

# 2023 Business Workforce Survey Results



The  
Business  
Council



Empire State  
Development

**WE ARE YOUR DOL**



Department  
of Labor

SEPTEMBER 2023

## Overview

In March 2021, The Business Council teamed up with the New York State Department of Labor to survey thousands of businesses on the challenges and needs in a world deeply changed by COVID. The results continue to shape workforce development practices and policy from the P-12 system to higher education and among training providers across New York State.

In 2022 and 2023, the Department of Labor partnered again with The Business Council and with Empire State Development and the Regional Economic Development Councils to gather real-time feedback on the state of the workforce and the needs of businesses.

As with the previous surveys, most survey questions were optional, but businesses were encouraged to answer as many as possible. Percentages listed represent a percentage of the total participants for that individual question, not all survey participants.

In total, **2,400 unique businesses** responded to the 2023 survey, representing **11,200** business locations across New York State. The breakdown of region and major industry group is below.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>%</b>
Capital Region	394	Accommodation and Food Services	5%
Central NY	383	Administrative and Waste Services	4%
Finger Lakes	427	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	2%
Long Island	305	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3%
Mid-Hudson	378	Construction	8%
Mohawk Valley	198	Educational Services	6%
New York City	425	Finance and Insurance	3%
North Country	315	Health Care and Social Assistance	18%
Southern Tier	422	Information	1%
Western NY	612	Management of Companies and Enterprises	<1%
		Manufacturing	20%
		Mining	<1%
		Other Services (Except Public Admin.)	9%
		Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	5%
		Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2%
		Retail Trade	5%
		Transportation and Warehousing	3%
		Utilities	<1%
		Wholesale Trade	4%

## Digital Automation

In the next 12-24 months, **26% of businesses statewide** are considering implementing some form of **digital automation** (unchanged from 2022). Examples include:

- Enterprise resource planning (ERP)
- Customer relationship management (CRM)
- Appointment scheduling
- Workflow automation
- Artificial intelligence
- HR/payroll/onboarding/applicant tracking systems
- Inventory control

Industry	Manufacturing / Construction	Health Care	All Other Industries
<b>Yes</b>	28%	29%	24%
<b>No</b>	72%	71%	76%

Region	Capital Region	Central NY	Finger Lakes	Mid-Hudson	Long Island
<b>Yes</b>	29%	28%	26%	31%	32%
<b>No</b>	71%	72%	74%	69%	68%

Region	Mohawk Valley	New York City	North Country	Southern Tier	Western NY
<b>Yes</b>	29%	33%	28%	28%	28%
<b>No</b>	71%	67%	72%	72%	72%

## Robotic Automation

In the next 12-24 months, **10% of businesses statewide** are considering implementing some form of **robotic automation (up from 9% in 2022)**. Examples include:

- Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machinery
- Cobots/robot arms
- Cooking robots
- Robotic welding
- Mowers
- Palletizers

Industry	Manufacturing / Construction	Health Care	All Other Industries
<b>Yes</b>	21%	2%	6%
<b>No</b>	79%	98%	94%

Region	Capital Region	Central NY	Finger Lakes	Mid-Hudson	Long Island
<b>Yes</b>	9%	8%	11%	11%	8%
<b>No</b>	91%	92%	89%	89%	92%

Region	Mohawk Valley	New York City	North Country	Southern Tier	Western NY
<b>Yes</b>	7%	8%	8%	10%	10%
<b>No</b>	93%	92%	92%	90%	90%

## Space Needs (in next 12-24 months)

All Industries	2021	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	7%	5%	7%
Increasing physical footprint	17%	21%	21%
Stay the same	76%	60%	55%
Undecided		14%	17%

### Capital Region

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	6%	6%
Increasing physical footprint	23%	23%
Stay the same	60%	56%
Undecided	11%	15%

### Central NY

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	4%	8%
Increasing physical footprint	25%	19%
Stay the same	58%	54%
Undecided	14%	19%

### Finger Lakes

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	3%	8%
Increasing physical footprint	24%	27%
Stay the same	59%	49%
Undecided	14%	16%

### Mid-Hudson

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	5%	6%
Increasing physical footprint	22%	24%
Stay the same	58%	52%
Undecided	14%	17%

### Long Island

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	6%	11%
Increasing physical footprint	27%	18%
Stay the same	51%	53%
Undecided	16%	19%

### Mohawk Valley

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	6%	8%
Increasing physical footprint	27%	21%
Stay the same	55%	52%
Undecided	13%	19%

### NYC

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	6%	11%
Increasing physical footprint	21%	21%
Stay the same	54%	42%
Undecided	19%	27%

### North Country

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	7%	8%
Increasing physical footprint	19%	17%
Stay the same	66%	60%
Undecided	9%	15%

### Southern Tier

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	5%	7%
Increasing physical footprint	23%	18%
Stay the same	58%	59%
Undecided	14%	15%

### Western NY

	2022	2023
Reducing physical footprint	5%	7%
Increasing physical footprint	21%	21%
Stay the same	61%	54%
Undecided	13%	18%

## **Business Challenges**

Businesses were asked to rank their top five current challenges. This is what they said:

<b>Top Business Challenge</b> <i>(Statewide, All Industries)</i>	<b>%</b>
Attracting new workers	76%
Inflation	54%
Retaining current workers	49%
Government regulations	37%
Hiring / Maintaining a diverse staff	31%
Supply chain challenges	29%
Quiet quitting	27%
Keeping up with customer demand	23%
Training current staff	22%
Staying competitive compared to other states	19%

## Recruiting Workers: Difficult to fill positions

Which positions are most difficult to fill? Business' ranked responses are below:

### **All Industries/Statewide (2023)**

1. Teacher

2. Laborer

3. CDL Driver

4. Administrative

5. Sales

6. Accountant

7. Registered Nurse

8. Manager

9. Mechanic

10. Warehouse Worker

11. Direct Support Professional

12. Customer Service Representative

13. CNC Machinist

14. Electrician

15. Cook

16. Engineer

17. Project Manager

18. Carpenter

19. Licensed Practical Nurse

20. Machinist

21. Machine Operator

22. Cleaner

23. Housekeeper

24. Maintenance Technician

25. Assembler

26. Quality Control

27. Information Technology

28. Case Manager

29. Driver

30. Social Worker

### **Manufacturing/Construction**

*(Statewide)*

Laborer

CNC Machinist

Carpenter

Machinist

Electrician

Machine Operator

Engineer

Assembler

Project Manager

Quality Control

Mechanic

Sales

### **Health Care**

*(Statewide)*

Teacher

Registered Nurse

Direct Support Professional

Licensed Practical Nurse

Case Manager

Social Worker

Home Health Aide

Administrative

Certified Nurse Aide

Personal Care Aide

Nurse

Manager

### **All Other Industries**

*(Statewide)*

Teacher

CDL Driver

Administrative

Sales

Laborer

Accountant

Customer Service Rep.

Cook

Manager

Warehouse Worker

Mechanic

Cleaner

### **Capital Region**

CDL Driver

Laborer

Administrative

Sales

Manager

Registered Nurse

Project Manager

Warehouse Worker

Teacher

Carpenter

Customer Service Rep.

Engineer

Mechanic

Painter

Bus Driver

### **Central New York**

CDL Driver

Sales

Laborer

Accountant

Administrative

Warehouse Worker

Mechanic

Teacher

Project Manager

Registered Nurse

Customer Service Rep.

Direct Support Professional

Electrician

Maintenance Technician

Food service

### **Finger Lakes**

Teacher

CDL Driver

Laborer

Administrative

Sales

Registered Nurse

Electrician

Accountant

CNC Machinist

Maintenance Technician

Mechanic

Cleaner

Direct Support Professional

Licensed Practical Nurse

Warehouse Worker

### **Hudson Valley**

Teacher

Registered Nurse

Sales

Accountant

Customer Service Rep.

Licensed Practical Nurse

Administrative

CDL Driver

Direct Support Professional

Laborer

Machinist

Engineer

Mechanic

Project Manager

Manager

**Long Island**

Teacher  
 Administrative  
 Sales  
 Manager  
 Customer Service Rep.  
 Machinist  
 Case Manager  
 Mechanic  
 Registered Nurse  
 Accountant  
 CNC Machinist  
 Laborer  
 Nurse  
 CDL Driver  
 Project Manager

**Mohawk Valley**

Administrative  
 CDL Driver  
 Laborer  
 Sales  
 Teacher  
 Manager  
 Mechanic  
 Registered Nurse  
 Accountant  
 Engineer  
 Painter  
 Machinist  
 Maintenance  
 Maintenance Technician  
 Project Manager

**New York City**

Teacher  
 Accountant  
 Manager  
 Case Manager  
 Sales  
 Administrative  
 Social Worker  
 Registered Nurse  
 Direct Support Professional  
 Information Technology  
 Security  
 CDL Driver  
 Electrician  
 Project Manager  
 Mechanic

**North Country**

CDL Driver  
 Administrative  
 Laborer  
 Sales  
 Customer Service Rep.  
 Engineer  
 Warehouse Worker  
 Housekeeper  
 Mechanic  
 Registered Nurse  
 Carpenter  
 Cook  
 Manager  
 Project Manager  
 Teacher

**Southern Tier**

CDL Driver  
 Teacher  
 Laborer  
 Administrative  
 Sales  
 Accountant  
 Mechanic  
 Registered Nurse  
 Customer Service Rep.  
 Direct Support Professional  
 Painter  
 Housekeeper  
 Licensed Practical Nurse  
 Manager  
 Engineer

**Western New York**

Teacher  
 Laborer  
 Sales  
 CDL Driver  
 Warehouse Worker  
 Administrative  
 CNC Machinist  
 Accountant  
 Mechanic  
 Electrician  
 Project Manager  
 Customer Service Rep.  
 Manager  
 Registered Nurse  
 Maintenance

## Finding Talent

Businesses ranked their most used and most successful recruitment resources:

<b><u>Popular Recruitment Tools</u></b> (Statewide, All industries)	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>	<b><u>2023</u></b>
Word of mouth / Networking through current employees / Referrals	78%	58%	78%
Indeed	73%	53%	73%
Company website	62%	46%	63%
NYS Dept. of Labor/NYS Job Bank/Jobs Express	48%	35%	52%
Facebook	46%	37%	45%
LinkedIn	36%	30%	40%
Third-party recruiter/head-hunter/staffing firm	31%	24%	32%
In-person career fairs	--	21%	32%

<b><u>Most Successful Recruitment Tool</u></b> (Statewide, All industries)	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>	<b><u>2023</u></b>
Word of mouth / Networking through current employees / Referrals	58%	57%	56%
Indeed	52%	50%	52%
Company website	17%	18%	20%
Third-party recruiter/head-hunter/staffing firm	14%	14%	15%
Facebook	17%	14%	13%



## Recruiting for Skills

Businesses identified both technical and non-technical skills lacking among job applicants and new employees:

<b>Non-Technical Skills Lacking</b> <i>(Statewide, All industries)</i>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Self-motivation	64%	70%	61%
Communication skills	66%	52%	56%
Problem-solving/critical thinking	63%	48%	52%
Timeliness/attendance	51%	55%	51%
Attention to detail	58%	50%	46%
Time management	44%	32%	32%
Ability to take criticism	40%	31%	27%
Personal awareness	34%	27%	26%
Teamwork	31%	24%	21%
English skills/grammar	31%	19%	21%
Customer service	24%	19%	20%
Conflict management	33%	17%	18%
Basic math skills	30%	15%	17%
Self-motivation	64%	70%	61%
Communication skills	66%	52%	56%

<b>Technical Skills Lacking</b> <i>(Statewide, All industries)</i>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Basic computer use / computer literacy	47%	44%	48%
Software proficiency in Excel	39%	32%	34%
Email	19%	19%	22%
Mechanical technical / engineering	23%	19%	22%
Software proficiency in Word	23%	17%	19%
Data analysis	15%	16%	19%
Typing	19%	16%	18%

## Barriers

The most common barriers that prevent a business from hiring a job candidate or prevent the candidate from taking a job are:

<b><u>Barriers</u></b> <i>(Statewide, All Industries)</i>	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>	<b><u>2023</u></b>
Lack of experience	56%	50%	52%
Self-motivation, initiative	37%	47%	45%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	34%	45%	43%
Transportation	30%	33%	35%
Insufficient education/training	29%	32%	35%
Scheduling	19%	26%	28%
Child care	19%	24%	26%
Lack of driver's license	19%	20%	18%
Gaps in employment	16%	16%	18%

<b>Capital Region</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of experience	50%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	44%
Self-motivation, initiative	39%
Transportation	37%
Insufficient education/training	29%
Scheduling	28%
Child care	26%
Lack of driver's license	20%

<b>Central New York</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of experience	53%
Self-motivation, initiative	43%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	40%
Insufficient education/training	35%
Transportation	34%
Scheduling	24%
Child care	22%
Lack of driver's license	20%

<b>Finger Lakes</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of experience	53%
Self-motivation, initiative	50%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	45%
Insufficient education/training	35%
Transportation	29%
Scheduling	29%
Child care	25%
Lack of driver's license	17%

<b>Hudson Valley</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of experience	50%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	44%
Self-motivation, initiative	40%
Transportation	39%
Insufficient education/training	34%
Scheduling	29%
Child care	25%
Gaps in employment	19%

<b>Long Island</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of experience	48%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	47%
Transportation	39%
Insufficient education/training	35%
Self-motivation, initiative	31%
Scheduling	28%
Child care	23%
Lack of driver's license	14%

<b>Mohawk Valley</b>	<b>%</b>
Self-motivation, initiative	50%
Lack of experience	50%
Transportation	45%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	44%
Insufficient education/training	36%
Scheduling	31%
Lack of driver's license	26%
Child care	25%

<b>New York City</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of experience	52%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	41%
Transportation	34%
Insufficient education/training	33%
Self-motivation, initiative	31%
Scheduling	28%
Child care	25%
Lack of certificate	19%

<b>Southern Tier</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of experience	54%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	46%
Self-motivation, initiative	43%
Transportation	35%
Insufficient education/training	32%
Scheduling	29%
Child care	24%
Lack of driver's license	21%

<b>North Country</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of experience	47%
Self-motivation, initiative	47%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	46%
Transportation	35%
Insufficient education/training	32%
Child care	30%
Scheduling	21%
Lack of driver's license	21%

<b>Western New York</b>	<b>%</b>
Lack of experience	56%
Self-motivation, initiative	46%
Gap in salary and wage expectations	41%
Insufficient education/training	38%
Transportation	31%
Scheduling	26%
Child care	26%
Gaps in employment	20%

## Training

Businesses identified the types of training they wish to offer, but are unable:

### **Training Desired, but Not Provided** (Statewide, All industries)

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Management/leadership dev. or training	31%	31%	28%
Mentoring/coaching	16%	29%	26%
On-the-job training	13%	28%	24%
Job shadowing	12%	20%	18%
In-house online learning/professional develop.	18%	19%	15%
Third-party online learning/professional develop.	24%	16%	14%
Lunch-and-learns or similar programs	18%	15%	14%
Registered Apprenticeship programs	23%	14%	13%

<b>Training Desired, but Not Provided</b>	<b>Capital Region</b>	<b>Central NY</b>	<b>Finger Lakes</b>	<b>Hudson Valley</b>	<b>Long Island</b>
Management/leadership dev. or training	32%	23%	28%	22%	23%
Mentoring/coaching	26%	27%	25%	31%	33%
Technical training	21%	20%	22%	32%	20%
On-the-job training	23%	22%	20%	25%	25%
Job shadowing	19%	19%	18%	23%	22%
In-house online learning/professional dev.	19%	13%	13%	19%	13%
Lunch-and-learns or similar programs	18%	11%	13%	18%	19%
Registered Apprenticeship programs	15%	12%	16%	17%	15%
Third-party online learning/professional dev.	15%	12%	16%	13%	13%

<b>Training Desired, but Not Provided</b>	<b>Mohawk Valley</b>	<b>NYC</b>	<b>North Country</b>	<b>Southern Tier</b>	<b>Western NY</b>
Management/leadership dev. or training	27%	27%	27%	27%	32%
Mentoring/coaching	24%	35%	25%	22%	30%
Technical training	24%	22%	23%	22%	25%
On-the-job training	25%	32%	21%	25%	27%
Job shadowing	26%	21%	17%	24%	21%
In-house online learning/professional dev.	16%	17%	14%	16%	17%
Lunch-and-learns or similar programs	12%	19%	14%	15%	17%
Registered Apprenticeship programs	19%	14%	13%	9%	16%
Third-party online learning/professional dev.	12%	18%	13%	17%	15%

## Support Services

Businesses also identified the support services they currently offer and those they wish they could but are unable.

### **Support services for workers** *(Statewide, All industries)*

	2022	2023
Education/tuition assistance or reimbursement	40%	40%
N/A	39%	35%
Mental health support	37%	38%
Transportation assistance	13%	12%
Access to low- or no-cost legal services	12%	13%
Child care assistance	7%	7%

### **Support services desired** *(Statewide, All industries)*

	2022	2023
N/A	37%	40%
Child care assistance	36%	34%
Transportation assistance	26%	25%
Education/tuition assistance or reimbursement	24%	23%
Mental health support	16%	19%
Debt repayment	14%	15%
Access to low- or no-cost legal services	7%	8%

Below is the breakdown of what services businesses desired to offer, but were unable:

<b>Capital Region</b>	<b>%</b>
Child care assistance	44%
Transportation assistance	36%
N/A	33%
Mental health support	19%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	19%
Debt repayment	17%

<b>Central New York</b>	<b>%</b>
N/A	42%
Child care assistance	34%
Transportation assistance	29%
Mental health support	19%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	17%
Debt repayment	14%

<b>Finger Lakes</b>	<b>%</b>
N/A	41%
Child care assistance	40%
Transportation assistance	26%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	25%
Debt repayment	17%
Mental health support	14%

<b>Hudson Valley</b>	<b>%</b>
Child care assistance	41%
N/A	34%
Transportation assistance	31%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	24%
Debt repayment	22%
Mental health support	20%

<b>Long Island</b>	<b>%</b>
N/A	44%
Child care assistance	37%
Transportation assistance	24%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	23%
Mental health support	18%
Debt repayment	16%

<b>Mohawk Valley</b>	<b>%</b>
N/A	39%
Child care assistance	35%
Transportation assistance	31%
Access to low- or no-cost legal services	19%
Mental health support	19%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	17%

<b>New York City</b>	<b>%</b>
Child care assistance	40%
Mental health support	32%
N/A	32%
Transportation assistance	29%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	29%
Debt repayment	24%

<b>Southern Tier</b>	<b>%</b>
N/A	47%
Child care assistance	33%
Transportation assistance	23%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	18%
Mental health support	14%
Debt repayment	14%

<b>North Country</b>	<b>%</b>
N/A	49%
Child care assistance	37%
Transportation assistance	21%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	15%
Mental health support	15%
Debt repayment	13%

<b>Western New York</b>	<b>%</b>
Child care assistance	38%
N/A	35%
Transportation assistance	26%
Education/tuition asst. or reimbursement	24%
Mental health support	19%
Debt repayment	15%