



SHRM/Kaplan University School of Business & Information Technology Survey Findings: Recruitment for Business and IT Employment Opportunities

In collaboration with and commissioned by
Kaplan University School of Business &
Information Technology



- **Business:** For the purpose of this survey, the term “business” focuses on disciplines such as sales, banking and accounting, financial planning, risk management and insurance, real estate, and investment and wealth management.
- **Information technology (IT):** For the purpose of this survey, “IT” includes careers in application and software development, information security, database management and other in-demand jobs with government and private enterprise.

- **Aside from educational training, what are the most valuable skills for applicants, in general, and for business and IT job applicants?** Communication and critical thinking skills were the two skill sets reported as one of the top three most valuable skills for all groups. Communication skills were the most valuable skill for job applicants in general (94%) and business job applicants (90%), whereas technology/social and digital media skills was the most valuable skill for IT job applicants (72%).
- **Excluding education and experience, what strengths give job applicants a competitive edge?** Being adaptable to change and an articulate communicator were the leading strengths for job applicants in general, as well as for business and IT job applicants.
- **Where do organizations find their most qualified business and IT job applicants?** Employee referrals, national online job boards and internal job postings were reported to be the leading resources for seeking out the most qualified business and IT job applicants. Social networking websites were also found to be a successful recruiting method for finding these job applicants.

What Do These Findings Mean for the HR Profession?

- Despite recent gains in the U.S. labor market, millions of positions are still going unfilled and, consequently, impeding the growth of some employers. In August, there were 4.8 million job openings in the United States, up nearly 900,000 from the beginning of 2014, according to federal data. With millions of people seeking work and so many jobs available, it is clear that a skills mismatch exists between some job seekers and open positions.
- Knowing that a skills mismatch may prevent jobs from getting filled, a multipronged approach is needed to close this gap. HR professionals should explore potential partnerships with local educational institutions; these efforts can involve creating a curriculum that is in line with the skills needed at HR professionals' organizations. Programs that center on effective communication, critical thinking and problem-solving skills should be at the forefront of these collaborative agreements with educational organizations. Government job training programs are also active in many communities, and HR professionals should be aware of these as a means of supporting their recruiting efforts.

What Do These Findings Mean for Job Seekers?

- Though business acumen and technical skills remain important for obtaining employment, HR professionals and their organizations place equal emphasis on job candidates' applied skills, particularly communication, critical thought and problem-solving abilities. Respondents to this survey were nearly unanimous (94%) in citing communication skills as being most valuable for job applicants, aside from educational training.
- Maintaining a resume on social media or an online employment venue should also be a top priority for job seekers. An increasing number of HR professionals and their organizations are using these options as part of the recruiting process. More than one-half of respondents (53%) to this survey said they use national online job boards to find candidates, and roughly one-third (34%) said they use social networking sites.

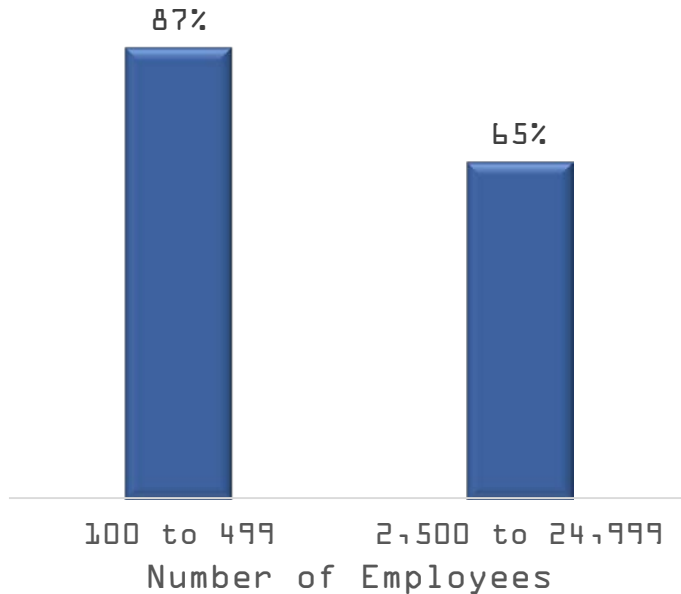
Most Valuable Skills—Aside from Educational Training—for Business, IT and General Job Applicants

	Job Applicants in General	Business Job Applicants	IT Job Applicants
Communication skills	94%	90%	51%
Critical thinking skills	73%	75%	67%
Previous work experience	52%	34%	46%
Technology/social and digital media skills	23%	20%	72%
Leadership skills	23%	40%	4%
Professional networking skills	8%	14%	7%
Industry certifications	6%	4%	31%
Negotiating skills	5%	10%	3%

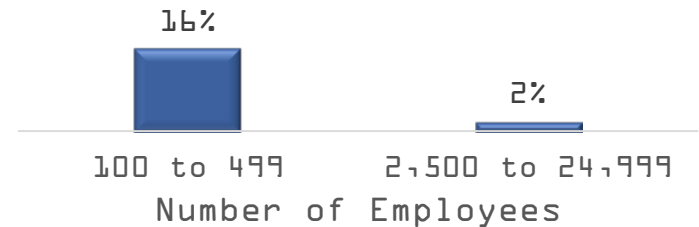
Note: n = 386. Respondents who answered "don't know" were excluded from this analysis. Percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple response options. Data sorted in descending order by the "Job Applicants in General" percentages.

Comparisons by organization staff size

- Smaller organizations were more likely than larger organizations to report **technology/social and digital media skills** as valuable for IT job applicants.



- Smaller organizations were more likely than larger organizations to report **professional networking skills** as valuable for IT job applicants.



Note: Only statistically significant differences are shown.

	Job Applicants in General	Business Job Applicants	IT Job Applicants
Strong work ethic	20%	15%	12%
Articulate communicator	20%	23%	24%
Adaptable to change	20%	25%	31%
Positive attitude	18%	11%	5%
Confidence in fulfilling the position's responsibilities	15%	11%	22%
Leadership ability	3%	11%	2%
Professional demeanor/appearance	3%	4%	1%

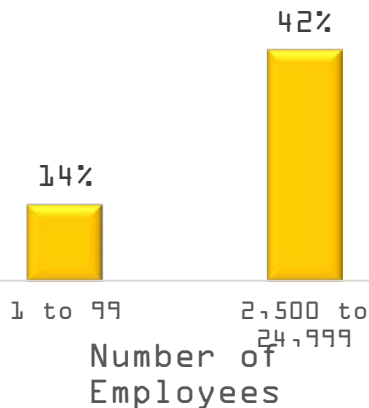
Note: n = 375-378. Respondents who answered "don't know" were excluded from this analysis. Percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding. Data sorted in descending order by the "Job Applicants in General" percentages.

	Business Job Applicants	IT Job Applicants
Employee referrals	58%	46%
National online job boards (e.g., careerbuilder.com, indeed.com)	53%	46%
Internal job postings	45%	31%
Career section of organization's website	39%	30%
Informal networking	37%	28%
Social networking websites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn)	34%	34%
Industry-specific/niche online job boards	33%	39%
College recruiting	30%	22%
Coordination with academic institutions	26%	19%
Direct hire agencies/search firms (excluding temp agencies)	23%	26%
Job fairs	22%	17%
Print advertising	16%	11%
Temporary agencies	16%	14%
Other	3%	3%

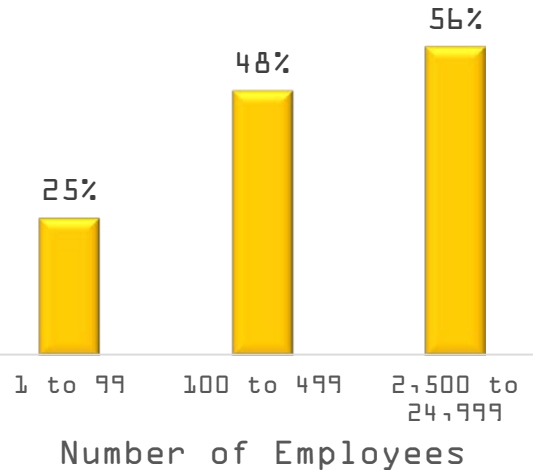
Comparisons by organization staff size

- Larger organizations are more likely than smaller organizations to report **college recruiting, internal job postings, and job fairs** as sources to find their most qualified business job applicants.

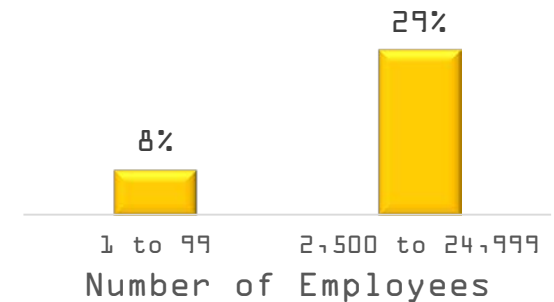
College
 Recruiting



Internal Job
 Postings



Job Fairs

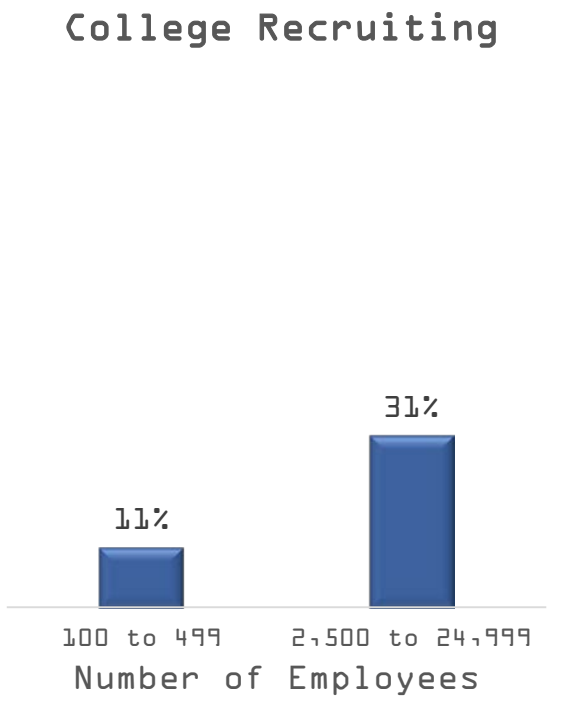


Note: Only statistically significant differences are shown.

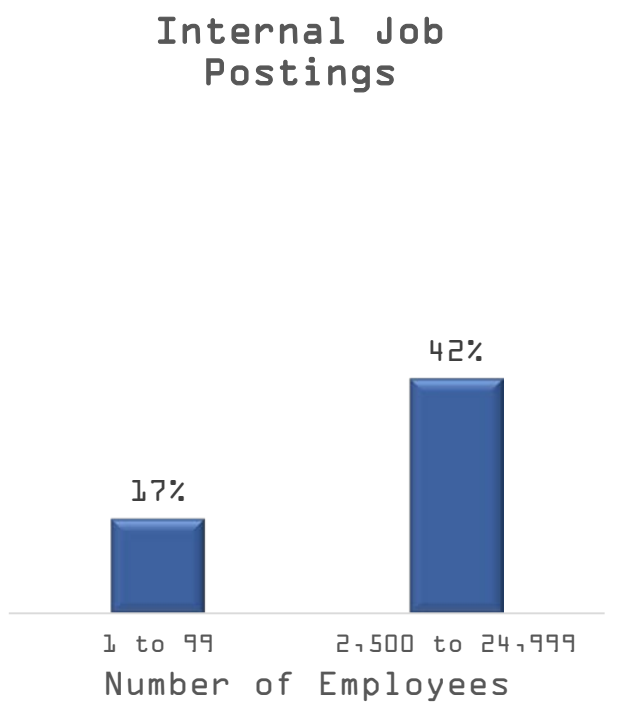
Comparisons by organization staff size

- Larger organizations are more likely than smaller organizations to report **college recruiting**, **internal job postings**, and the **career section of their organization's website** as sources to find their most qualified IT job applicants.

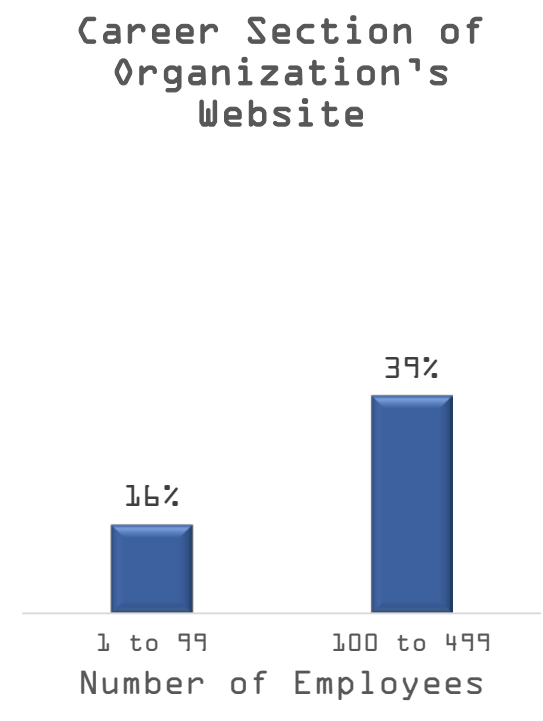
College Recruiting



Internal Job Postings



Career Section of Organization's Website

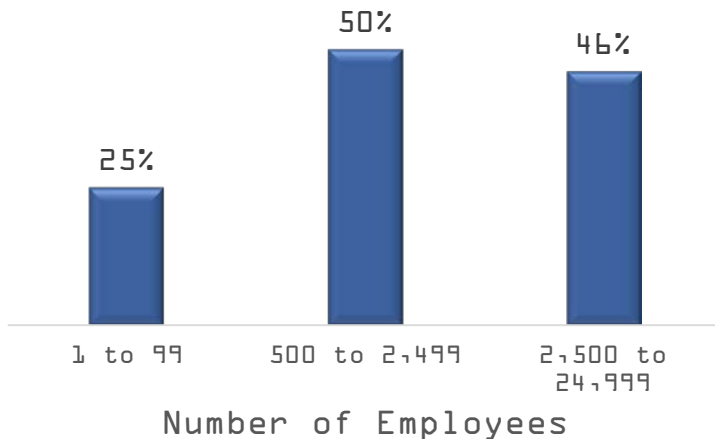


Note: Only statistically significant differences are shown.

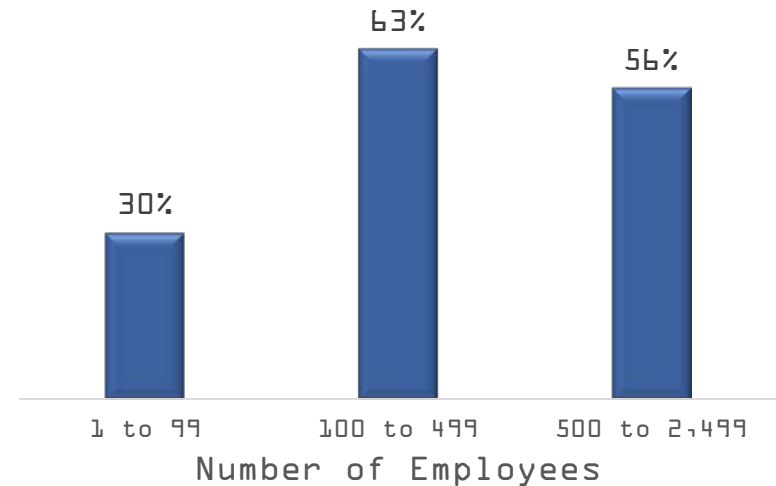
Comparisons by organization staff size

- Larger organizations are more likely than smaller organizations to report industry-specific/niche online job boards and national online job boards as sources to find their most qualified IT job applicants.

Industry-Specific/Niche
 Online Job Boards



National Online Job
 Boards



Note: Only statistically significant differences are shown.

"I would encourage them to have a solid understanding of the industry they have in mind. They should also make sure they fully investigate and study the company(ies) they wish to be employed by."

Research

"Know about the company and the position you are applying for. Make sure the position is a good fit for you and for the company."

"A lot of time, we are looking for potential rather than current skill sets. A great candidate who has the right attitude, strong work ethic, and the desire and ability to learn and grow will always stand out."

Stay Positive

"Be honest in evaluating your strengths and weaknesses, but remain confident enough to go outside the box when you are looking for a next position."

Show Your Value

"Be prepared to share examples when you personally have demonstrated the skills required for the position. Share examples when you have identified a solution to a problem, the impact the problem had on the business and the overall results."

"Because IT is an ever-changing and innovative field, it is important for the applicants to be on top of all cutting edge technology, especially the technology most closely resembling the company they wish to be employed by."

Stay
Current

"Obtain certifications in niche technologies as this will make you highly desirable by multiple companies across different industries."

"Know your value yet realize you are a service provider and the employees in your company are your customers - aim to serve them."

Build
Relationships

"Networking with other IT professionals seems to work best with the industry."

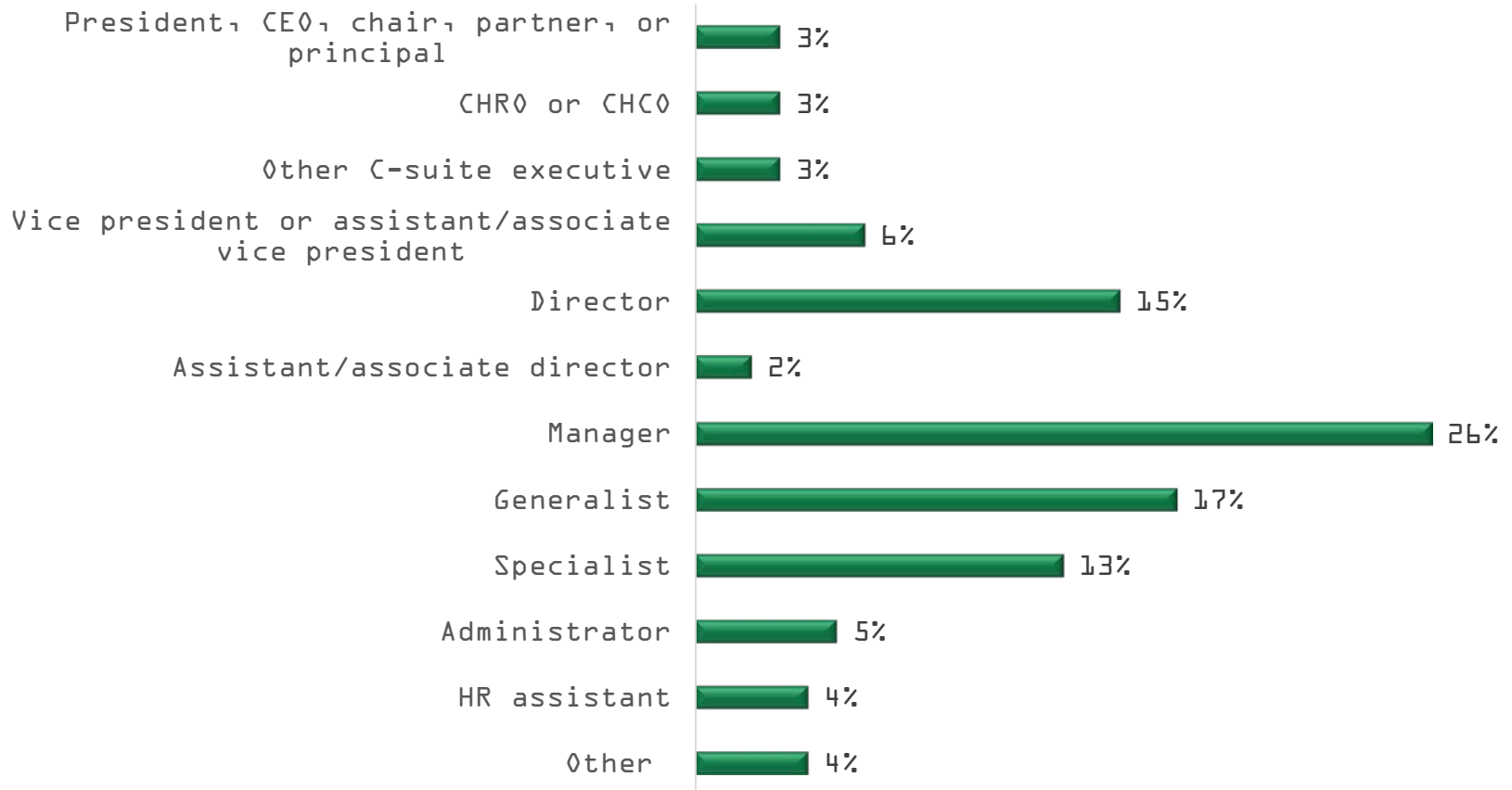
"Demonstrate that you can relate well with those who do not understand the 'IT world' and that you can look ahead and see what may help the business move ahead, with respect to IT technologies."

Develop
Communication Skills

"Share examples where you have worked in a team environment, how you collaborated and communicated, what your role was vs. the role of others on the team."

Demographics

Demographics: Job Title



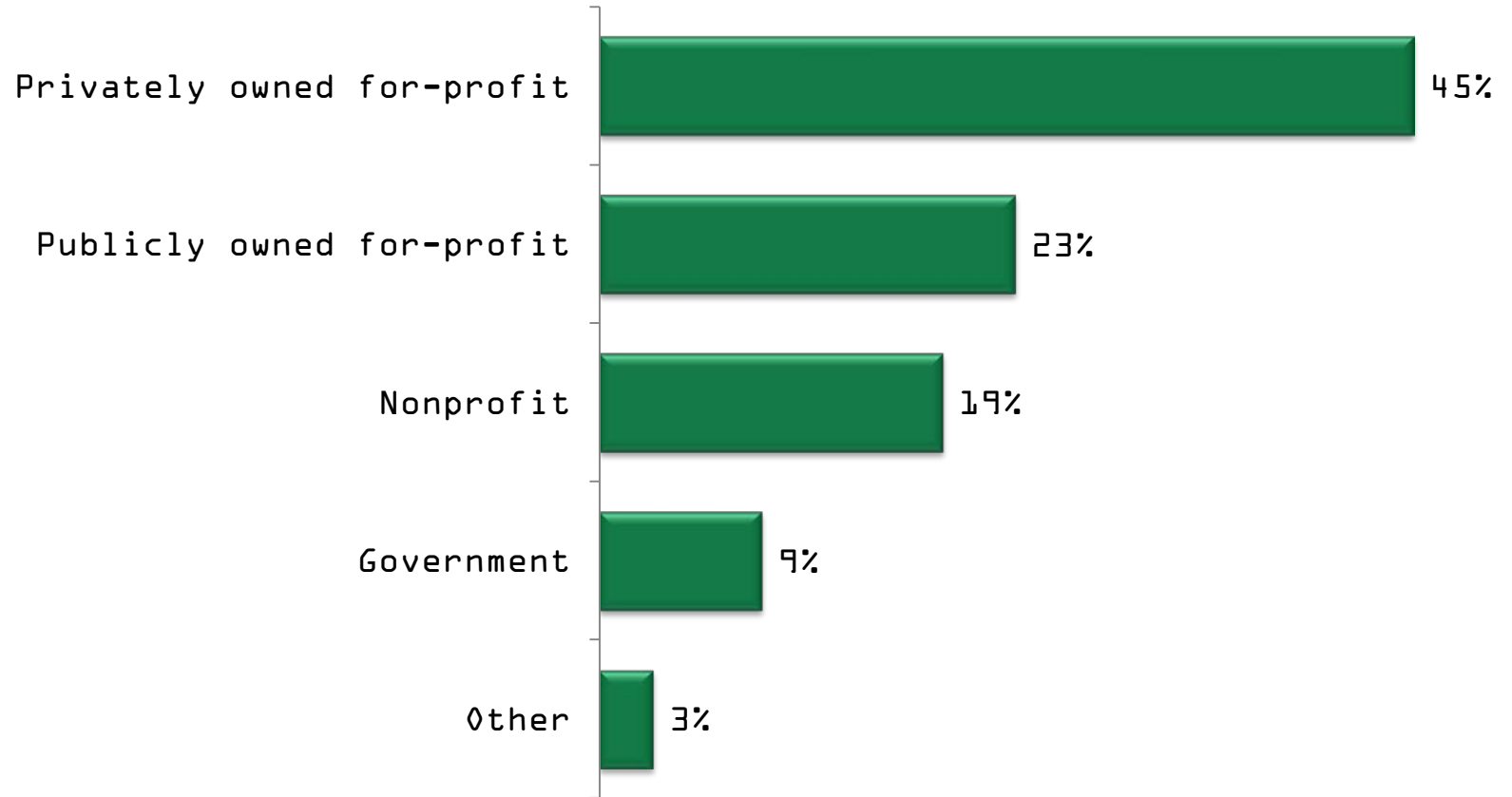
Note: n = 348. Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.

	Percentage
Professional, scientific and technical services	22%
Health care and social assistance	18%
Manufacturing	18%
Finance and insurance	12%
Government agencies	10%
Educational services	9%
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation services	8%
Retail trade	7%
Transportation and warehousing	7%
Information	6%
Accommodation and food services	5%

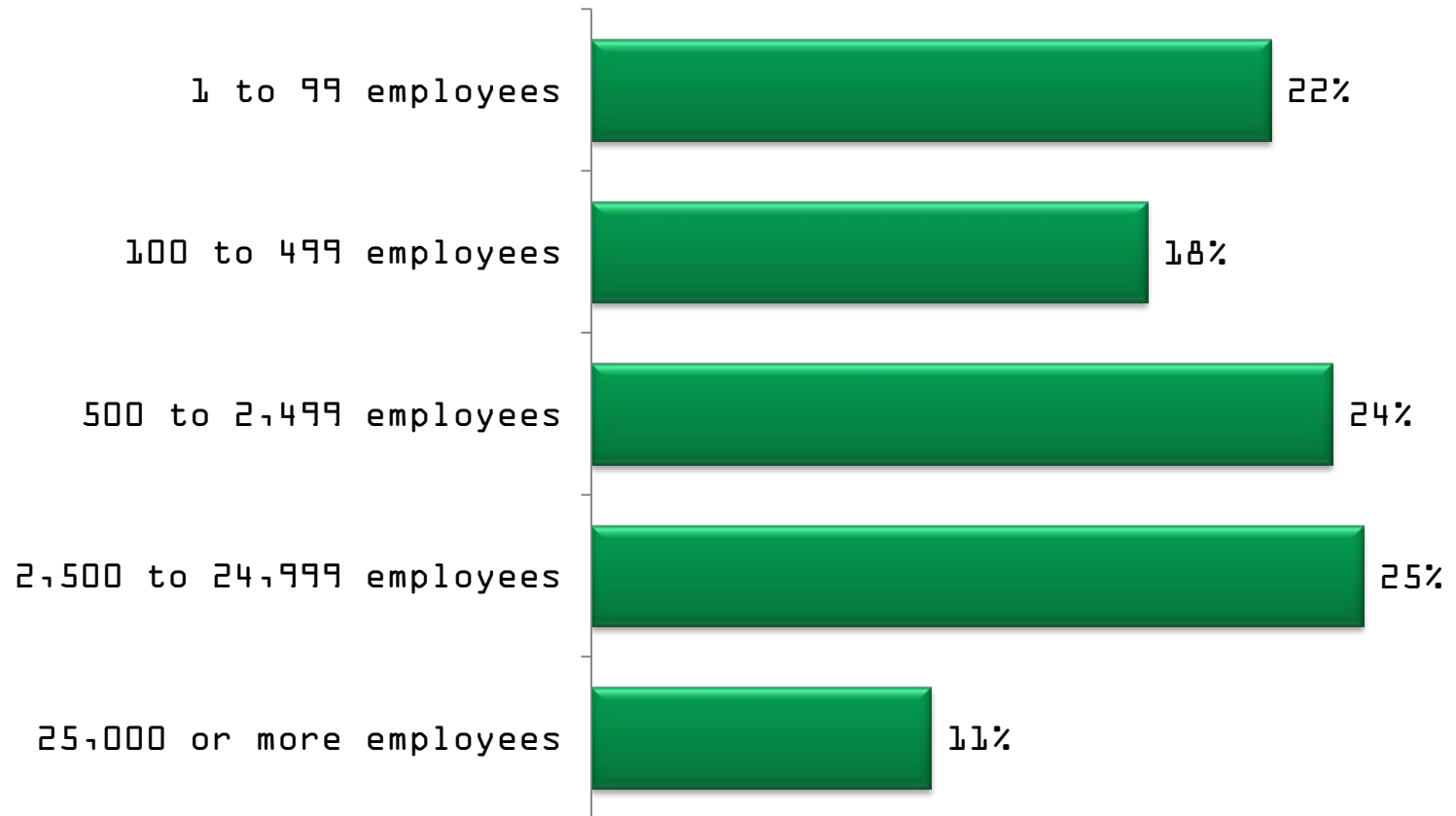
Note: n = 353. Percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple response options.

	Percentage
Construction	5%
Wholesale trade	5%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	3%
Religious, grant-making, civic, professional and similar organizations	3%
Utilities	3%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	2%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	2%
Real estate and rental and leasing	2%
Repair and maintenance	2%
Personal and laundry services	1%
Other	5%

Note: n = 353. Percentages do not equal 100% due to multiple response options.



Note: n = 348. Percentages do not equal 100% due to rounding.



n = 338

Does your organization have U.S.-based operations (business units) only, or does it operate multinationally?

U.S.-based operations only	66%
Multinational operations	34%

n = 358

What is the HR department/function for which you responded throughout this survey?

Corporate (companywide)	63%
Business unit/division	20%
Facility/location	17%

n = 279

Is your organization a single-unit organization or a multi-unit organization?

Single-unit organization: An organization in which the location and the organization are one and the same.	24%
Multi-unit organization: An organization that has more than one location.	76%

For multi-unit organizations, are HR policies and practices determined by the multi-unit headquarters, by each work location or by both?

Multi-unit headquarters determines HR policies and practices	45%
Each work location determines HR policies and practices	2%
A combination of both the work location and the multi-unit headquarters determines HR policies and practices	53%

n = 149

In collaboration with and commissioned by
Kaplan University School of Business &
Information Technology



Survey Methodology

- Response rate = 13%
- 386 HR professionals from a randomly selected sample of SHRM's membership participated in this survey
- Margin of error +/-5%
- Survey fielded September 2-24, 2014

Additional SHRM Resources

- [SHRM Findings: Social Networking Websites and Recruiting/Selection](#)
- [SHRM Findings: Changing Employee Skills and Education Requirements Series](#)
- [SHRM Staffing Management Resource Page](#)

About SHRM Research

For more survey/poll findings, visit shrm.org/surveys

For more information about SHRM's Customized Research Services, visit shrm.org/customizedresearch

Follow us on Twitter [@SHRM_Research](https://twitter.com/SHRM_Research)

About SHRM

Founded in 1948, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) is the world's largest HR membership organization devoted to human resource management. Representing more than 275,000 members in over 160 countries, the Society is the leading provider of resources to serve the needs of HR professionals and advance the professional practice of human resource management. SHRM has more than 575 affiliated chapters within the United States and subsidiary offices in China, India and United Arab Emirates. Visit us at shrm.org.

Kaplan University's School of Business & Information Technology prepares today's students to be leaders in tomorrow's world. In addition to a core business administration curriculum, programs have a specialty focus on the in-demand disciplines of accounting, financial planning, risk management & insurance, real estate, and investment & wealth management. The IT program prepares graduates with the strong technical foundation and business skills to start or advance careers in application and software development, information security, database management and other in-demand jobs with government and private enterprise. For more information on the Kaplan University School of Business & Information Technology, visit www.kaplan.edu.