

Skills most in demand in New Hampshire’s labor markets

Who is hiring and what skills are New Hampshire employers looking for? The answer to this question is of great interest to workforce professionals, policy makers, educators and job seekers alike. One way to gain insight into skills in demand is by analyzing the skills specified in online job postings, known as real-time labor market information (LMI).

There is no standard for how and where to post a job or what to include in the posting. Employers in some industries commonly use the internet to advertise jobs, while employers in other industries rarely do so. Though online job postings do not represent a universe, information about occupations in demand and employers looking for workers can be gleaned from job ad content.

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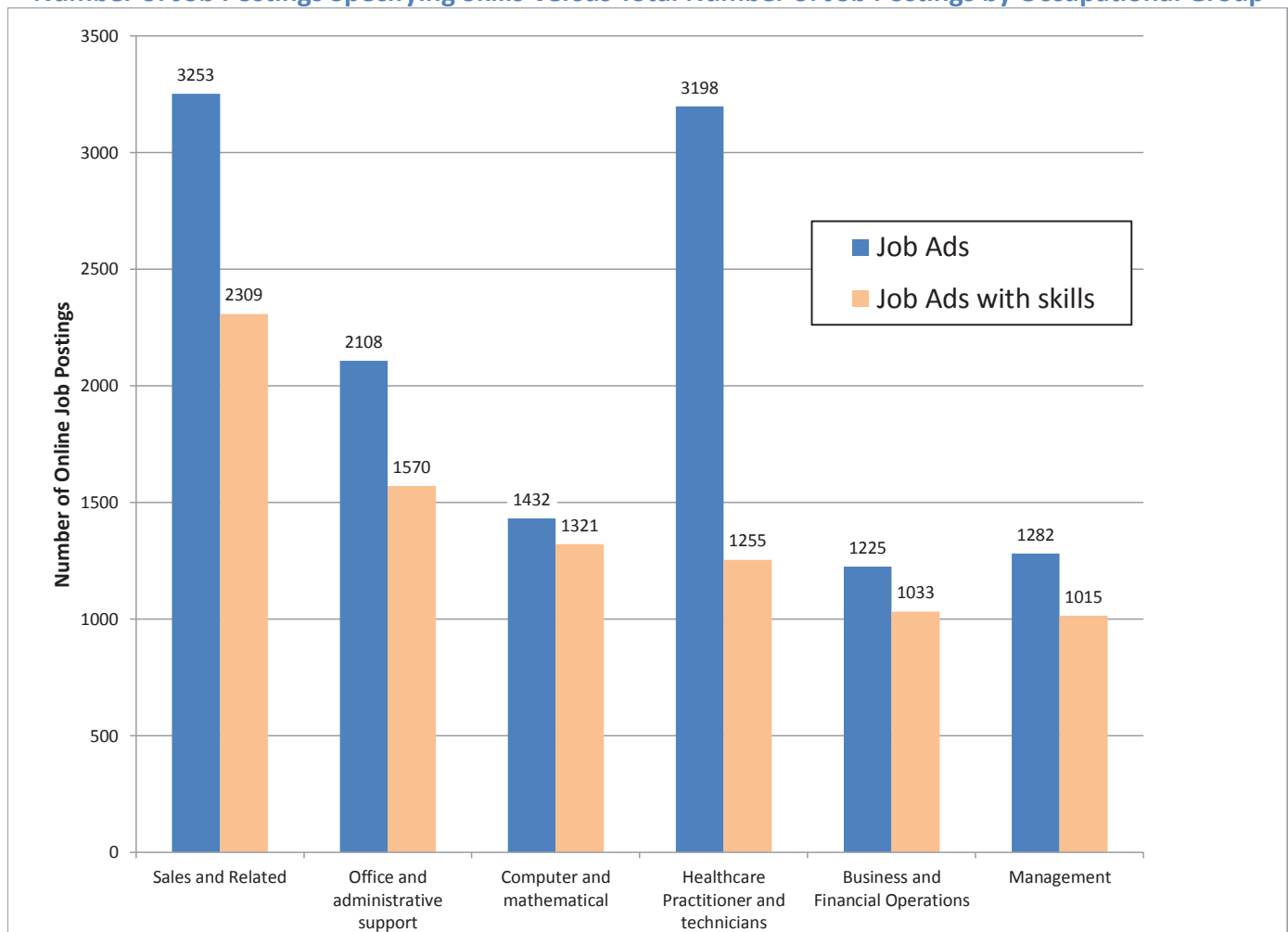
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Number of Job Postings Specifying Skills Versus Total Number of Job Postings by Occupational Group



Source: Labor/Insight, Burning Glass Technologies, New Hampshire results August 1 to September 30, 2016.

While a job title is part of all job postings, not all job postings list much detail about the skills needed. For some job ads, a long list of prerequisites and preferred skills are included, while others just display a title.

From August to September, 2016, there were 20,926 online job ads with a geographic connection to New Hampshire. Major occupational groups were used as the framework for the analysis to provide some differentiation between types of jobs. Overall, three out of five online postings had at least one skill specified. In order to make sure that there were substantial skills data available for this analysis, the number of ads with skills attached was evaluated for each major occupational group.

Two of the eight major occupational groups with the largest number of online job ads had a limited share of postings with skills included. Only 17 percent of the online postings in Transportation and material moving occupations had at least one skill specified. For occupations in the Health care practitioner and technicians group, 39 percent of postings for this period had skills included.

Major occupational groups with at least 1,000 online job ads with skills specified and posted during August and September¹ were selected for analysis.

The six major occupational groups were:

- Sales and related occupations
- Office and administrative occupations
- Computer and mathematical occupations
- Healthcare practitioner and technical occupations
- Business and financial operations occupations
- Management occupations

Of these six major occupational groups, Computer and mathematical occupations had the highest share of postings with skills specified; 92 percent of job ads had at least one skill included. So whereas this major occupational group had the fifth largest number of online ads overall, it had the third largest number of job postings with skills specified.

Using Burning Glass Technologies' Labor/Insight application, two types of skills can be identified: specialized skills and baseline skills. Specialized skills include professional and occupation-specific skills, including specific software skills. Baseline skills are foundational skills that can be found across multiple occupational groups.

In Labor/Insight, assessment of skills is based on the frequency of the skills being specified in the online job ad and not a measurement of the frequency of the skill used on the job. Nor is it a measurement of the level of mastery of such skill. Often skills mentioned frequently are indicators of skills that are highly valued by employers.

Specialized skills

Evaluation of specialized skills for the six major occupational groups showed few skills overlapping for all groups. Microsoft Excel and Customer Service were among the 25 most common skills in job postings for five of the six major occupational groups. The strong presence of a specialized skill across many occupational fields indicates that the ability to use Microsoft Excel and have some knowledge of providing quality Customer Service is highly sought after by many employers. It would, therefore, also indicate that such skills are very valuable for job seekers to possess, no matter the job.

Some of the specialized skills may seem obvious for an occupational group. Skills such as Sales and Product Sales are – not surprisingly – listed frequently in job postings in Sales and related occupations.

¹ The two month timeframe was used to increase the likelihood of selecting unique job ads. According to the Burning Glass Technologies' deduplication methodology, the software treats identical job ads as separate unique postings after 60 days.

Specialized skills

Sales and Related Occupation		Office and Administrative Support Occupations		Computer and Mathematical Occupations	
<i>2,309 Job Ads with Skills</i>		<i>1,570 Job Ads with Skills</i>		<i>1,321 Job Ads with Skills</i>	
Sales	67%	Customer Service	34%	Software Development	27%
Customer Service	43%	Microsoft Excel	23%	Software Engineering	26%
Retail Setting	33%	Data Entry	17%	Technical Support	23%
Customer Contact	19%	Scheduling	16%	SQL	19%
Merchandising	19%	Microsoft Office	15%	LINUX	18%
Store Management	18%	Sales	15%	C++	17%
Product Sales	17%	Administrative Support	15%	Python	16%
Product Knowledge	12%	Accounting	13%	Object-Oriented Analysis and Design	16%
Supervisory Skills	12%	Retail Setting	12%	Agile Development	15%
Sales Goals	12%	Customer Billing	9%	Product Development	15%
Description and Demonstration of Products	11%	Customer Contact	8%	Project Management	13%
Retail Sales	11%	Microsoft Word	8%	JAVA	12%
Sales Management	8%	Merchandising	7%	Oracle	12%
Scheduling	8%	Product Sales	6%	Software Quality Assurance	12%
Microsoft Excel	8%	Labeling	6%	Sorting	12%
Retail Management	8%	Mailing	6%	Process Control	12%
Loss Prevention	7%	Supervisory Skills	6%	Microsoft Excel	11%
Customer Checkout	7%	Appointment Setting	5%	Business Communications	11%
Microsoft Office	6%	Cash Handling	5%	System Operation	11%
Prospective Clients	6%	Accounts Payable / Accounts Receivable	5%	Algebra	11%
Store Operations	6%	Record Keeping	5%	Financial Reporting	11%
Calculator	6%	Customer Checkout	4%	Calculus	11%
Cleaning	5%	SAP	4%	Legal Document Composition	11%
Cash Handling	5%	Clerical Duties	4%	Legal Documentation	11%
Labeling	5%	Front Office	4%	Customer Service	11%
Healthcare Practitioner and Technical Occupations		Business and Financial Operations Occupations		Management Occupations	
<i>1,255 Job Ads with Skills</i>		<i>1,033 Job Ads with Skills</i>		<i>1,015 Job Ads with Skills</i>	
Patient Care	30%	Microsoft Excel	26%	Budgeting	30%
Treatment Planning	21%	Accounting	17%	Scheduling	19%
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	17%	Marketing	16%	Project Management	18%
Supervisory Skills	14%	Microsoft Office	16%	Supervisory Skills	18%
Patient/Family Education and Instruction	13%	Oracle	13%	Microsoft Excel	17%
Rehabilitation	12%	Customer Service	12%	Microsoft Office	16%
Therapy	10%	Budgeting	11%	Sales	13%
Patient Direction	9%	Financial Analysis	10%	Staff Management	12%
Physical Therapy	9%	Microsoft Powerpoint	10%	Customer Service	11%
Critical Care	9%	Sales	10%	Business Development	9%
Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)	8%	LINUX	10%	Microsoft Powerpoint	8%
Case Management	8%	Network Administration	9%	Customer Contact	8%
Patient Evaluation	8%	UNIX	9%	Sales Management	7%
Hospital Experience	8%	Disaster Recovery Planning	9%	Microsoft Word	6%
Scheduling	7%	High Tech Industry Experience	9%	Accounting	6%
Instruction	7%	Red Hat Linux	9%	Contract Management	6%
Medical Coding	7%	IT Management	9%	Retail Setting	5%
HIPAA	6%	Microsoft Word	9%	Process Improvement	5%
Record Keeping	6%	Social Media	7%	Sales Goals	5%
Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)	6%	Email Marketing	7%	Operations Management	5%
Pathology	6%	Project Management	7%	Product Management	5%
Teaching	6%	Scheduling	7%	Cost Control	4%
Care Planning	5%	Retail Setting	6%	Customer Billing	4%
Patient Safety	5%	General Ledger	6%	Performance Management	4%
Customer Billing	5%	Recruiting	5%	Case Management	4%

However, the concentration of postings specifying Sales (67 percent) suggests that being proficient in this skill is necessary for success in this occupational field.

The specialized skills assessment displayed a mix of technical software knowledge such as SQL and LINUX, and more task oriented skills such as Mailing and Labeling. When advertising positions online employers tend to specify the skills and terminology used in specific job fields, closely aligning with common work activities.

Some of the specialized skills show high frequency in job postings across multiple occupational groups. For example, Accounting was displayed in 13 percent of the job postings with skills attached in Office and administrative support occupations, in 17 percent of postings in Business and financial occupations, and in 6 percent of the postings in Management occupations. Another example is Customer contact. This specialized skill was listed in 19 percent of postings for Sales and related occupations, in eight percent of the postings

for Office and administrative support occupations, and likewise in eight percent of the postings for Management occupations. A high presence of specific skills across multiple occupational groups indicates that such skills are highly valuable and tend to be incorporated in the work activities of many different types of jobs.

Baseline skills

In contrast to the specialized skills analysis, there were many baseline skills specified in job ads across all six major occupational groups with large numbers of postings. The baseline skill with the largest share of job posting for each of the six occupational groups was Communication Skills. So despite the many differences among occupations, being able to communicate in an effective manner is critical in all jobs. The baseline skill of Writing is also frequently listed in job postings across all six major occupational groups, verifying the need to include this skill across educational fields. Many of the additional baseline skills are related to workplace effectiveness such as Multi-tasking, Time Management, Detail oriented, Planning, and Organizational

Skills. Another baseline skill, though more technical, that appeared in job postings for all of the occupational groups was Computer Skills. Many interpersonal skills were specified in all six major occupational groups as well, such as Team Work/Collaboration and Building Effective Relationships. Problem Solving is also frequently specified in job postings across all six major occupational groups.

While certifications and technical skills are the entry level expectation for many jobs, workers possessing soft skills are more likely to be successful on the job. In other words, both specialized and baseline skills are important in the workplace and the job postings data reflect that importance.

Understanding what skills are most in demand can help job seekers and educators. Job seekers can assess whether they possess the most common skills requested, and educators and workforce professionals can verify that the classes and programs they currently are offering encourage the development of these highly requested skills.

Annette Nielsen, Economist

Baseline skills

Communication	Workplace Effectiveness	Interpersonal Skills
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Sales and Related Occupation <i>2,309 Job Ads with Skills</i>		Office and Administrative Support Occupations <i>1,570 Job Ads with Skills</i>		Computer and Mathematical Occupations <i>1,321 Job Ads with Skills</i>	
Communication Skills	38%	Communication Skills	36%	Communication Skills	34%
Physical Demand	17%	Detail-Oriented	24%	Team Work/ Collaboration	26%
Writing	16%	Organizational Skills	23%	Research	22%
Organizational Skills	16%	Computer Skills	19%	Writing	22%
Team Work/ Collaboration	14%	Writing	17%	Problem Solving	18%
Time Management	13%	Multi-Tasking	14%	Troubleshooting	16%
Building Effective Relationships	12%	Problem Solving	13%	Planning	14%
Mathematics	11%	Physical Demand	13%	Time Management	14%
Computer Skills	11%	Research	11%	Detail-Oriented	8%
Detail-Oriented	10%	Mathematics	8%	Quality Assurance and Control	8%
Problem Solving	10%	Telephone Skills	7%	Project Planning and Development Skills	7%
Multi-Tasking	10%	Typing	7%	Computer Skills	7%
Planning	8%	Planning	6%	Building Effective Relationships	6%
Listening	7%	English	5%	Mentoring	6%
Energetic	6%	Team Work/ Collaboration	5%	Organizational Skills	6%
Telephone Skills	6%	Building Effective Relationships	5%	Leadership	5%
Mentoring	5%	Listening	5%	Multi-Tasking	5%
Leadership	5%	Time Management	5%	Creativity	5%
Self-Starter	4%	Bilingual	4%	Presentation Skills	5%
Presentation Skills	4%	Meeting Deadlines	3%	Self-Starter	5%
English	4%	Positive Disposition	3%	Mathematics	5%
Positive Disposition	4%	Decision Making	2%	Physical Demand	4%
Research	3%	Self-Starter	2%	Articulate	3%
Creativity	3%	Prioritizing Tasks	2%	Analytical Skills	3%
Decision Making	3%	Troubleshooting	2%	Management	3%

Healthcare practitioner and Technical Occupations <i>1,255 Job Ads with Skills</i>		Business and Financial Operations Occupations <i>1,033 Job Ads with Skills</i>		Management Occupations <i>1,015 Job Ads with Skills</i>	
Communication Skills	19%	Communication Skills	31%	Communication Skills	45%
Team Work/ Collaboration	16%	Writing	26%	Planning	22%
Computer Skills	8%	Organizational Skills	23%	Writing	22%
Writing	7%	Problem Solving	20%	Team Work/ Collaboration	22%
Organizational Skills	7%	Detail-Oriented	16%	Building Effective Relationships	17%
English	6%	English	12%	Organizational Skills	17%
Quality Assurance and Control	6%	Research	11%	Problem Solving	14%
Planning	6%	Computer Skills	10%	Computer Skills	12%
Problem Solving	6%	Multi-Tasking	10%	Research	12%
Troubleshooting	4%	Planning	9%	Detail-Oriented	11%
Physical Demand	4%	Building Effective Relationships	9%	Leadership	10%
Building Effective Relationships	4%	Team Work/ Collaboration	9%	Creativity	10%
Research	3%	Time Management	6%	Presentation Skills	10%
Multi-Tasking	3%	Creativity	5%	Quality Assurance and Control	8%
Detail-Oriented	3%	Presentation Skills	5%	Multi-Tasking	6%
Critical Thinking	2%	Analytical Skills	4%	Physical Demand	6%
Leadership	2%	Listening	3%	Mentoring	6%
Time Management	2%	Prioritizing Tasks	3%	Project Planning and Development Skills	6%
Work Area Maintenance	2%	Typing	3%	Time Management	5%
Mathematics	2%	Troubleshooting	3%	Performance Analysis	5%
Performance Analysis	1%	Physical Demand	3%	Strategic Planning	5%
Typing	1%	Leadership	3%	Decision Making	4%
Creativity	1%	Editing	3%	Management	4%
Presentation Skills	1%	Meeting Deadlines	3%	Self-Starter	4%
Decision Making	1%	Self-Starter	3%	Analytical Skills	4%