

WORKFORCE TRENDS IN THE TRIANGLE

Insights from the Regional Skills Analysis

Talent is the lifeblood of any thriving economy. To better understand the specific challenges and opportunities we face, Wake County Economic Development, in partnership with Capital Area Workforce Development and RTI International, conducted a Regional Skills Analysis (RSA) survey in 2017, 2020, and 2023. This analysis provides valuable insights into the evolving workforce needs of our region across diverse industries.

A Snapshot Across Dynamic Times

These three iterations of the survey offer a unique perspective on workforce trends across very different economic climates:

- 2017** A period of record economic highs and a tight labor market.
- 2020** The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented disruption, uncertainty and high unemployment.
- 2023** A time of economic recovery, with new challenges like inflation, supply chain issues, and varying labor market outcomes across industries.

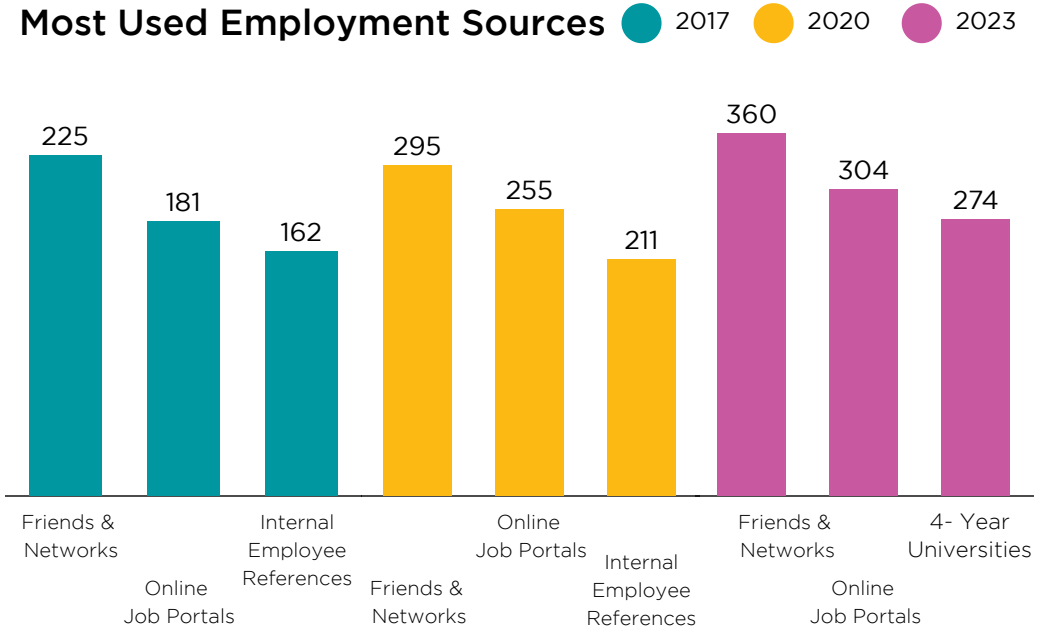
Despite these fluctuating conditions, the RSA revealed consistent trends that offer critical insights for businesses, policymakers, and educators.

Trend	2017	2020	2023
Top Growth Industries	IT, Life Sciences	IT, Life Sciences	Construction, Energy
Top Recruitment Sources	Friends/Family, Online Portals	Friends/Family, Online Portals	Friends/Family, Online Portals, Universities
% Companies Expecting Growth	78%	57%	78%
Top Soft Skills	Critical Thinking, Initiative	Responsibility, Self-Discipline	Responsibility, Self Discipline

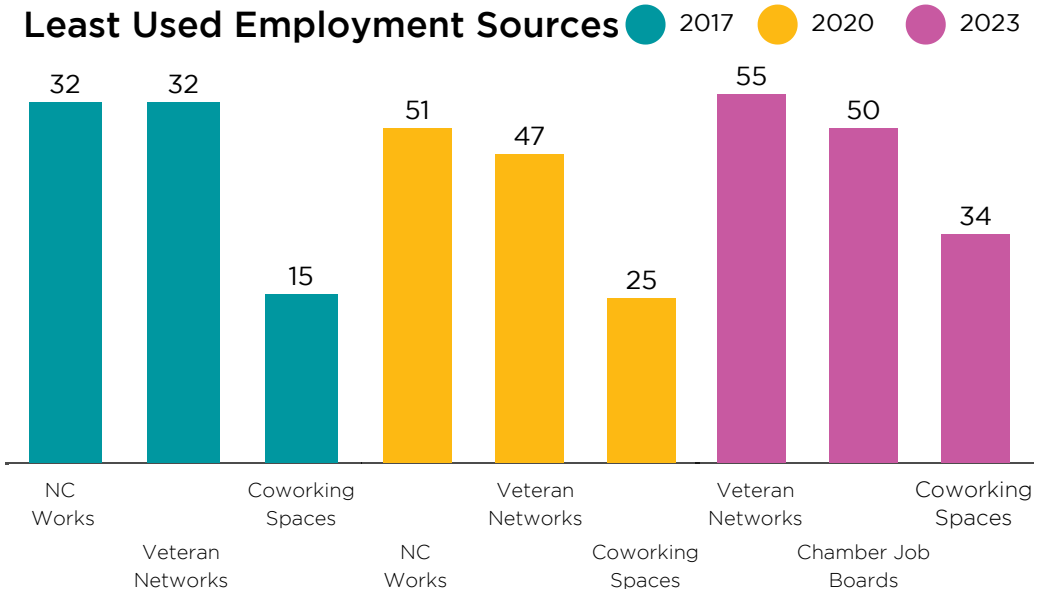
RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Friends and family networks and online job portals remain popular recruitment methods. However, 4-year universities have grown in importance, highlighting the demand for highly educated talent.

Most Used Employment Sources



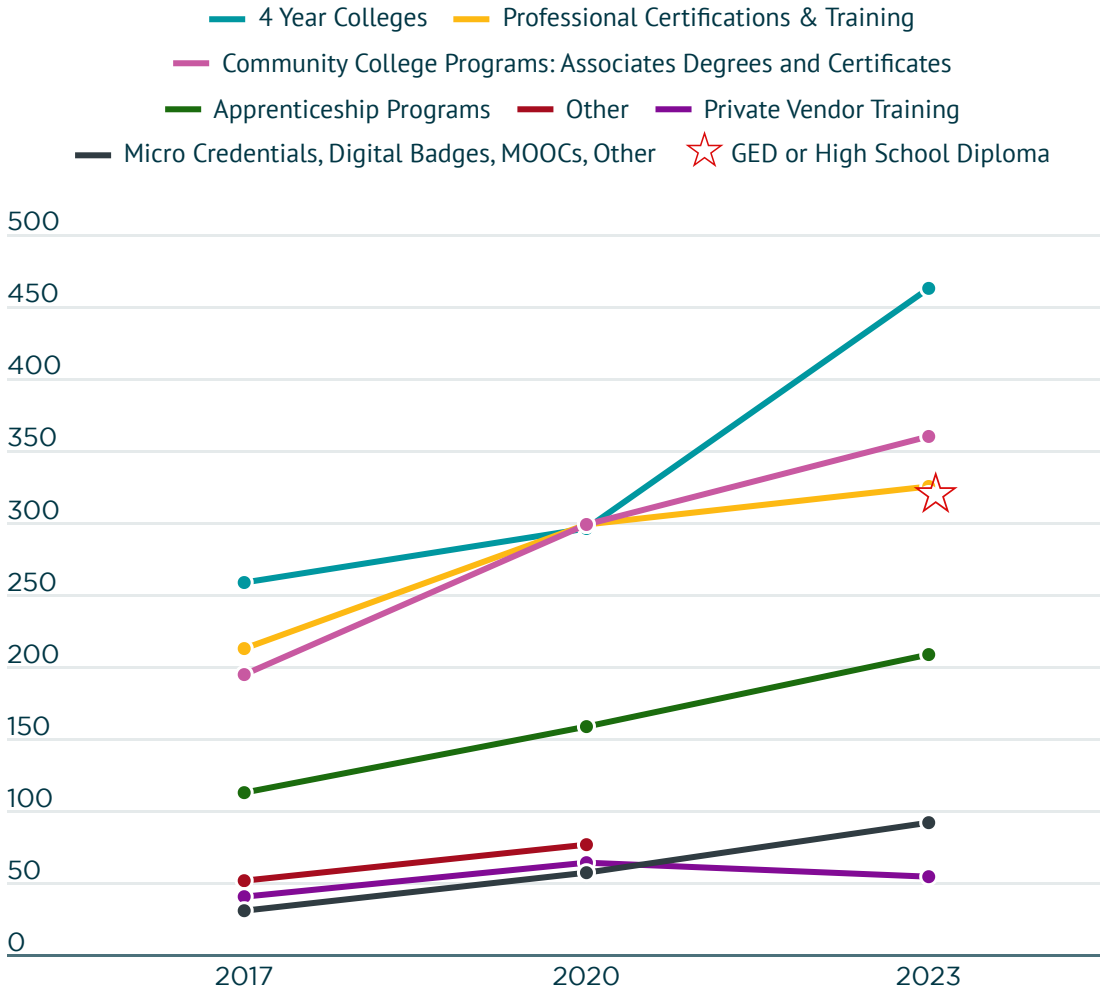
Least Used Employment Sources



PREFERRED CREDENTIALS

While four-year college degrees remain the most sought-after credentials across all industries in the region, community college programs (associates and certificates) continue to be highly valued. There are also significant differences across industry sectors for requested credentials.

Education & Credentials*



*The answers to this question were rephrased for the 2023 survey. "Other" was removed as an option, and "GED or High School Diploma" was added as an option for the first time.

SOFT SKILLS

Critical thinking, taking initiative, and responsibility & self-discipline remain highly valued soft skills, emphasizing the need for adaptable and dependable employees. These skills are also commonly referred to as "employability" or "durable skills."

