



SOUTH CENTRAL  
IOWA LWDA  
Executive Summary

RELEASED 2023

# WORKFORCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT



**South Central Iowa LWDA** includes the following counties: Appanoose, Davis, Hardin, Jefferson, Keokuk, Lucas, Mahaska, Marshall, Monroe, Poweshiek, Tama, Wapello, Wayne, and Van Buren

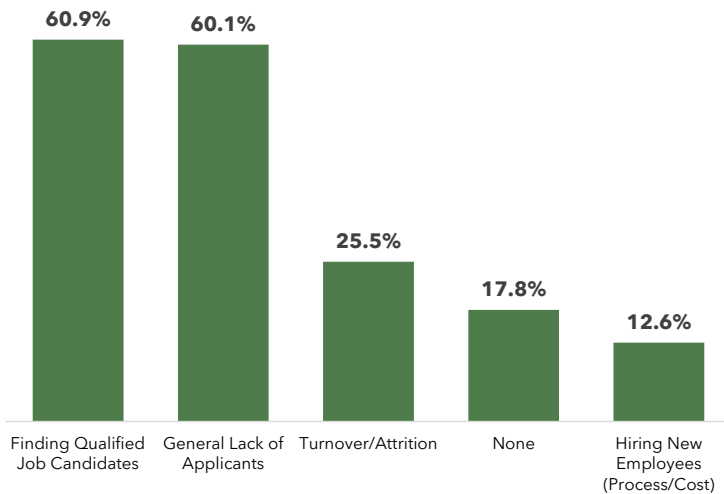
# 2023 Iowa Workforce Needs Assessment Survey Results for the South Central Iowa Local Workforce Development Area

Iowa Workforce Development (IWD) conducted the seventh Workforce Needs Assessment Survey during the fall of 2022 through the spring of 2023. This survey collects information from employers across the state regarding their vacancies, workforce challenges, difficulties in hiring, perceptions of applicants, advertising outlets for job openings, and upcoming retirements—among other questions.

In October of 2022, 25,160 employers operating 39,254 locations in the State of Iowa were contacted and asked to participate in the survey. In the South Central Iowa LWDA, 2,536 locations were contacted. By the end of the survey period (March 2023), IWD received 749 responses from employers in the South Central Iowa LWDA, for a response rate of 29.5% (by locations contacted).

## WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

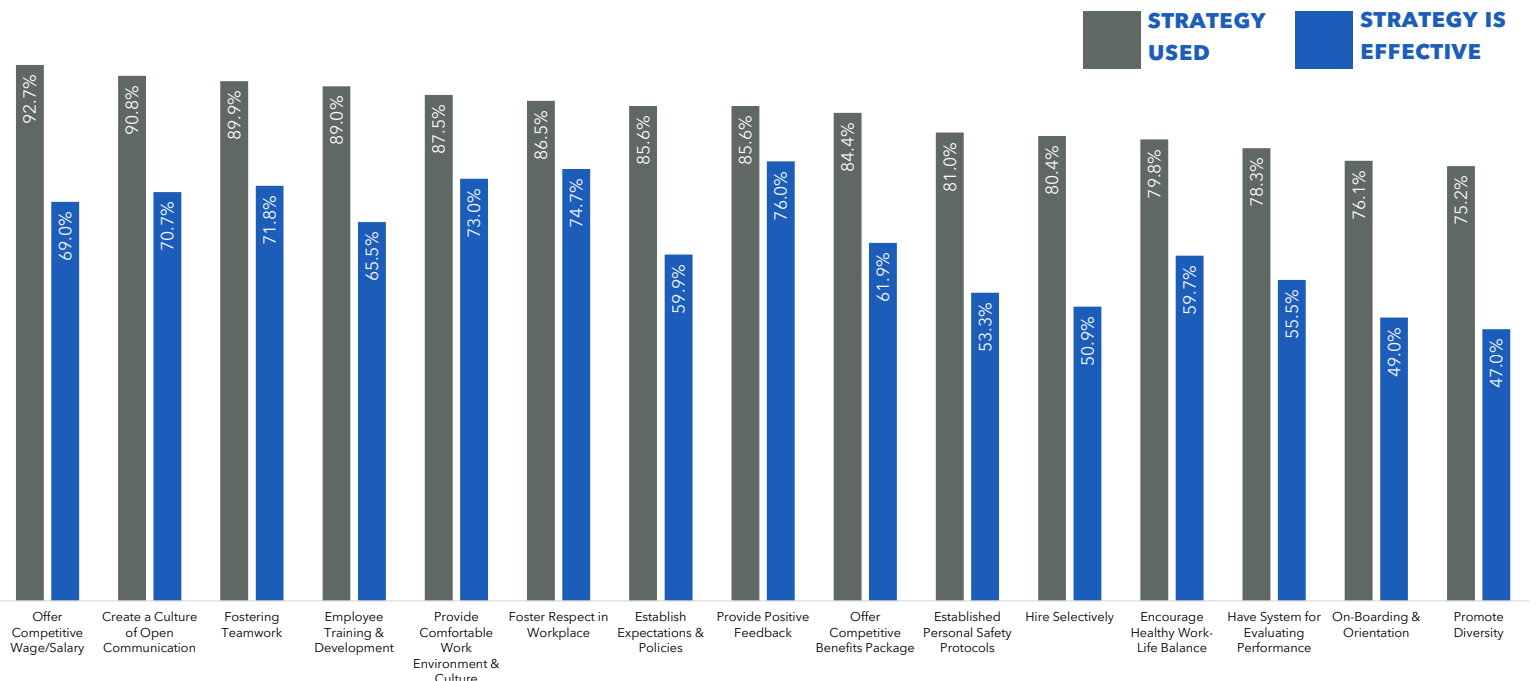
**Top five most significant workforce challenges, reported by surveyed employers concerning employees in the past 12 months.**



**Top 10 responses to workforce challenges, reported by surveyed employers.**

EMPLOYER RESPONSE	% USED
Revised Pay Scale	48.0%
Expanded Current Employees Responsibilities/Job Duties	41.7%
Hired a Less Qualified Applicant	38.3%
Increased Recruiting Efforts	32.2%
Increased Overtime for Current Employees	27.6%
Chose Not to Fill a Job Opening	27.4%
Provided Flexible Scheduling	24.7%
Increased Training	14.1%
Revised Benefits	13.6%
Outsourced Work or Used Contract Services	13.5%

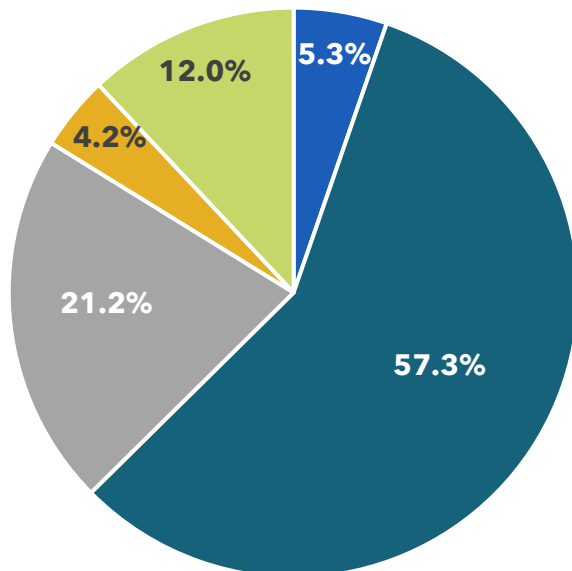
**Top 15 employee retention strategies reported by surveyed employers and percentage of employers that found the retention strategies effective.**



# DIFFICULTIES IN HIRING

## Rate the experience of filling job openings in 2022 compared to that of 2021.

- Easier than in 2021
- Same as in 2021
- More difficult than in 2021
- No job openings in 2021
- No job openings in 2022



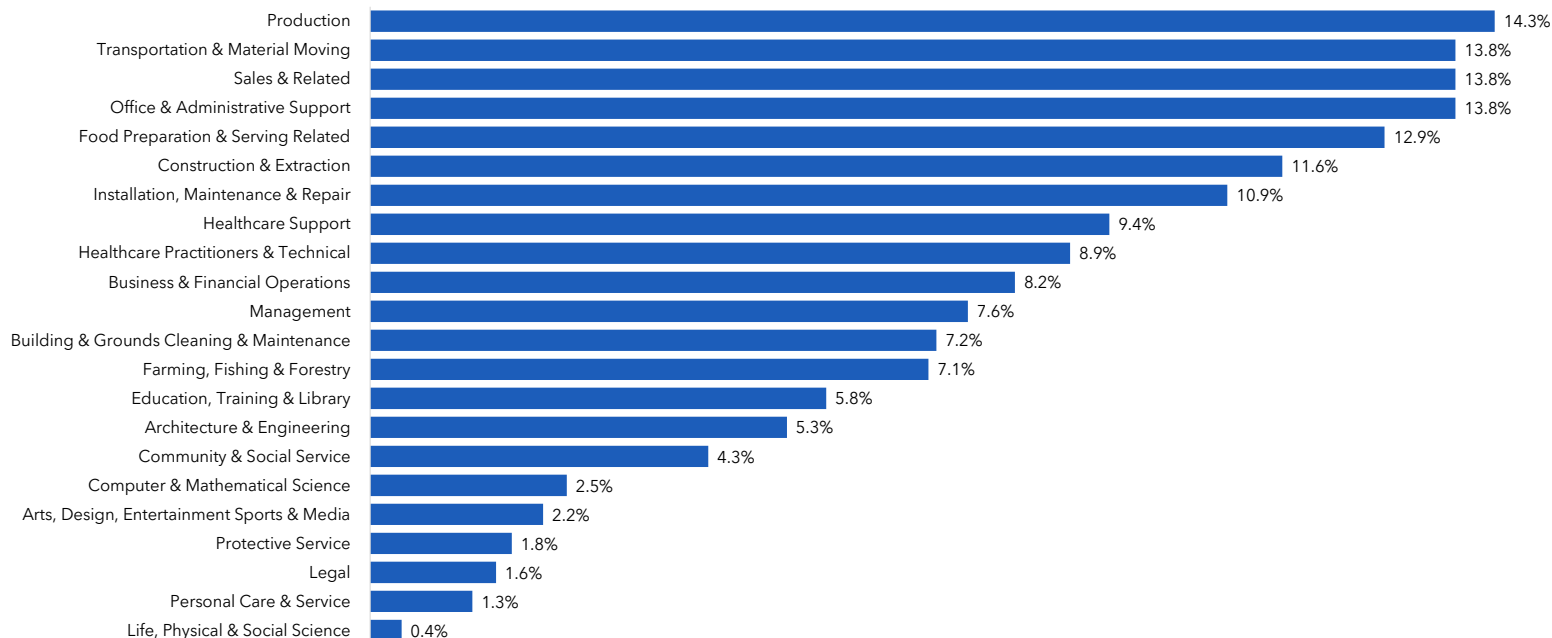
## Rate, from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" regarding problems your organization has filling job openings.

ORGANIZATION HAS PROBLEM FILLING POSITIONS DUE TO:	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE
General Lack of Applicants	9.0%	17.8%	<b>73.2%</b>
Lack of Qualified Applicants	5.6%	21.4%	<b>73.0%</b>
Wage Applicants are Willing to Accept	24.6%	35.6%	<b>39.8%</b>
Type of Work Involved	27.7%	37.1%	<b>35.2%</b>
Local Competition	27.5%	41.6%	<b>30.9%</b>
Hours or Shifts Offered	37.5%	36.2%	<b>26.3%</b>
Benefit Package Applicants Expect	37.3%	36.7%	<b>26.0%</b>
Lack of Telework/Hybrid Schedule Options	32.9%	54.8%	<b>12.3%</b>

\*Ratings of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" were summed and listed under the above "disagree" column. Ratings of "strongly agree" and "agree" were summed and listed under the above "agree" column. Table is sorted by the "agree" column, high-to-low.

## Occupational categories that are the most challenging to find qualified candidates for job openings.

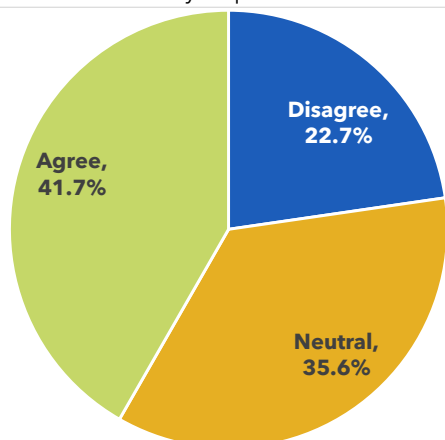
Results for permanent positions only, displayed below



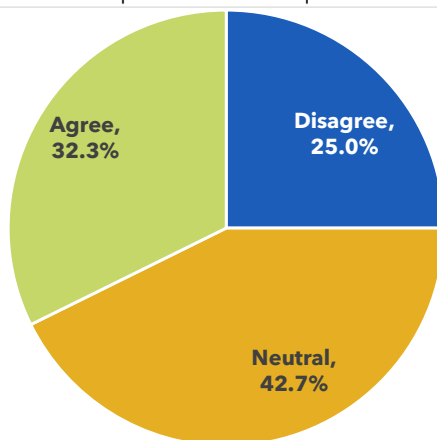
# PERCEPTION OF APPLICANTS

## Rate each statement below regarding job applicants.

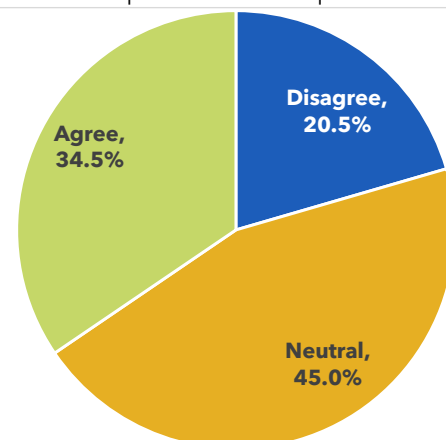
In general, applicants fulfill the necessary requirements.



Applicants fulfill the "hard" or occupational skills required.



Applicants fulfill the "soft" or interpersonal skills required.



## Type of skills applicants are generally lacking.

**21.8%**

of employers indicate a  
**LACK OF  
BASIC SKILLS**

**63.8%**

of employers indicate a  
**LACK OF  
HARD SKILLS**

**94.6%**

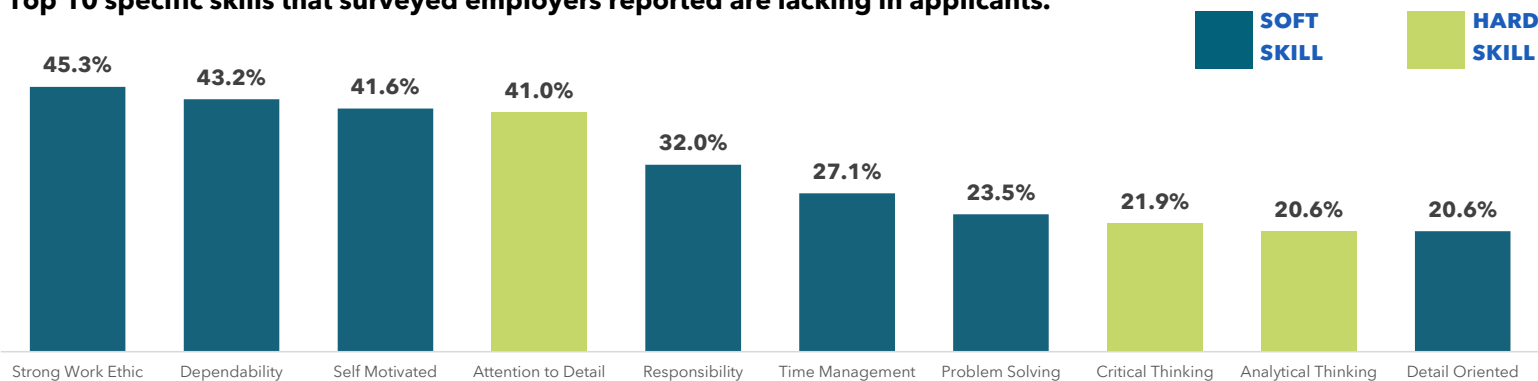
of employers indicate a  
**LACK OF  
SOFT SKILLS**

**Basic skills:** are those skills most commonly developed during elementary and middle school. Examples include: literacy, numeracy, and the ability to locate and read information.

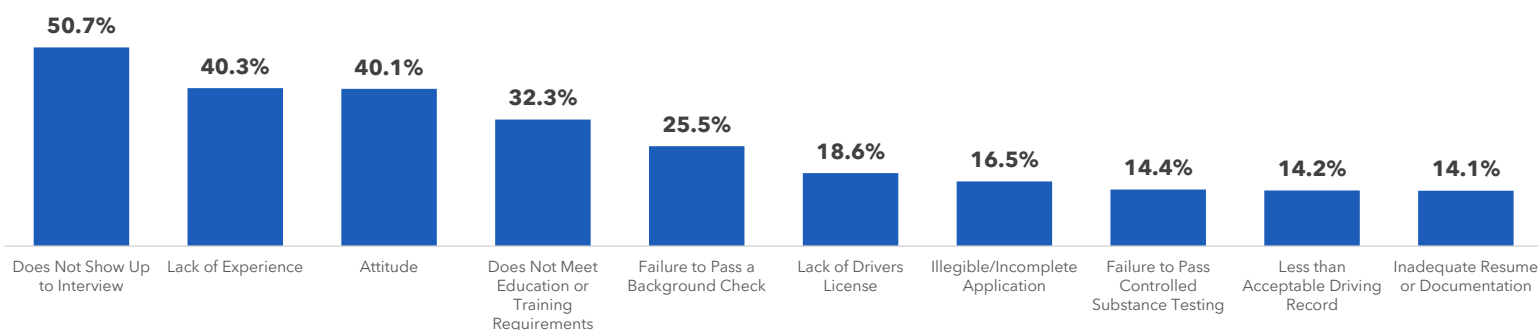
**Hard skills:** are generally considered to be teachable and measurable abilities, which apply directly to the job. Examples include: critical thinking, data analysis, problem-solving, machine operation, computer literacy, software knowledge, etc.

**Soft skills:** are most often considered to be skills associated with an individual's habits, personality, and character. Examples include: dependability, honesty, self-motivation, communication skills, time management, teamwork, etc.

## Top 10 specific skills that surveyed employers reported are lacking in applicants.



## Top 10 reasons surveyed employers reported for rejecting an applicant.



# RETIREMENTS

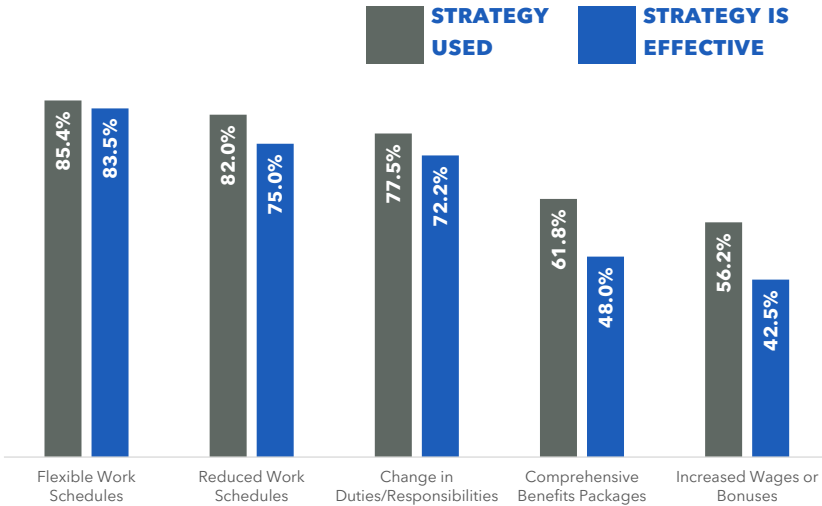
Are employee retirements, within the next two years, a concern?

**27.2% YES**

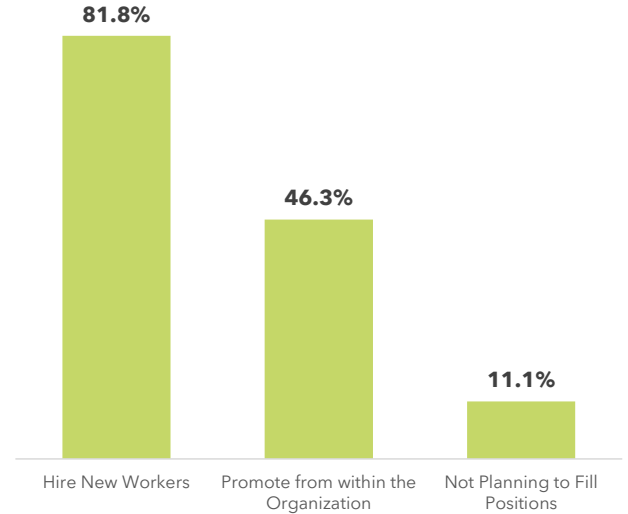
**51.0% NO**

**21.8% NONE, WITHIN NEXT 2-YEARS**

Top 5 retention strategies used to retain employees eligible to for retirement.

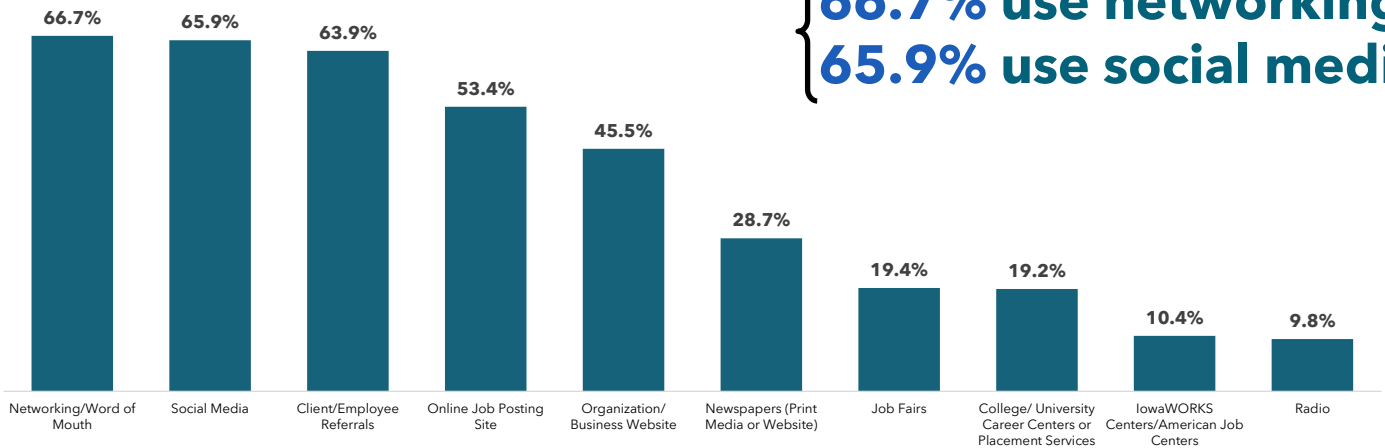


Top plans for filling vacant jobs due to retirements.



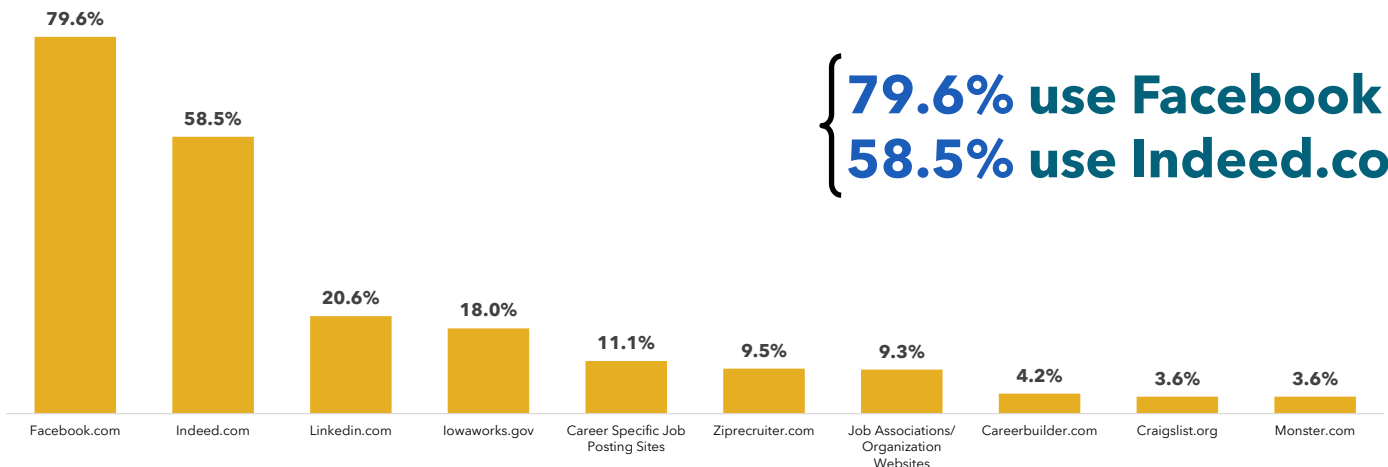
# ADVERTISING OUTLETS FOR OPEN JOBS

Outlets used to attract new employees/fill openings.



**66.7% use networking**  
**65.9% use social media**

Social media platforms and websites used to advertise job openings.



**79.6% use Facebook**  
**58.5% use Indeed.com**



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