

# Business

Talent Demand Report 2024

Advancing San Diego

SAN DIEGO REGIONAL



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## San Diego's Business Talent Pipeline

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# Overview

## Advancing San Diego

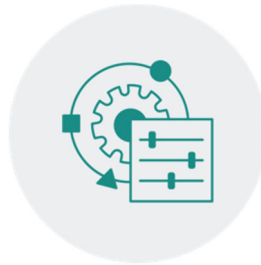
Advancing San Diego is a collaborative effort to **better prepare San Diegans for quality jobs via locally-serving education institutions** and expand access to diverse, qualified talent for San Diego companies.

Advancing San Diego is helping the region meet its **Inclusive Growth goals** by strengthening relationships between local industry and education systems. Better alignment between these systems will mean that the region can collectively prepare San Diegans for high-demand jobs, and local employers—many of which are small companies—can establish or expand recruitment relationships with locally-serving institutions.



### Communicate Industry Demand

Regularly quantify & communicate broad regional workforce demand.



### Adapt Existing Resources

Help adapt curriculum & workforce systems for better economic mobility.



### Expand Access for San Diegans

Explore unique solutions to remove barriers to entry into quality jobs.

## Regional Overview

# Economy

**3.3M+**

**POPULATION**

across 18 cities

**\$266B**

**GRP**

San Diego County

**\$99K**

**MEDIAN INCOME**

per household

The San Diego region is consistently recognized as a **leading life sciences market with an established tech and entrepreneurial ecosystem**, supported by distinguished universities and an **unrivaled quality of life**.

San Diego's economy—combined with the region's diverse communities, population, and global connectivity—supports the attraction and retention of top talent and **some of the world's most innovative companies**.



## Overview

# Employer Working Group

Through [Advancing San Diego](#)'s employer working groups (EWG), San Diego Regional EDC gains a real-time understanding of regional labor market information. The following Talent Demand Report is the culmination of the information gleaned from a series of working group meetings and surveys intended to help San Diego training providers align curriculum to the needs of industry.

San Diego's dynamic economy is powered by a diverse range of industries, with technology leading the charge in innovation. In today's business environment, technical skills are increasingly vital for success across diverse roles. More than **40 percent of business roles desire a bachelor's degree**. Additionally, **63 percent of surveyed businesses reported available talent does not have the relevant training or education needed for the job**. Access to post-secondary education, work-based learning opportunities, and internships are essential for strengthening talent pipelines.

## EWG Companies

Informed by a **survey of more than 120 businesses, and in-depth conversations with six key San Diego employers** with a shared need for business talent, this report serves as a snapshot of local demand for business professionals. Representing multiple industries, **these employers collectively employ nearly 24,000 people in San Diego**.



# Talent Supply

## The Workforce of Tomorrow

**481K**

**K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT 2022**

**34K**

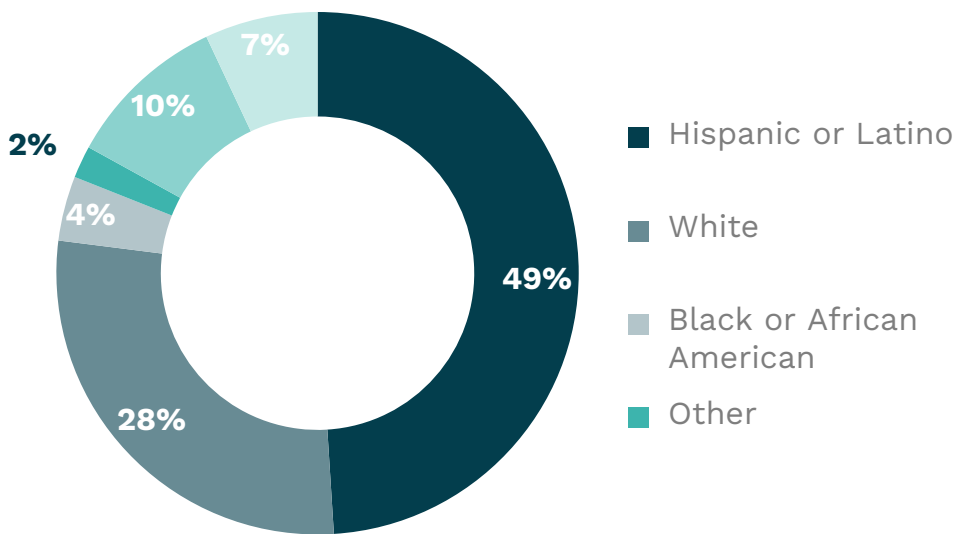
**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES 2022**

**19K**

**GRADUATE A-G REQUIREMENTS 2022**

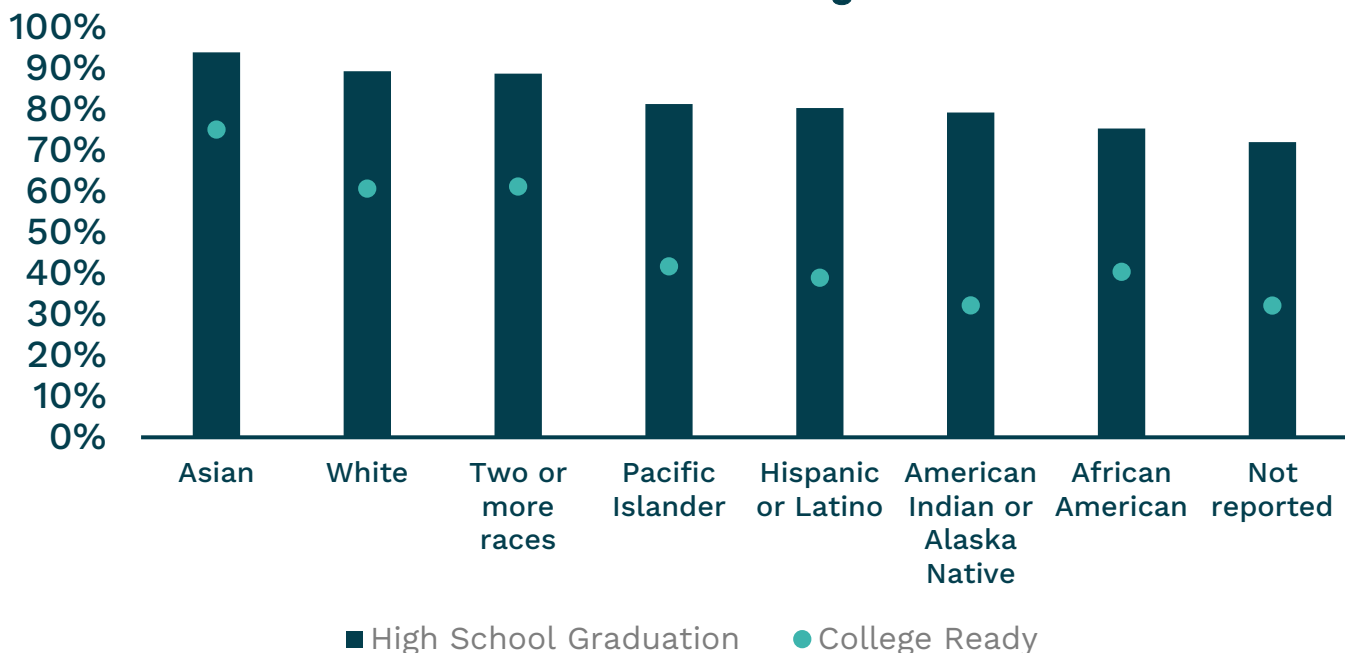
Source: CA Department of Education, 2022

### K-12 Demographics



Current demographic trends don't indicate pathways to success for all future workforce.

### 2022-23 Graduation & College Readiness Rate

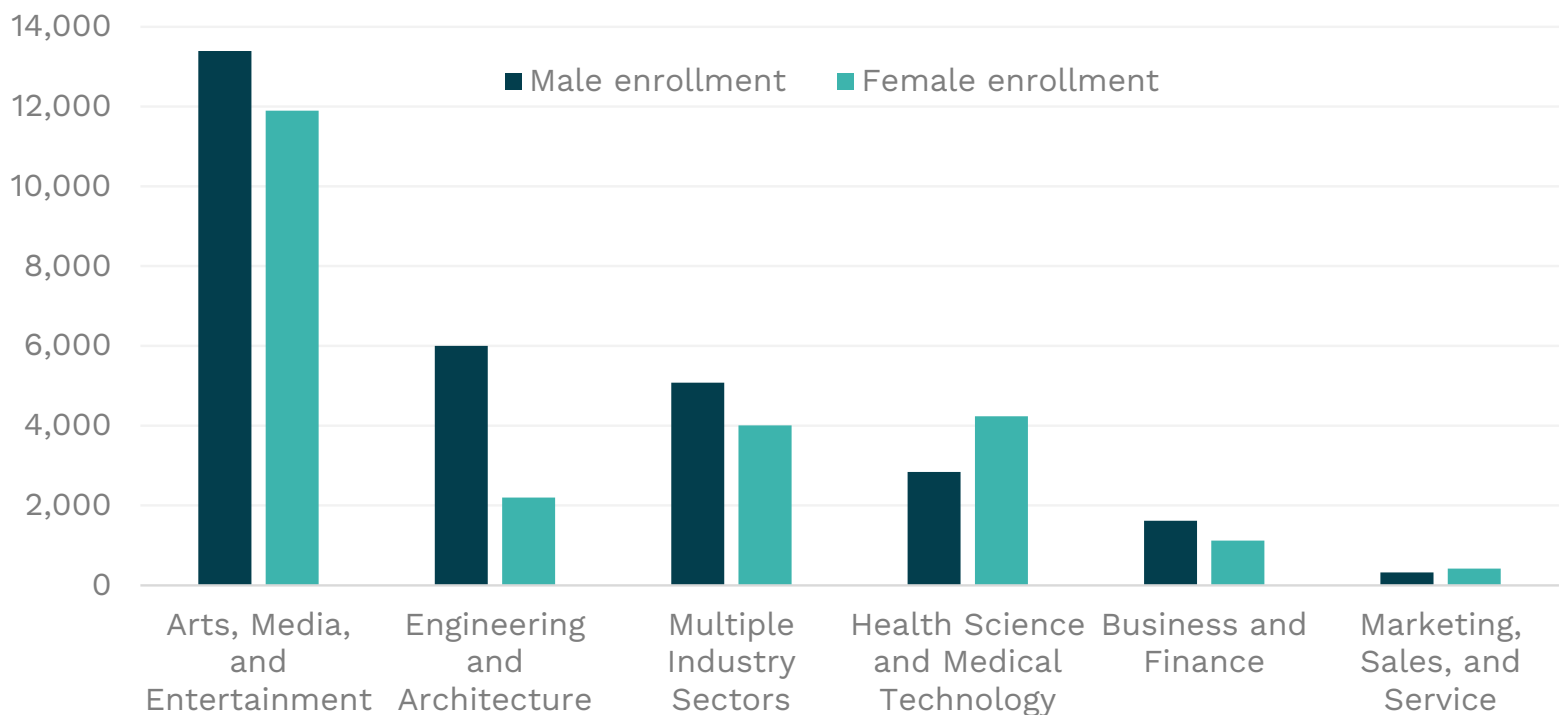


## Talent supply

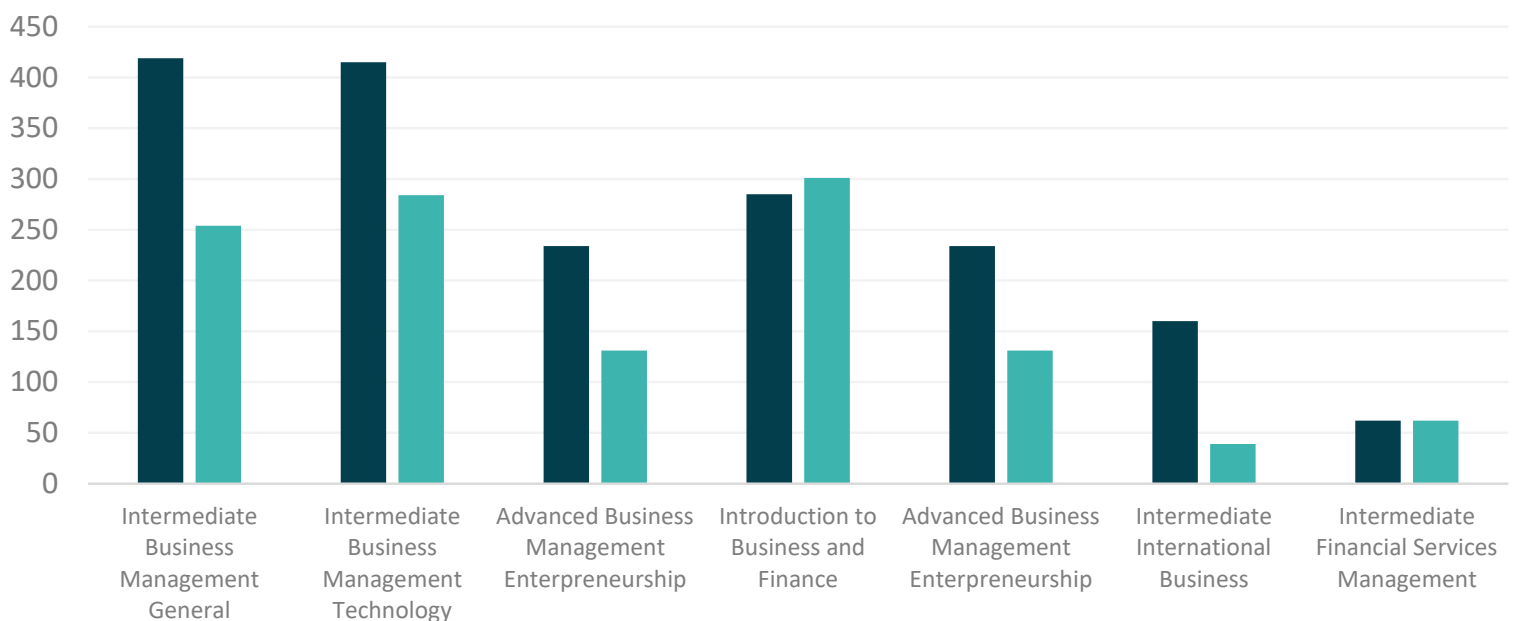
# K-12 Career Technical Education

There continues to be a misalignment between Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways at K-12 public schools and the overall job market in San Diego where roles in **life sciences, aerospace, and technology** dominate. There is also a significant gender gap when it comes to K-12 CTE enrollment in intermediate and advanced Business and Finance course enrollments.

### CTE Enrollments 2018 - 2019



### Business and Finance CTE Enrollments



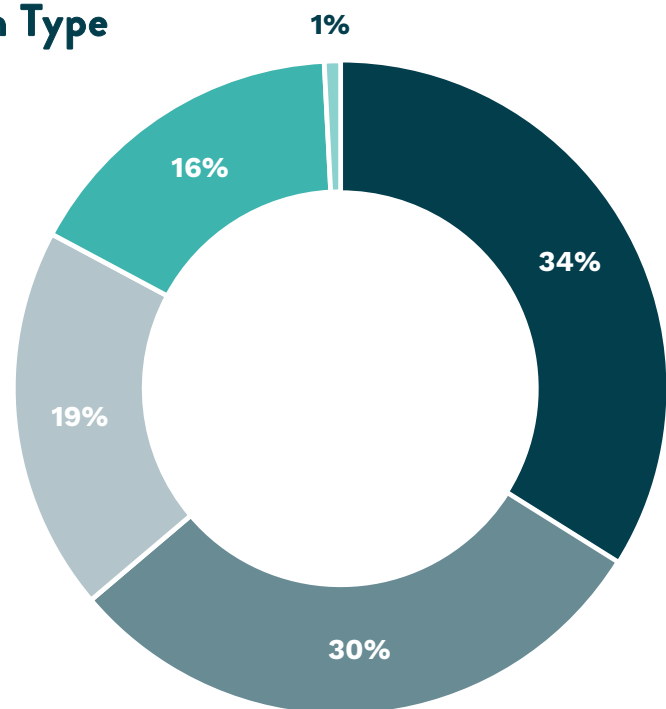
# Talent Supply

## Occupational Training

There were more than 13,000 students in business occupation training across all institution types in 2022. Enrollments are highest in public and private four-year universities, making up 64 percent of the market share.

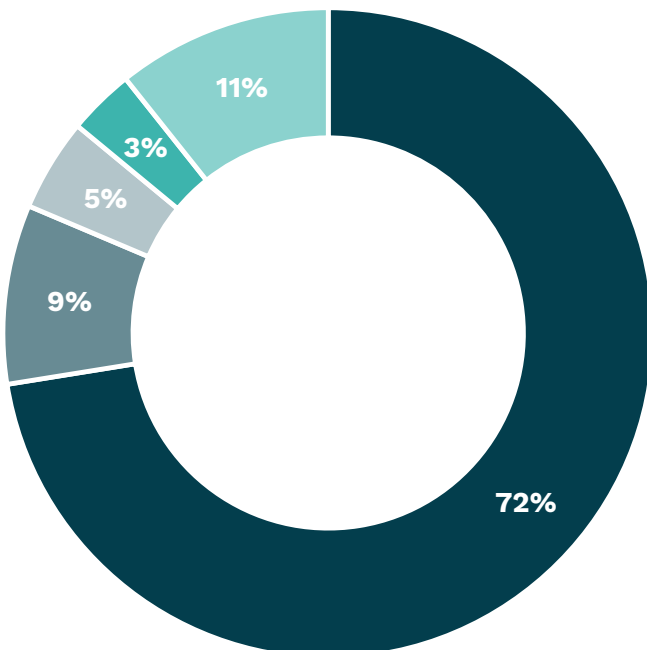
### Market Share by Institution Type

- Public, 4-year or above
- Private for-profit, 4-year
- Public, 2-year
- Private non-profit, 4-year
- Other



### Market Share by Program

- Business Administration & Management, General
- Business Administration, Management and Operations
- Accounting
- Finance
- Other



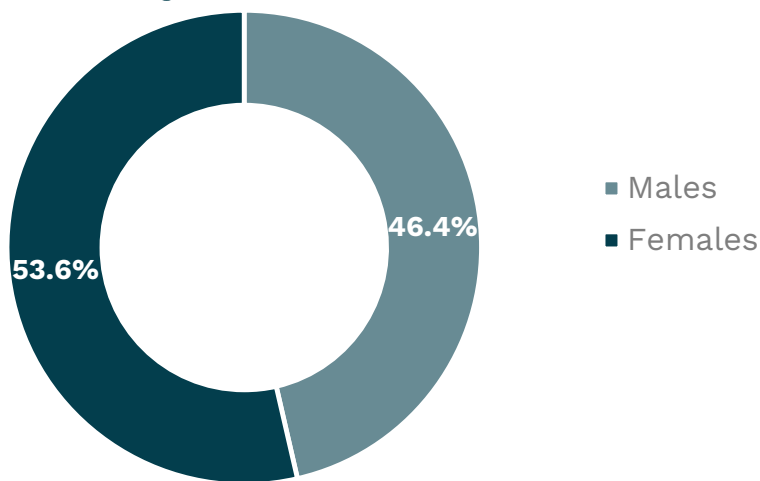


# Talent Supply

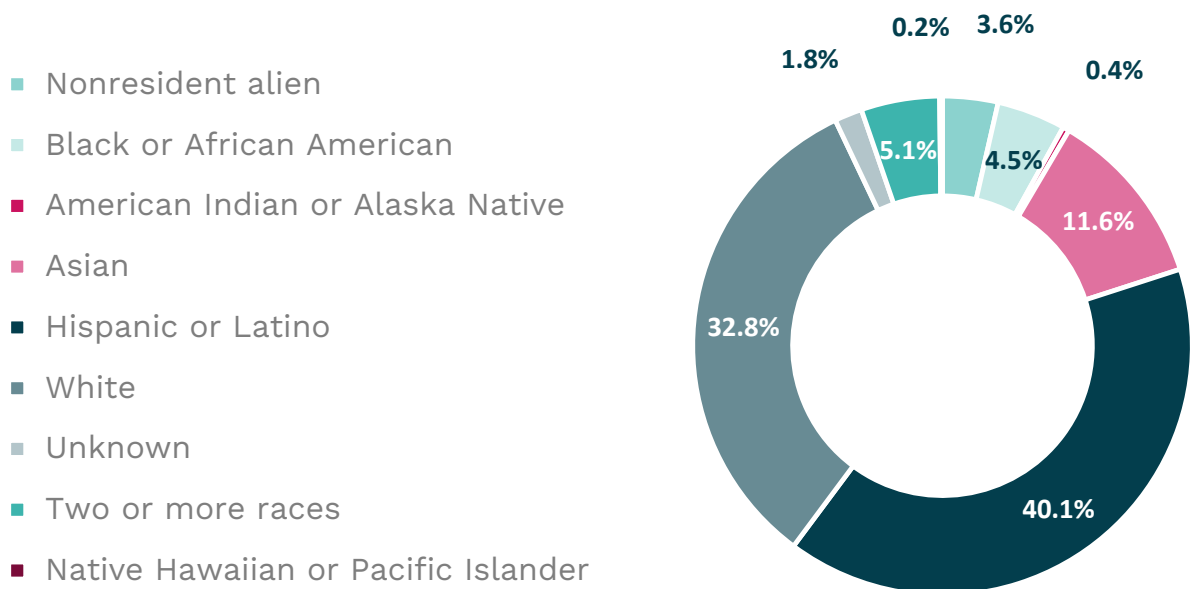
## Community Colleges

There is a slightly higher representation of females in business programs at community colleges. The highest concentrations of female students attend MiraCosta College, San Diego Miramar College, and Grossmont College, collectively making up 54 percent of all female business students. Additionally, the demographics of students at community colleges more closely align with regional K-12 demographics, compared to public universities.

### Gender Breakdown of Community College Business Programs



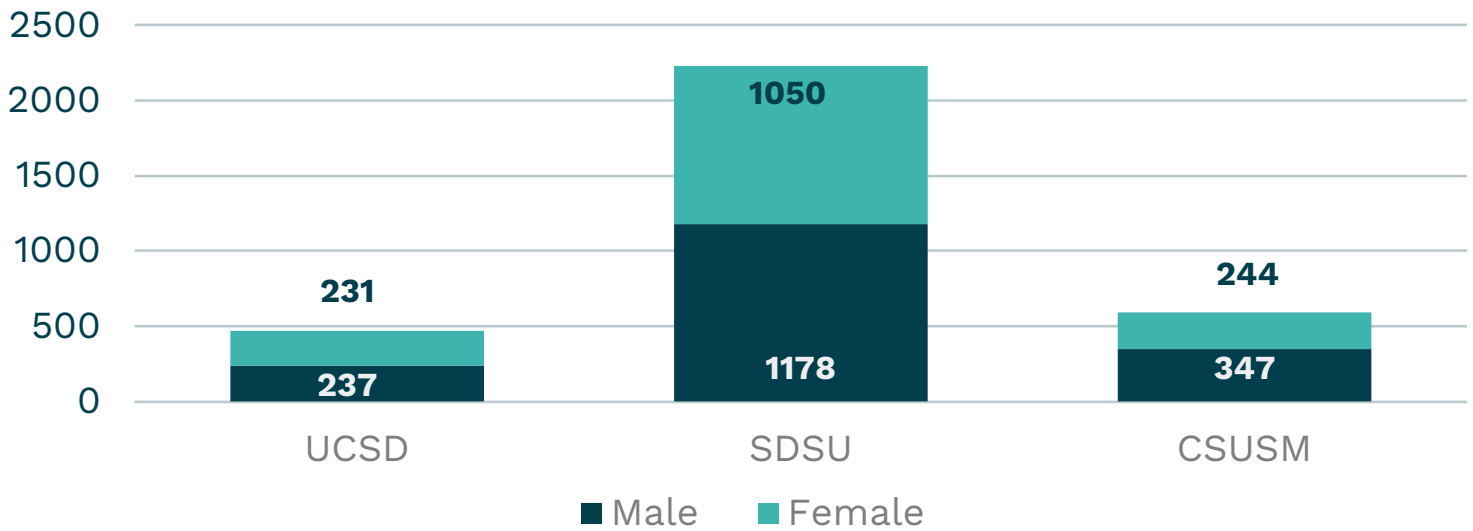
### Demographics of community college business programs



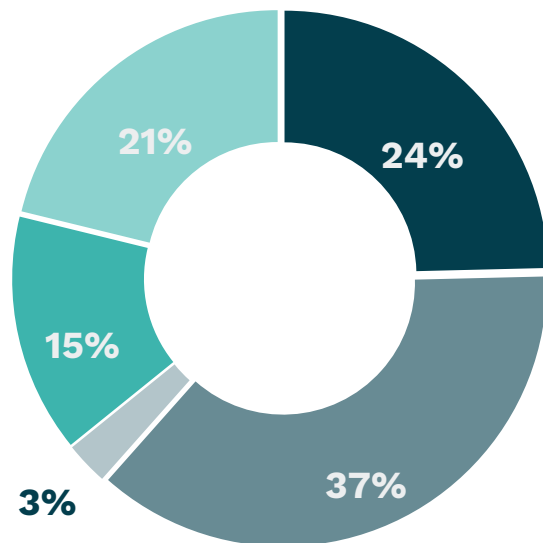
# Talent Supply

## Public Universities

Gender of Public University Students, enrolled in 2023



Race and Ethnicity Of Public University Students, enrolled in 2023



- Hispanic or Latino
- White
- African American or Black
- Asian
- Other

**3,287**

students enrolled in business programs at San Diego public universities, 2023

**2,143**

unique job postings for business talent, May 2024

# Talent Demand

## Business Occupation Demand

71K

JOB

\$94K

AVG  
COMPENSATION

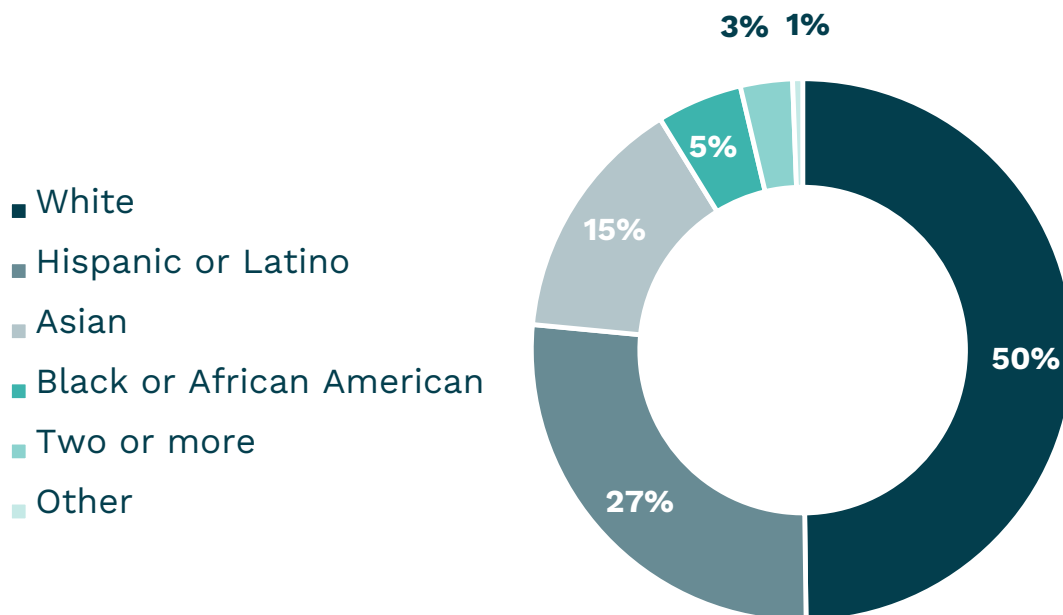
2.1K

AVG JOB  
POSTINGS  
PER MONTH

Source: Lightcast labor market information (May 2023-May 2024)

A lower-than-expected supply of jobs compared to national averages may be due to a lack of qualified candidates, making it more difficult for employers in San Diego County to fill open positions. **Compensation for business talent is 30 percent higher** than the national average, likely reflecting the higher cost of living in the region. Job postings per month are seven percent higher in San Diego County compared to the national average.

### Occupation Race/Ethnicity Breakdown



**Hispanic, Latino, Black, and African American individuals are underrepresented, indicating a need for investment in equitable access to strengthen the regional workforce.**

## Talent Demand

# Talent Demand Survey

EDC contracted with BW Research Partnership to conduct a talent initiative survey focused on eight priority business occupations. A survey of 126 businesses with five or more employees in San Diego County was fielded from May 2 to May 16, 2024. The survey was geared toward larger firms to develop a more comprehensive profile of each of the listed occupations.

Participating businesses were selected from the four primary regions of San Diego (North County, South County, East County, and the City of San Diego) to ensure the diversity of responses. Therefore, the distribution of responses may not mirror the actual geographic distribution of businesses within San Diego County.

## Key Findings

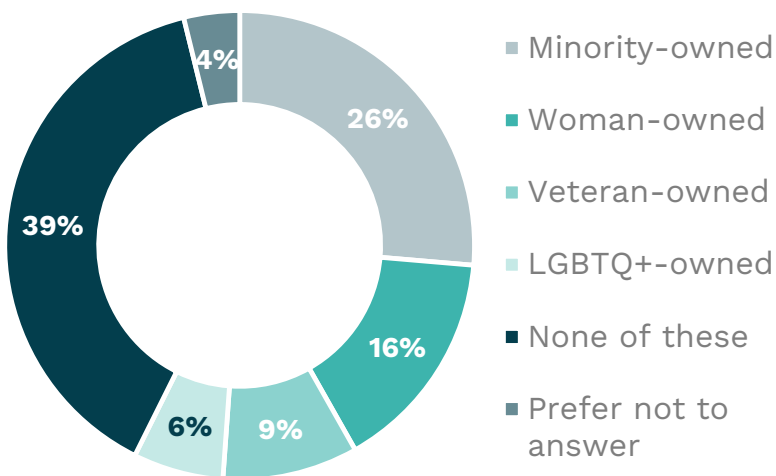
- 20 percent of businesses reported a **high turnover** in four out of eight listed occupations.
- **Lack of sufficient training or education** was cited as the primary reason for hiring difficulties for entry-level business positions.
- For non-entry level positions, **lack of sufficient industry or work experience** and inadequate training or education were the primary hiring challenges.
- Employers predicted the **highest job growth for purchasing & buying** roles over the next 24 months, with 30 percent indicating it takes more than six months to fill these positions.
- The **most challenging positions to fill** included supply chain and logistics positions, finance, and project manager roles, all of which reported high turnover rates.

# Talent Demand

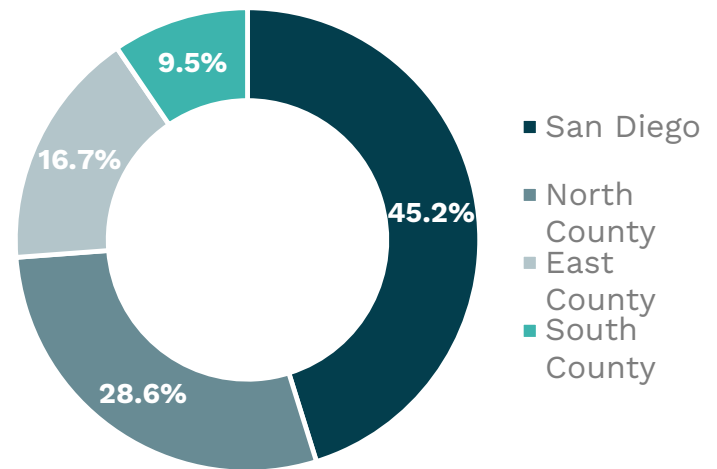
## Respondent Demographics

Most respondents indicated that their company was woman-owned, minority-owned, veteran-owned, or LGBTQ+-owned, highlighting the range of input contributing to survey outcomes. The geographic distribution of respondents showed that nearly half are in the City of San Diego. Technology was well represented, reflecting the region's strong tech sector.

### Company Ownership Demographics

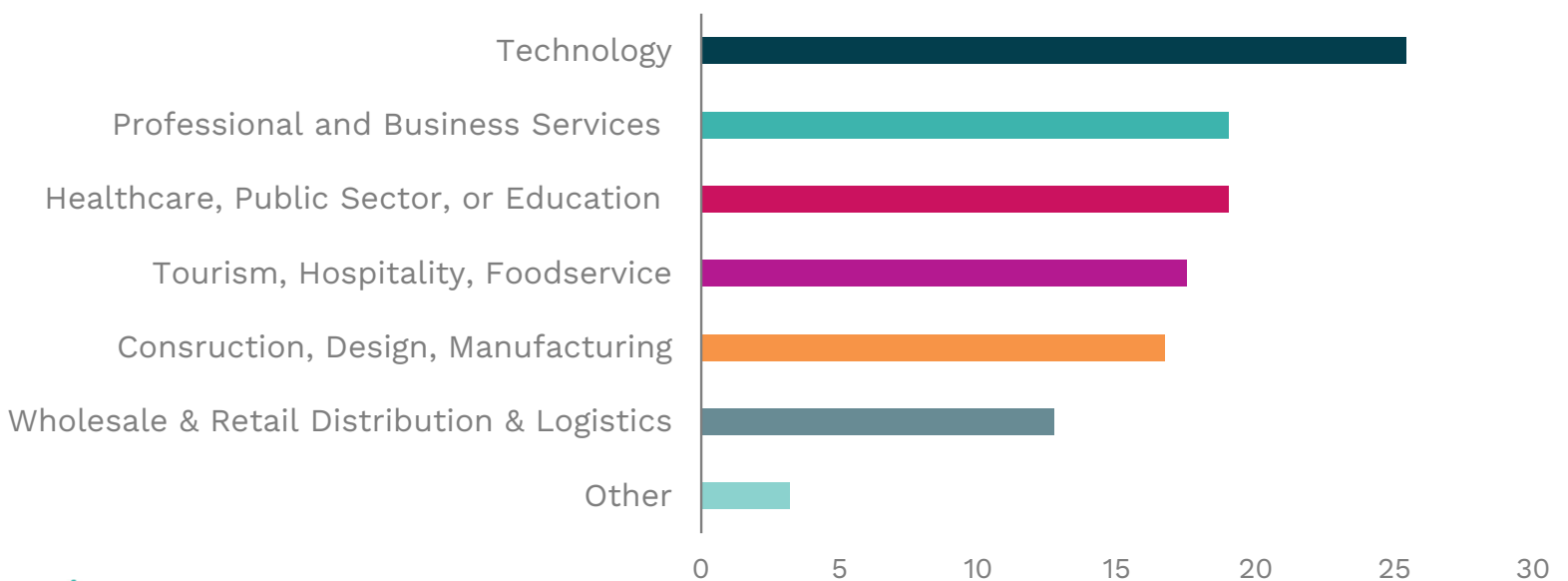


### Geographic Distribution



Multiple responses were permitted, percentages may sum to more than 100 percent.

### Industry Distribution

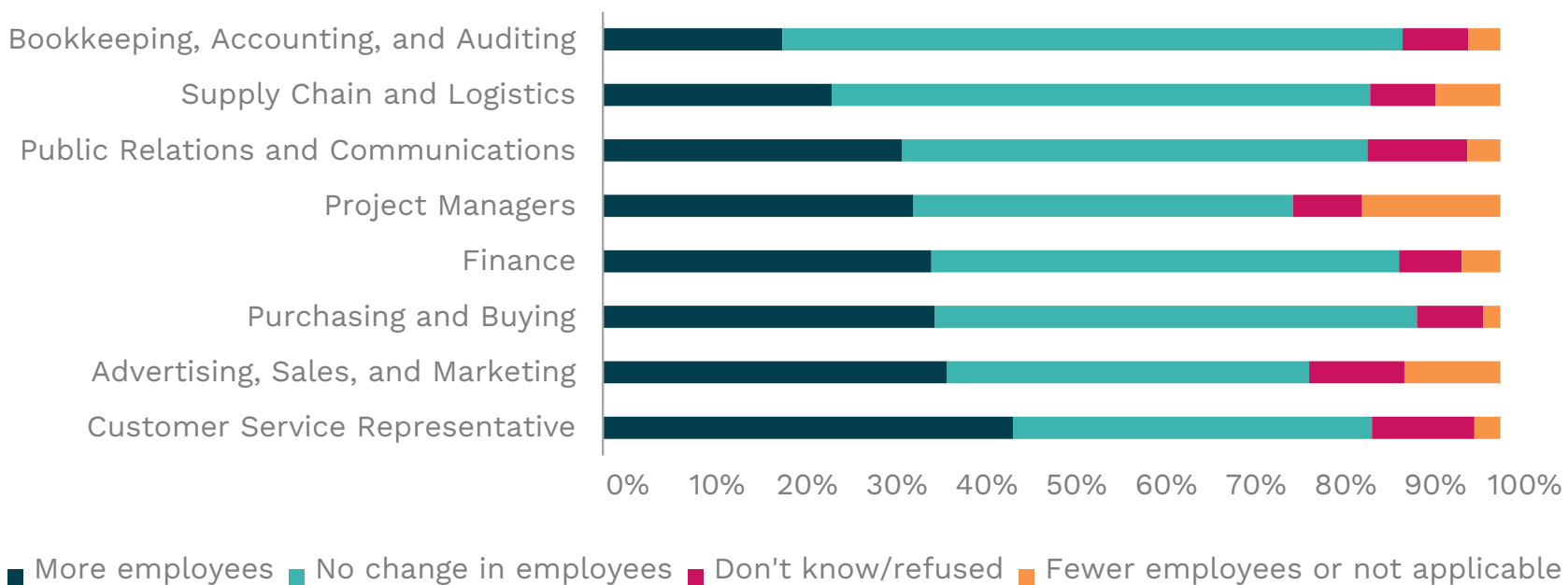


**32 percent of respondents reported having two or more locations in San Diego County.**

# Talent Demand Survey Results

Looking **at employment change predictions** over the next 24 months, customer service representatives and advertising, sales, and marketing roles are expected to see significant growth, with more than 45 percent and 38 percent of respondents, respectively, anticipating an increase in employees. Other occupations including supply chain and logistics, and bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing indicate slow growth or stability in these roles.

### Employment Change Predictions over the Next 24 Months, by Occupation

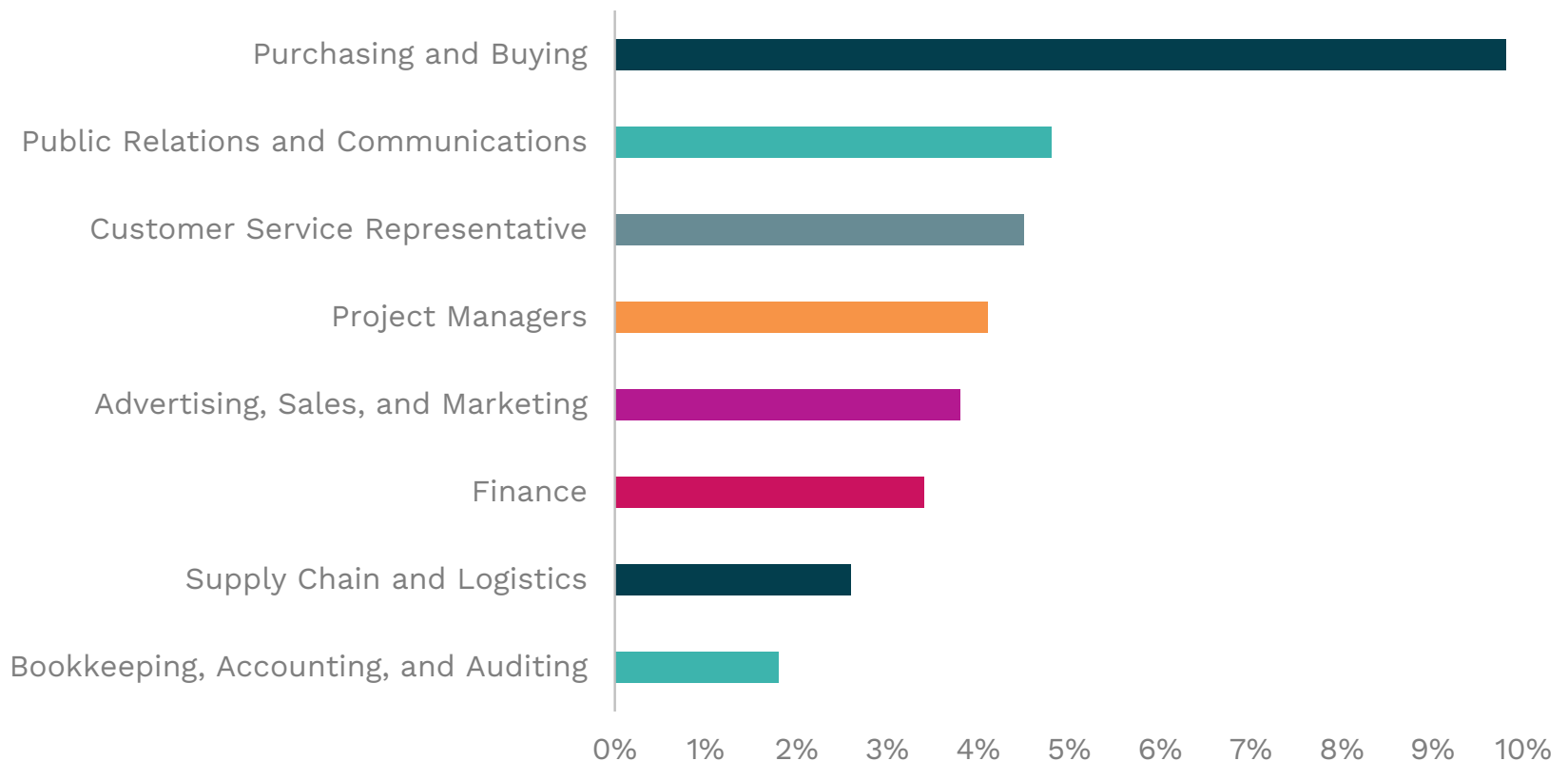


**Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing roles were noted by working group participants as hard to fill and lacking qualified applicants.**

# Talent Demand Survey Results

**Anticipated growth rates** across business occupations underscore a high demand for purchasing and buying positions, with a substantial growth projection of 9.8 percent. This figure well surpasses the next highest occupations, public relations and communication (4.8 percent) and customer service representatives (4.5 percent). While our working group participants noted high demand for accounting professionals due to an ongoing difficulty to fill these positions, survey results indicate modest growth expectations for these roles. Combined with a low turnover in these positions, accounting, bookkeeping, and auditing appear to offer career stability once individuals have attained the requisite education and technical skills.

**Percent of Employee Growth Expected,  
By Occupation**



**Purchasing and buying significantly outpaced demand over other occupations.**

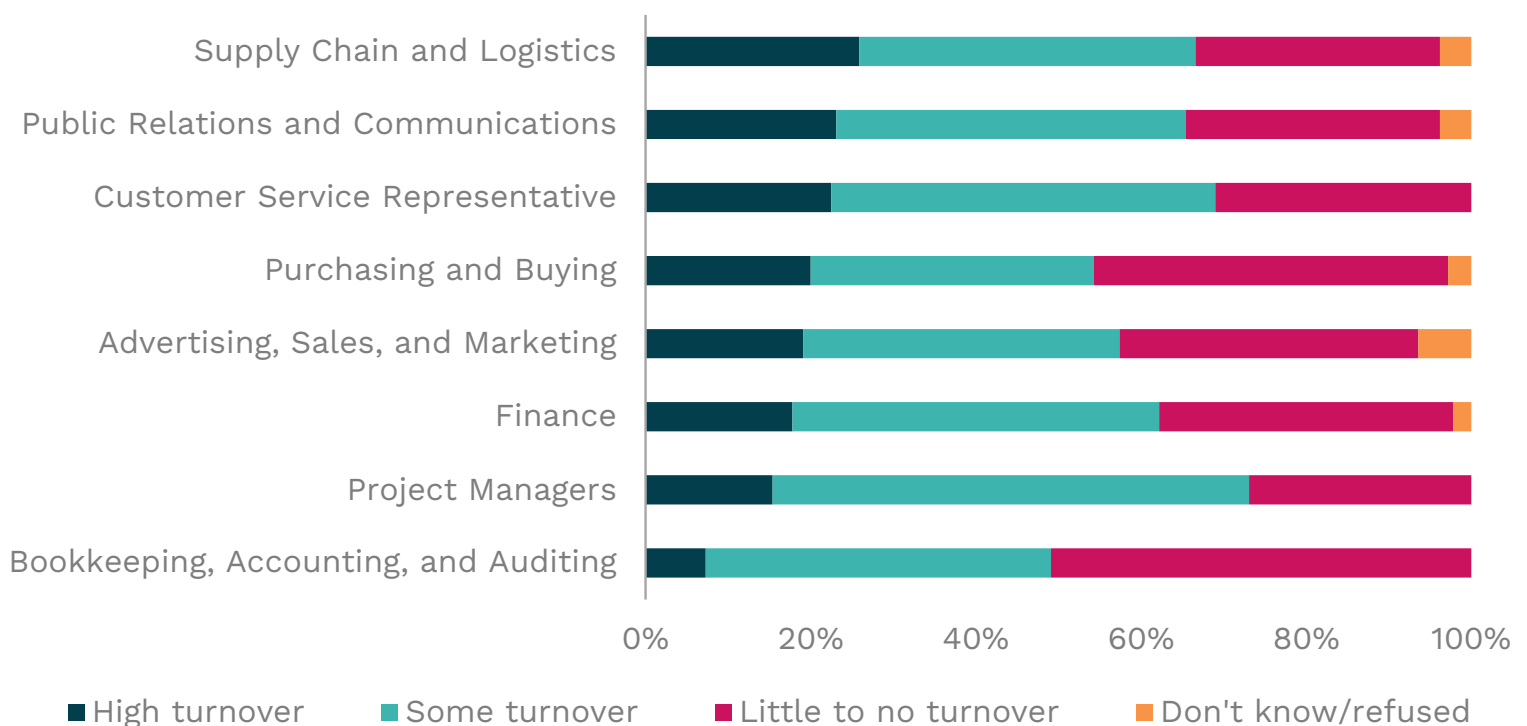
# Talent Demand

## Survey Results

Respondents were asked to rate the **level of turnover typically experienced** for each of the top four occupations for which they currently employ workers.

Supply chain and logistics roles had the highest share of responses indicating high turnover (26 percent), followed by public relations and communication (23 percent), customer service representatives (23 percent), and purchasing and buying (20 percent). Only bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing occupations saw more than 50 percent of employers reporting little to no turnover.

**Level of Turnover Typically Experienced,  
by Occupation**



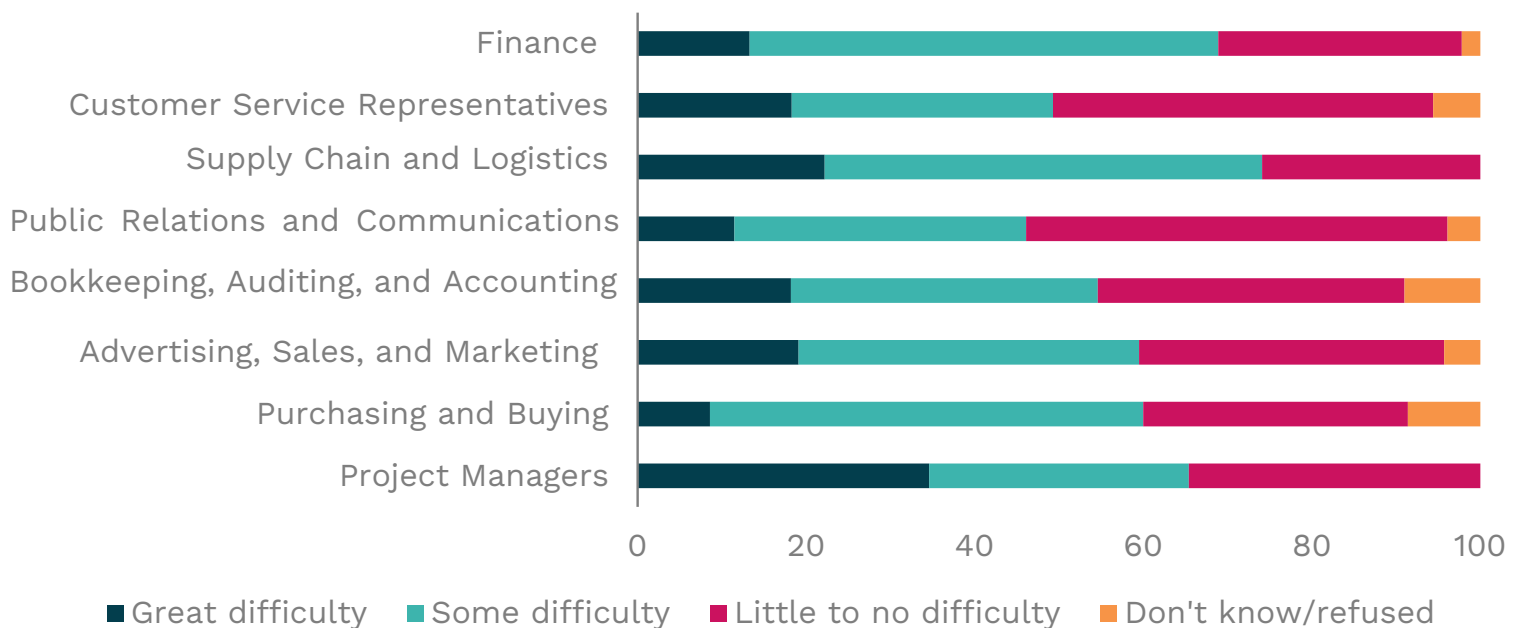
High turnover rates lead to increased recruitment costs, loss of expertise, impacts on morale and productivity, and negative impacts on client relationship and company reputation. Hiring and supporting skilled workers with the necessary expertise can help minimize turnover and reduce related costs.



# Talent Demand Survey Results

**The most difficult entry-level positions to fill include** supply chain and logistics (74 percent), finance (69 percent), and project managers (65 percent). Respondents identified the top reasons for difficulty as applicants not having the training or education needed for the job (63 percent), and an unwillingness of applicants to work under the job conditions offered (24 percent).

## Perceived Hiring Difficulties for Entry-level Staff



Respondents indicated these **positions as requiring six months or more to fill**: purchasing and buying (31.4 percent), public relations and communications (30.8 percent), finance (28.9 percent), and bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing (27.3 percent).



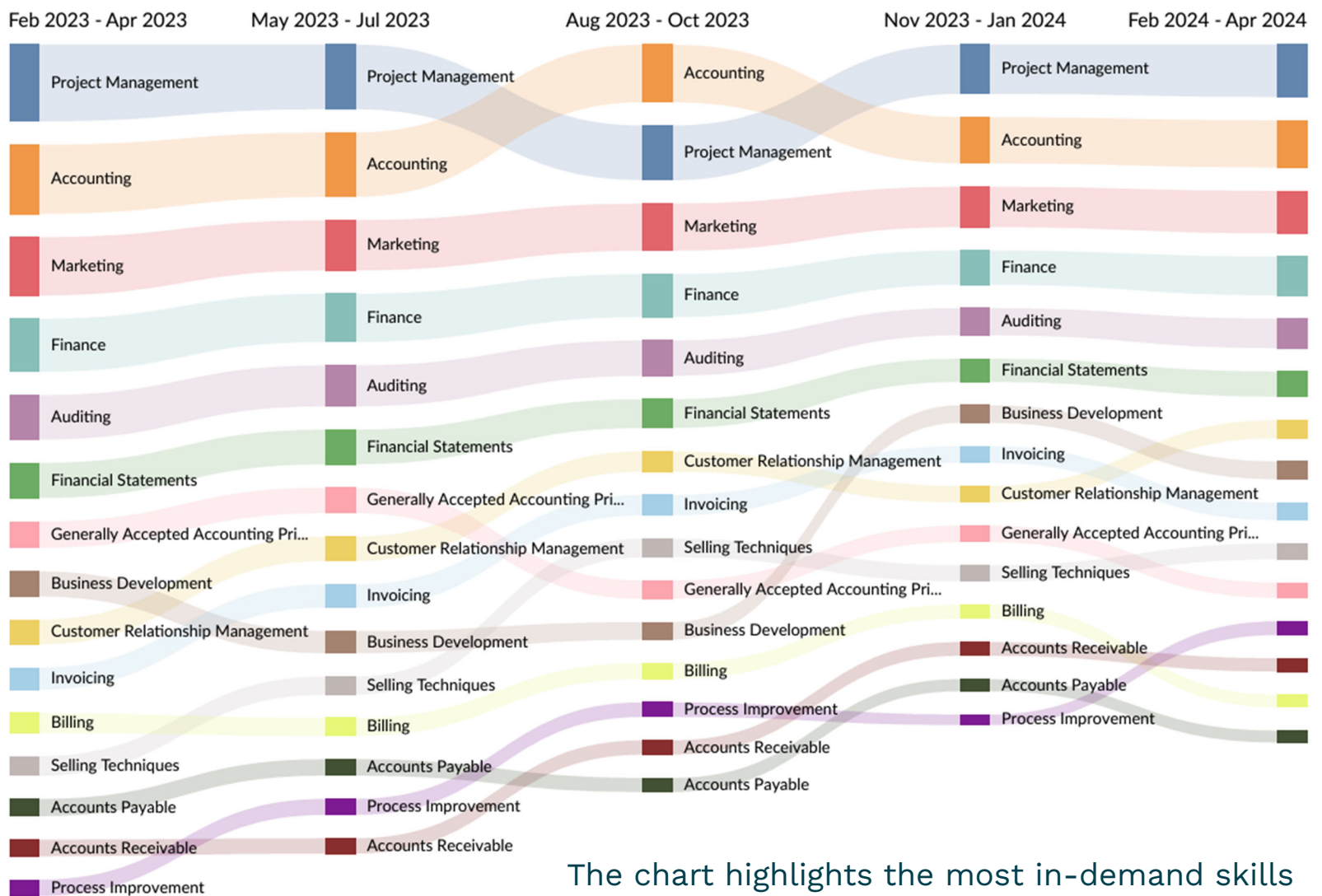
**Less than 20 percent of employers cited a lack of sufficient number of applicants as a difficulty in hiring.**

# Skills and Competencies

## General Trends

Members of the EWG report that entry-level positions require more technical skills and work experience. Technical skills are in high demand across all industries, with many employers offering internships and internal training opportunities to bridge skill gaps.

Over the last 12 months, there were more than **28,320 unique job postings** for these roles. Approximately 50 percent of postings sought entry-level talent with 0-1 year of experience.



The chart highlights the most in-demand skills from unique job postings from 2023-2024. Each skill (highlighted in different colors) is tracked on how often the skill is mentioned in job postings for business roles in San Diego.

# Skills and Competencies

## Internal Facing Business Roles

39K

JOBS

1.35K

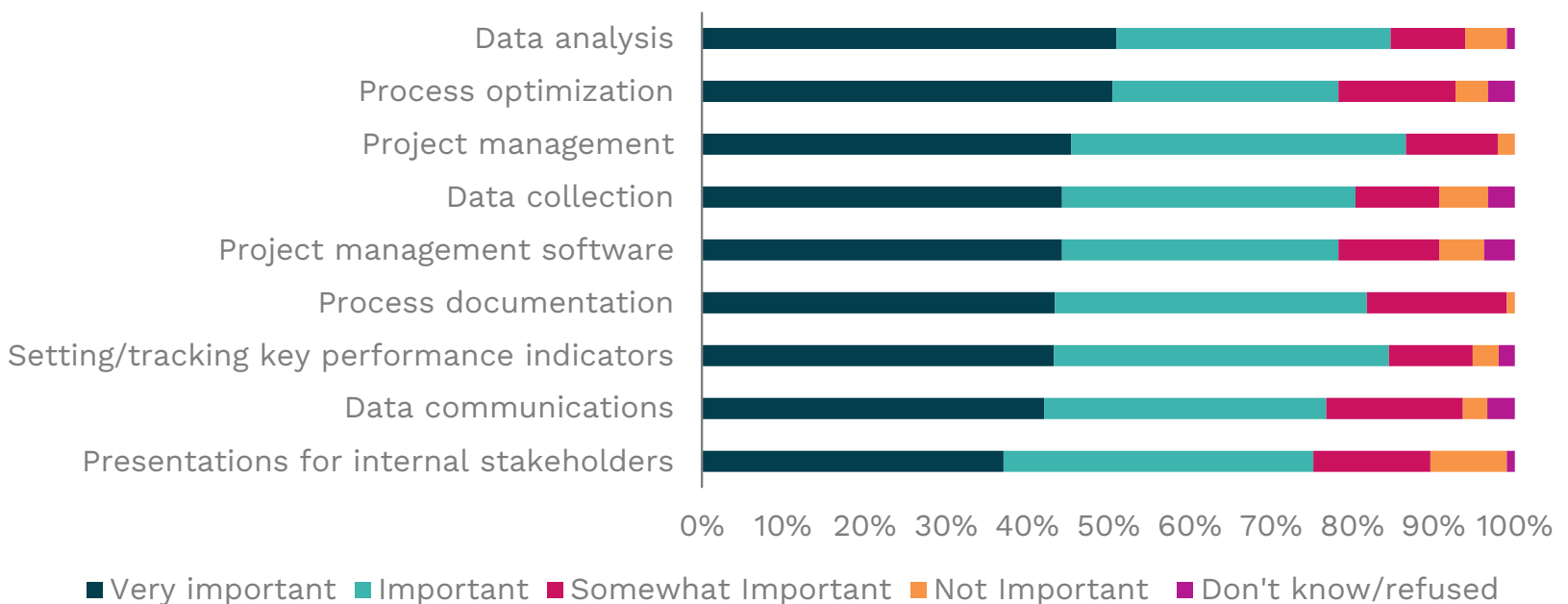
AVG MONTHLY  
HIRES

\$110K

AVG  
ANNUAL WAGES

Source: Lightcast labor market information (May 2023-May 2024)

### Perceived Level of Importance of Skills to Internal Facing Roles



Most respondents surveyed felt that San Diego County's internally facing talent pool was sufficiently skilled/prepared with respect to the skills listed. **Key skills rated as "very important"** included data analysis (51 percent), followed by process optimization (50.5 percent) and project management (45.4 percent).



**Twenty percent of employers felt the county's talent pool was least prepared in the use of project management software.**

## Skills and Competencies

# Internal Facing Business Roles

Respondents rated **top skills required for internal facing business roles** including finance, purchasing and buying, supply chain and logistics, project managers, bookkeepers, accountants, and auditors. Highlighted are three in-demand, high-wage internal facing occupations and corresponding top skills.

### Purchasing and buying

Growth projection: 9.8 percent  
High turnover rate: **20 percent**

### Project management

Growth projection: 4.1 percent  
High turnover rate: **15.4 percent**

### Accounting, bookkeeping, and auditing

Growth projection: 1.8 percent  
Low turnover rate: **7.3 percent**

### Skills rated as “very important” by 50 percent of respondents

**Data gathering and analysis** – collect and record accurate, relevant data through systematic methods. Expertly interpret and transform complex data into actionable insights, informing strategic decisions through statistical analysis and clear, concise communication.

**Process optimization** - streamlining operations and workflows to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and maximize output through systematic evaluation and improvement.

**Project management** - leading teams and resources to achieve project goals efficiently, within scope, on time, and within budget through effective planning and coordination.



**Purchasing and buying had the highest growth projection by nearly double the next closest role.**

## Skills and Competencies

# Internal Facing Business Roles

## Other considerations

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Survey respondents considered **data analysis the most important skill** for internal facing business roles.

More than two-thirds of employers surveyed indicated that the county's workforce was **somewhat skilled or highly skilled with respect to data communication and data analysis.**

Approximately one-third (33 percent) viewed San Diego County's **bookkeepers, auditors, and accountants as highly skilled in financial statements,** and 31 percent considered them somewhat skilled.

One in five respondents (20 percent) viewed San Diego County's workforce to be the **least skilled in use of project management software.**



# Skills and Competencies

## External Facing Business Roles

32K

JOBS

1.5K

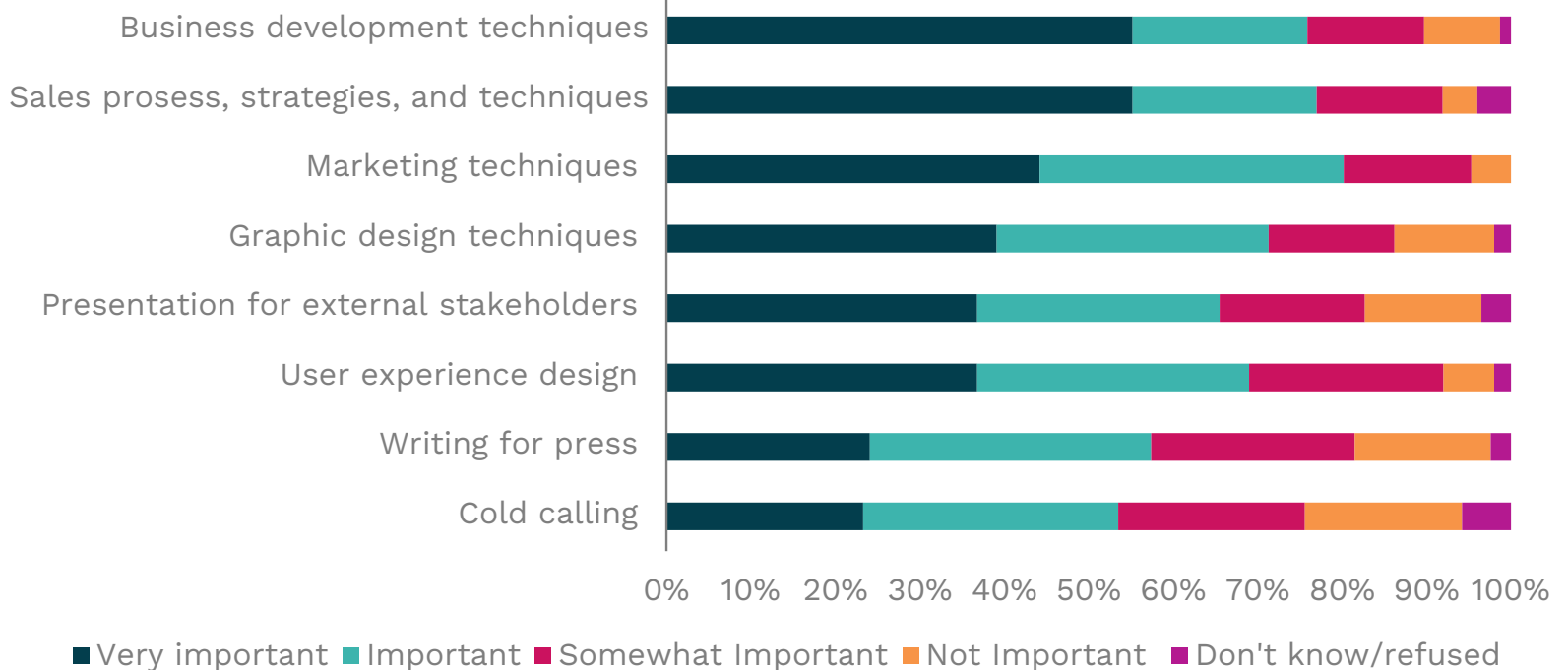
AVG MONTHLY  
HIRES

\$61K

AVG  
ANNUAL WAGES

Source: Lightcast labor market information (May 2023-May 2024)

### Perceived Level of Importance of Skills to External Facing Roles



Most respondents surveyed felt that San Diego County's externally facing talent pool was sufficiently skilled/prepared with respect to the skills listed. **Key skills rated as "very important"** included business development techniques (55.2 percent), followed by sales process, strategies and techniques (55.2 percent), and marketing techniques (44.2 percent).



**One in six respondents (17 percent) felt the county's talent pool was deficient in business development techniques.**



## Skills and Competencies

# External Facing Business Roles

Respondents rated **top skills required for external facing business roles** including advertising, sales and marketing, public relations and communication, and customer service representatives. Highlighted are two in-demand, high-wage occupations and the corresponding top skills.

### Customer service representative

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Growth projection: 4.5 percent  
High turnover rate: **22.5 percent**

### Advertising, sales, and marketing

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Growth projection: 3.8 percent  
High turnover rate: **19.1 percent**

#### Skills rated as “very important” by 40 percent of respondents

**Business development** - setting clear objectives, leveraging market research, developing strategic partnerships, and aligning efforts cross functionally to meet goals.

**Sales processes and strategy** – identify sales opportunities, build rapport with customers, utilize sales methodology, and close sales.

**Marketing techniques** - creating marketing strategy, clearly communicating, proficiency in software and AI tools, data analytics contributing to goals, social media skills.

**Graphic design** - knowledge of design elements, artistic ability, and creativity. Client management, problem-solving, and time management. Technical skills, including design software.



**These employability skills were ranked top three for external facing business roles.**

## Skills and Competencies

# External Facing Business Roles

## Other considerations

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While business development techniques were considered one of the most important skills for external facing positions, **approximately one in six respondents (17 percent) perceived the county's talent pool as deficient** in these skills. Specifically, 12 percent rated the talent pool as 'somewhat deficient,' and 5 percent rated it as 'highly deficient'.

More than two out of three employers (68 percent) indicated that the county's workforce was **somewhat skilled or highly skilled with respect to sales processes, strategies, and techniques and marketing techniques.**

**Cold calling was regarded as the least important skill** for external facing business roles.





# Skills and Competencies

## Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing

15.1K

JOB

524

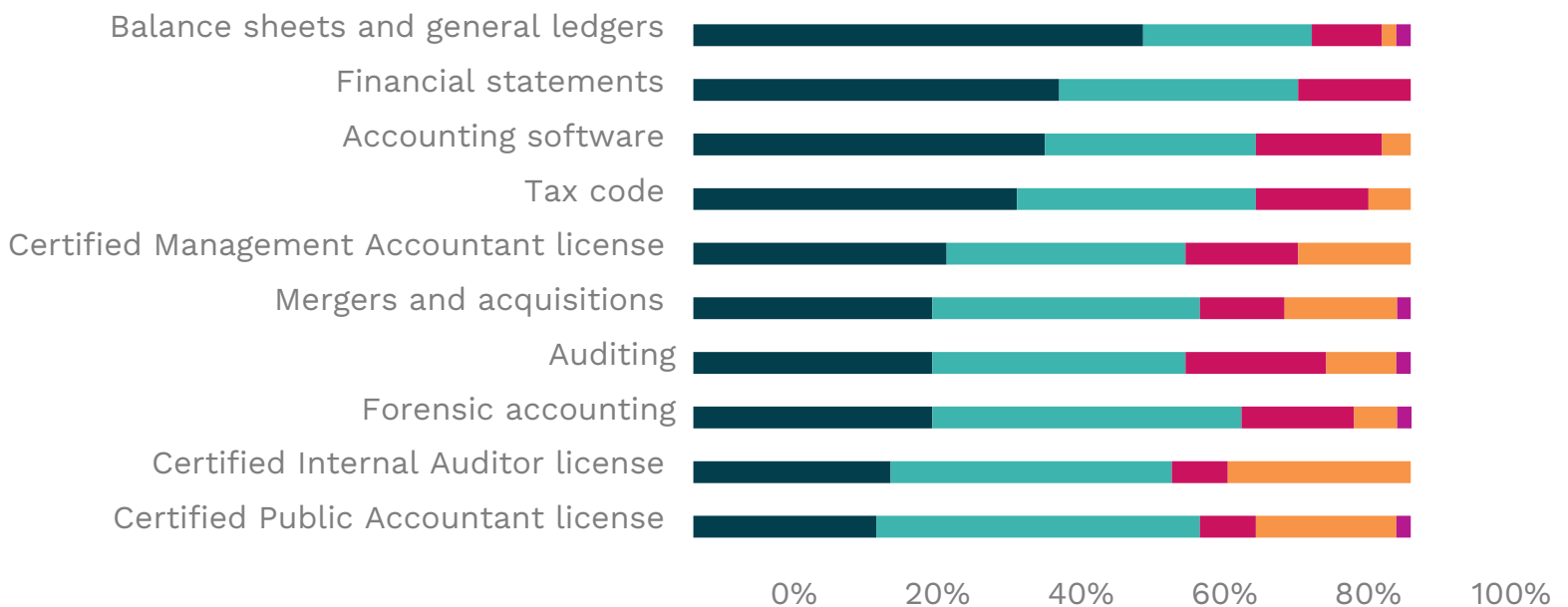
AVG MONTHLY  
HIRES

\$89K

AVG  
ANNUAL WAGES

Source: Lightcast labor market information (May 2023-May 2024)

### Perceived Level of Importance of Skills



■ Very important ■ Important ■ Somewhat important ■ Not important ■ Don't know/refused

**Key skills rated as "very important"** included balance sheets and general ledgers (63 percent), followed by financial statements (51 percent), and accounting software (49 percent).

Licensure is vital, yet job-related skills slightly surpass it in importance, marginally emphasizing practical proficiency over formal credentials for success in various professional roles.



**Eighteen percent of respondents were most likely to consider the county's workforce deficient with respect to knowledge of tax code.**

## Skills and Competencies

# Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing

## Other considerations

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Seventy percent of respondents saw bookkeepers, auditors, and accountants as **highly or somewhat skilled/prepared in balance sheets and general ledgers.**

Approximately one-third (33 percent) of respondents regarded San Diego County's bookkeepers, auditors, and accountants as **highly skilled in financial statements**, with an additional 31 percent considering them somewhat skilled.

Nearly one-fifth of respondents (18 percent) viewed San Diego County's workforce as **deficient in tax code knowledge**, with 12 percent rating it as "somewhat deficient" and six percent as "highly deficient."

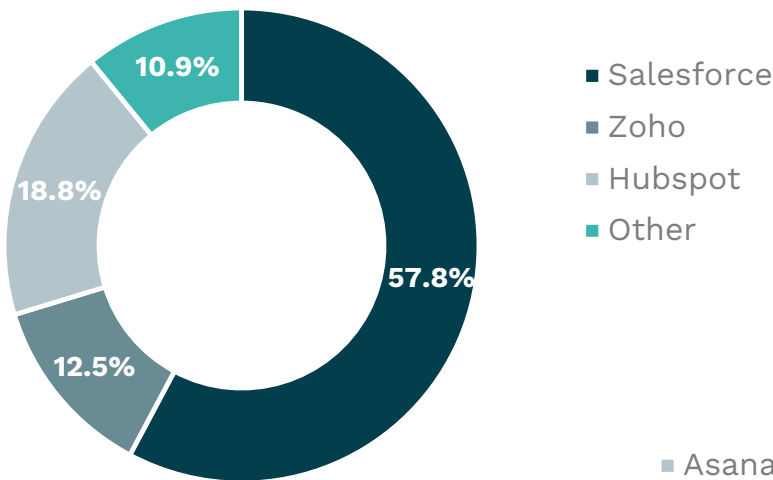


# Skills and Competencies

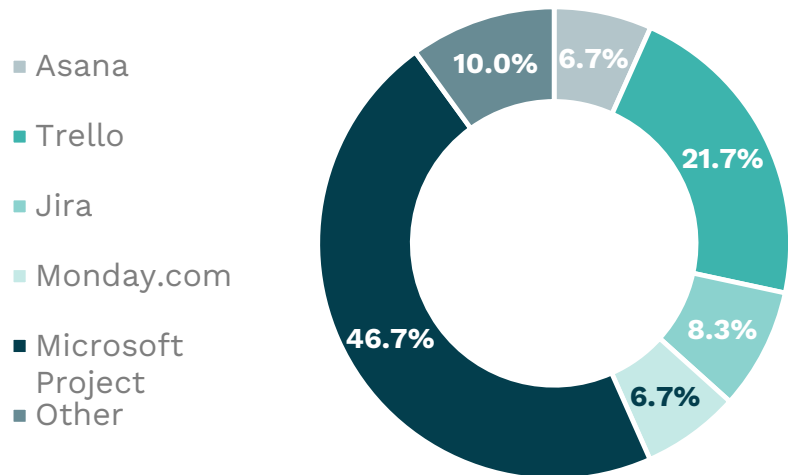
## Software Skills For Business

Survey respondents were asked about software use across all occupations. Seventy-seven percent used some type of customer relationship management (CRM) software, with Salesforce (58 percent), Hubspot (19 percent), and Zoho (13 percent) being the most popular.

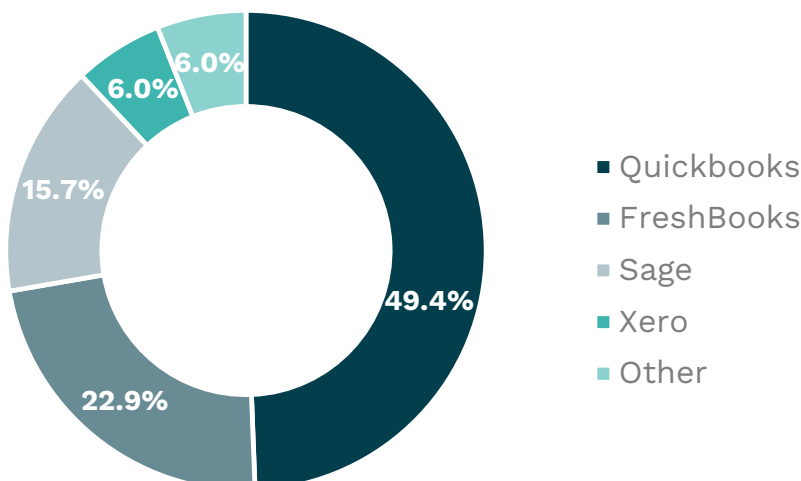
### Customer Relationship Management Software



### Project Management Software



### Accounting Software



## Skills and Competencies

# Artificial Intelligence (AI)

## Considerations

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### EWG insights

There are **shared concerns around safety and intellectual property**. Some companies have not yet defined AI policies.

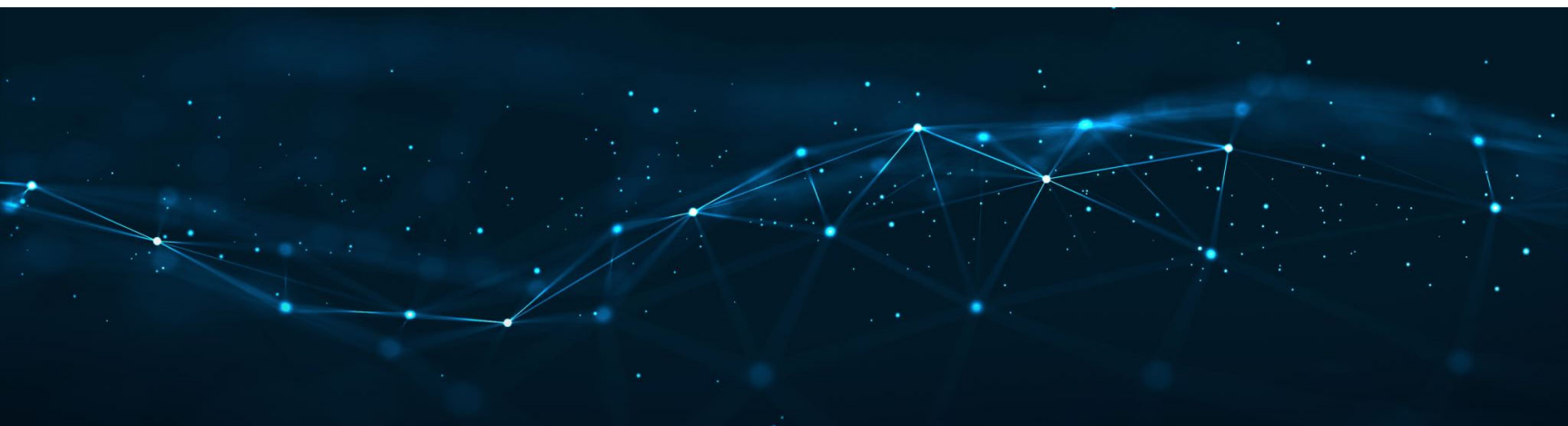
There is a **desire for more education about AI** and how it could be used to create efficiencies.

**Participants didn't see AI replacing roles**, but rather creating efficiencies and reducing time on simple tasks. It is currently being used to review resumes.

### National and regional trends

Nationally, Generative AI is used to enhance productivity and efficiency with document processing, communication mining, and process optimization with many companies moving from pilot programs to large-scale deployments. AI is also being integrated into CRM tools including, Salesforce, Hubspot, and Zoho.

The [\*San Diego Business Journal\*](#) has been tracking regional trends indicating that AI is becoming integral in the workforce, with increased utilization of AI tools and a growing demand for AI-related skills. Additionally, San Diego's Smart Cities initiatives use AI for a variety of tasks to create a more efficient and sustainable urban landscape.



# Advancing San Diego Verified Programs

## What is an ASD Verified Program?



**A program that is meeting the need of industry.**

Adequately preparing students with the skills required for entry-level positions and internships at high-demand jobs.



**A program that is reaching and serving San Diego/Imperial County residents.**

Programs reach and serve a student population that represents our region's population.

## Verified Program Benefits

- Employer recognized curriculum.
- Networking opportunities with regional employers and workforce partners.
- Public recognition through EDC's marketing channels, feature on EDC's talent dashboard, and highlights on EDC's blog.
- EDC "short-list" for industry partnerships.
- Paid work-based learning opportunities for students.

**Apply now!**

For more information, please contact Bridgette Coleman at [bc@sandiegobusiness.org](mailto:bc@sandiegobusiness.org)