilling training?

Interested:	
Interested and actively engages in training	01
Interested but training is not available	02
Neutral	03
Not interested in training	04
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

11b. (If interested in training per Q.11a)

What barriers do your employees interested in training experience? (Read list; enter all that apply.)

Work responsibilities restrict availability to participate	01
Completing training on personal time is a barrier	02
The organization does not sponsor the cost of training	03
Any other barrier? (If "Yes" – Record)	04
Have not encountered any barriers to receiving training	95
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

11c. Approximately how much do you spend on training per year per employee? (Include spending on internal and external training, certifications, or courses, but not tuition reimbursement for college degrees.)

Up to \$200	01
\$201-\$500	02
\$501-\$999	03
\$1,000-\$1,500	04
More than \$1,500	05
We do not spend any money on training	95
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

12. Does your company offer financial assistance for employees pursuing college degrees? If yes, what type of financial assistance is available? (Enter all that apply.)

Full tuition reimbursement for a degree program	01
A set dollar amount per employee per year, please specify: _____	02
Coverage for a set number of courses per employee per year, please specify: _____	03
Other, please specify: _____	04
We do not offer financial assistance for college degrees	95
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

13. Now we have some questions about your company's workforce by job function.

13a. Do you employ staff in the Accounting or Finance function?

Yes	01
No (if "no" skip to question 13b)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

13aa. (If employ staff in Accounting or Finance function per Q.13a)

Are you seeing a shortage of skilled applicants in the Accounting or Finance function?

Yes	01
No (if "no" skip to question 13b)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

13aaa. (If seeing shortage of skilled applicants in the Accounting or Finance function per Q.13aa)

Please tell me the skill level of applicants required to meet your Accounting or Finance skill shortages. Approximately what percentage of the shortages you are experiencing require high-skill applicants (those with a 4-year degree or higher); middle-skill applicants (training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree); and low-skill applicants (high school or less).

What percent of positions require ...

Answers MUST total 100%	
Refuse	97
Don't know/Not sure	98
High-skill, requiring a 4-year degree or higher	—
Middle-skill, training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree	—
Low-skill, requiring high school or less	—

13b. Do you employ staff in the Information Technology function?

Yes	01
No (if "no" skip to question 13c)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

13bb. (If employ staff in Information Technology function per Q.13b)

Are you seeing a shortage of skilled applicants in the Information Technology function?

Yes	01
No (if "no" skip to question 13c)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98

13bbb. (If seeing shortage of skilled applicants in the Information Technology function per Q.13bb)

Please tell me the skill level of applicants required to meet your Information Technology skill shortages. Approximately what percentage of the shortages you are experiencing require high-skill applicants (those with a 4-year degree or higher); middle-skill applicants (training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree); and low-skill applicants (high school or less).

What percent of positions require ... Answers MUST total 100%

Refuse = 97	
Don't know/Not sure = 98	
High-skill, requiring a 4-year degree or higher	—
Middle-skill, training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree	—
Low-skill, requiring high school or less	—

13c. Do you employ staff in the Customer Service function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 13d)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98

13cc. (If employ staff in Customer Service function per Q.13c) Are you seeing a shortage of skilled applicants in the Customer Service function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 13d)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98

13ccc. (If seeing shortage of skilled applicants in the Customer Service function per Q.13cc)  
Please tell me the skill level of applicants required to meet your Customer Service skill shortages. Approximately what percentage of the shortages you are experiencing require high-skill applicants (those with a 4-year degree or higher); middle-skill applicants (training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree); and low-skill applicants (high school or less).  
What percent of positions require ...  
Answers MUST total 100%

Refuse	97
Don’t know/Not sure	98
High-skill, requiring a 4-year degree or higher	—
Middle-skill, training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree	—
Low-skill, requiring high school or less	—

13d. Do you employ staff in the Business Management function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 13e)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98

13dd. (If employ staff in Business Management function per Q.9d) Are you seeing a shortage of skilled applicants in the Business Management function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 13e)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98

13ddd. (If seeing shortage of skilled applicants in the Business Management function per Q.13dd)  
Please tell me the skill level of applicants required to meet your Business Management skill shortages. Approximately what percentage of the shortages you are experiencing require high-skill applicants (those with a 4-year degree or higher); middle-skill applicants (training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree); and low-skill applicants (high school or less).  
What percent of positions require ...  
Answers MUST total 100%

Refuse	97
Don’t know/Not sure	98
High-skill, requiring a 4-year degree or higher	—
Middle-skill, training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree	—
Low-skill, requiring high school or less	—

13e. Do you employ staff in the Skilled Trades function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 13f)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98

13ee. (If employ staff in Skilled Trades function per Q.13e) Are you seeing a shortage of skilled applicants in the Skilled Trades function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 13f)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98

13eee. (If seeing shortage of skilled applicants in the Skilled Trades function per Q.13ee)  
Please tell me the skill level of applicants required to meet your Skilled Trades skill shortages. Approximately what percentage of the shortages you are experiencing require high-skill applicants (those with a 4-year degree or higher); middle-skill applicants (training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree); and low-skill applicants (high school or less).  
What percent of positions require ...  
Answers MUST total 100%

Refuse	97
Don’t know/Not sure	98
High-skill, requiring a 4-year degree or higher	—
Middle-skill, training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree	—
Low-skill, requiring high school or less	—

13f. Do you employ staff in the Manufacturing, Production & Maintenance function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 13g)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98

13ff. (If employ staff in Manufacturing, Production & Maintenance function per Q.13f) Are you seeing a shortage of skilled applicants in the Manufacturing, Production & Maintenance function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 13g)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98

13fff. (If seeing shortage of skilled applicants in the Manufacturing, Production & Maintenance function per Q.13ff)  
Please tell me the skill level of applicants required to meet your Manufacturing, Production and Maintenance skill shortages. Approximately what percentage of the shortages you are experiencing require high-skill applicants (those with a 4-year degree or higher); middle-skill applicants (training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree); and low-skill applicants (high school or less).  
What percent of positions require ...  
Answers MUST total 100%

Refuse	97
Don’t know/Not sure	98
High-skill, requiring a 4-year degree or higher	—
Middle-skill, training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree	—
Low-skill, requiring high school or less	—

13g. Do you employ staff in the Patient Care function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 14)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98

13gg. (If employ staff in Patient Care function per Q.13g) Are you seeing a shortage of skilled applicants in the Patient Care function?

Yes	01
No (if “no” skip to question 14)	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don’t know/Not sure	98



13ggg. (If seeing shortage of skilled applicants in the Patient Care function per Q.13gg) Please tell me the skill level of applicants required to meet your Patient Care skill shortages. Approximately what percentage of the shortages you are experiencing require high-skill applicants (those with a 4-year degree or higher); middle-skill applicants (training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree); and low-skill applicants (high school or less). What percent of positions require ...		17d. Field trips	
Answers MUST total 100%		Yes	01
Refuse	97	No	02
Don't know/Not sure	98	17e. Classroom presentations	
High-skill, requiring a 4-year degree or higher	—	Yes	01
Middle-skill, training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree	—	No	02
Low-skill, requiring high school or less	—	17f. Youth apprenticeships	
14. In your business, what percentage of your TOTAL positions requires each of the following levels of experience?		Yes	01
What percent of positions require ...		No	02
Answers MUST total 100%		17g. (If 17a through 17f are all "No") Would you be interested in offering work-based learning experiences for students and young adults?	
Refuse	97	Yes	01
Don't know/Not sure	98	No	02
A minimum of 4 or more years of experience	—	18. Do you currently have partnerships with any of the following organizations to help you source talent?	
A minimum of 1 to 3 years of experience	—	(Do not read) Refuse	97
Some experience, but less than 1 year	—	(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98
No Experience	—	18a. Job Centers or Workforce Investment Boards	
15. In your business, what percentage of your TOTAL positions require each of the following levels of education as a minimum requirement? What percent of positions require...		Yes	01
Answers MUST total 100%		No	02
Refuse	97	18b. School districts or individual K-12 schools	
Don't know/Not sure	98	Yes	01
High-skill, requiring a 4-year degree or higher	—	No	02
Middle-skill, training or education beyond high school, but less than a 4-year degree	—	18c. 2-year colleges	
Low-skill, requiring high school or less	—	Yes	01
16. What percentage of jobs in your business are available for individuals with industry relevant short-term training, meaning not more than 6 months of training beyond a high school diploma?		No	02
No jobs	01	18d. 4-year colleges	
1 to 49% of jobs	02	Yes	01
50 to 100% of jobs	03	No	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97	18e. Training institutions	
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98	Yes	01
17. Do you offer any of the following work-based learning experiences for students and young adults?		No	02
(Do not read) Refuse	97	18f. Nonprofit organizations	
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98	Yes	01
17a. Paid internships		No	021
Yes	01	18g. Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development	
No	02	Yes	01
17b. Unpaid internships		No	02
Yes	01	18h. Other (please record)	
No	02	Yes	01
17c. Career shadowing		No	02
Yes	01	19. What percentage of jobs in your firm receives each of the following types of background checks prior to hire?	
No	02	Criminal check, percentage	—
		Financial check, percentage	—
		Drug screen, percentage	—
		eVerify check, percentage	—
		Social media check, percentage	—
		Professional license or certification check, percentage	—
		Check by an outside service, percentage	—

20. What aspects of DEI – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – does your business incorporate?		1 to 5 scale where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important.”	
(Do not read) Refuse	97	(Do not read) Refuse	97
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98	(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98
20a. A DEI strategy or plan		Health Insurance	—
Yes	01	Pay rate	—
No	02	Sense of purpose	—
20b. An Equal Opportunity Employer notice in job postings		Accessibility	—
Yes	01	Retirement plan	—
No	02	Job stability	—
20c. A DEI statement on your website or in a handbook		Paid time off (vacation or sick leave)	—
Yes	01	Flexibility	—
No	02	Paid family leave	—
20d. A DEI committee		Inclusiveness, a sense of belonging	—
Yes	01	Job satisfaction	—
No	02	Opportunities for advancement or a career path	—
20e. Harassment or sensitivity course or training		24. In what areas of your company are you using Artificial Intelligence (AI)?	
Yes	01	(Read list; enter code for each area of your company; enter all that apply.)	
No	02	Accounting/Finance	01
20f. Affinity groups within your company (These are voluntary, employee-led groups that are typically based on shared characteristics or experiences. Examples include: Women's Resource Group, Racial/Ethnic Groups, LGBTQ+ Employee Network, Veterans Group, Disability Support Group.)		Information Technology	02
Yes	01	Customer Service	03
No	02	Business Management	04
21. How do you anticipate your organization's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts will change in the next year?		Skilled Trades	05
Increase	01	Manufacturing/Production	06
Stay the same	02	Maintenance	07
Decrease	03	Patient Care	08
(Do not read) Refuse	97	Transportation	09
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98	(Do not read) Refuse	97
22. Which statement best describes your company's position on hiring an applicant convicted of a felony offense who has completed their sentence and/or probation? (Read list; single response only)		(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98
Would not consider applicant for any position	01	25. How would you describe your organization's current use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)?	
Depends on the nature of the felony and the time since the offense	02	Not using AI and do not plan to use it	01
Would consider for some jobs but not for others	03	Not using AI but plan to use it in the future	02
Would consider the applicant for any job for which they are qualified	04	AI is currently being tested or used in a pilot project	03
(Do not read) Refuse	97	AI is integrated into our operations & business processes	04
(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98	(Do not read) Refuse	97
23. Finally, we want to understand the characteristics that best define a “good” job. Please rank the importance of each of the following job characteristics on a		(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98
		26. What benefits has your organization experienced since using AI?	
		(Read list; enter code for each area of your company; enter all that apply.)	
		More efficient/saving time on some tasks	01
		Improved decision-making through data insights	02
		Cost reduction through automation and optimization	03
		Enhanced customer experience and satisfaction	04
		Fostering innovation and gaining a competitive edge	05
		Replacing workers or unfulfilled positions	06
		Reduced operational errors or mistakes	07
		Enhanced employee experience and satisfaction	08
		(Do not read) Refuse	97
		(Do not read) Don't know/Not sure	98



Researched and developed by St. Louis Community College Workforce Solutions Group