

**2016**  
Research Report

# The Skills Gap in the Middle East and North Africa

A Real Problem or a Mere Trifle?



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What the world thinks

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The Middle East's #1 Job Site

## Executive Summary

One of the biggest problems facing the world today is the prolonged crisis of youth unemployment. **Put simply, too many young people lack the skills needed in a world that has too few skilled workers.** The result is that in parts of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), youth unemployment remains stuck at around 30%. As reported by the ILO, the 2014 youth unemployment rate was 28.2% in the Middle East and 30.5% in North Africa - the highest in the world and more than double the global average of 13%.

Clearly, youth unemployment is a critical issue for countries across the MENA region. As the Arab Spring has shown, high levels of unemployment, especially among the youth, generate **a predictable cycle of frustration, social unrest and political instability.** Add a little agitation and you have a full-blown disaster on your hands.

In a 2014 Millennials in the Middle East survey, Bayt.com asked young people in the Middle East about their priorities in life. The overwhelming response was what you would expect from young people anywhere in the world: they want good health, financial stability and a successful career. **Unfortunately, the same survey also showed the gap between these hopes and reality: 59% rely on their family for supplementary income,** and 28% find it difficult to make ends meet.

According to the Bayt.com Fresh Graduates in the MENA survey, July 2015, **76% said that the foremost challenge of their generation is finding a job.** Almost 30% stated that their jobs were not related to their studies, and more than 80% viewed their current jobs as interim and are looking to leave.

Among the myriad factors contributing to this market failure, one stands out: **a profound disconnect between the perceptions held by employers and the perceptions held by job seekers.**

Research reports, such as this one, are regularly conducted by Bayt.com as part of its mission to empower job seekers and employers alike with the right tools and information to achieve their career and hiring goals and help them reach their full potential in today's ever-changing job market.

In this report, Bayt.com and YouGov investigate the extent of the skills gap in different MENA countries. **The report describes some of the causes for the skills mismatch, and reveals what employers mean when they say job seekers are not 'employable.'** Findings in this report demonstrate that there is a clear skills gap in the region across the career level spectrum, a sentiment shared by both employers and job seekers, with employers finding it particularly challenging to identify candidates with the desired skill set and job seekers finding it especially difficult to secure a job with their current skills.

Evidence shows that it is challenging for employers across the MENA region to find candidates with the required skills. **This difficulty is accentuated when recruiting for senior positions, with seven in 10 respondents (70%) claiming they find it difficult to find candidates with the required skills.** The situation seems to be slightly easier when recruiting for junior positions, although 49% of the employers surveyed still rate the hiring process as 'difficult'.

The report provides a thorough investigation of the skills gap crisis in the MENA region, both from an employer's point of view and job seeker's point of view. **The report ends with a list of solutions to help companies, education providers, governments and job seekers themselves tackle this problem in the best way possible.**

# About This Report

This report details the results of a study conducted by Bayt.com and YouGov to explore employers' needs across the MENA region in terms of new talent, including which positions they are looking to hire, which skills they place most importance on when recruiting and which skills they find to be most lacking in new talent.

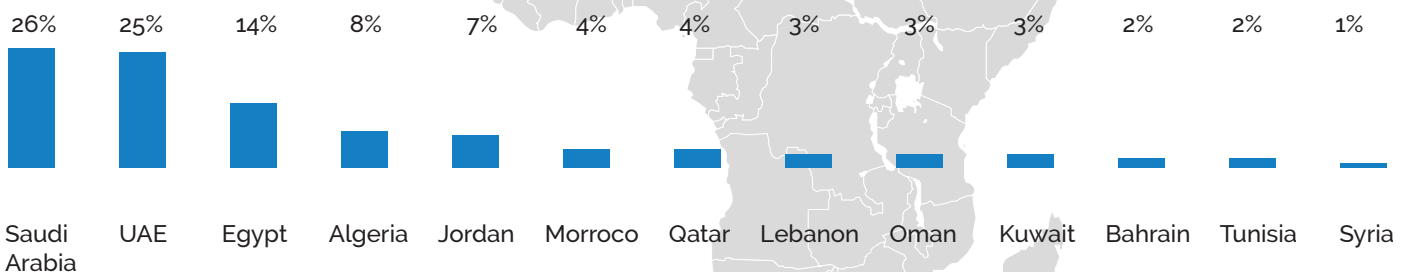
To provide a comprehensive overview of the situation, the study also sought the feedback of job seekers, including the industries of most interest to them, the specific roles they are seeking, how they rate themselves across a range of skills, and how challenging they feel it is to secure a job with their current skill set.

A total of 5,345 interviews were conducted for this study. For the report, analysis was split across two main stakeholder groups: those involved in hiring decisions for their company and whose companies are currently hiring (referred in the report as 'Employers') and those looking for a job (referred to in the report as 'Job seekers'). Since those working for a company looking for new employees could also be looking for a job themselves it is possible for the same individual to feature in both respondent groups ('Employer' and 'Job seeker').

All interviews were conducted online with members of the Bayt.com database between March 3rd and March 22nd, 2016. 62% were GCC residents, 27% were from North Africa and the remainder from the Levant (11%). Exact country of residence breakdown is provided below. Detailed respondent profiles can be found in the Appendix.

## Country of residence

**5,345**  
Interviews





## Skills in Demand: What employers are looking for

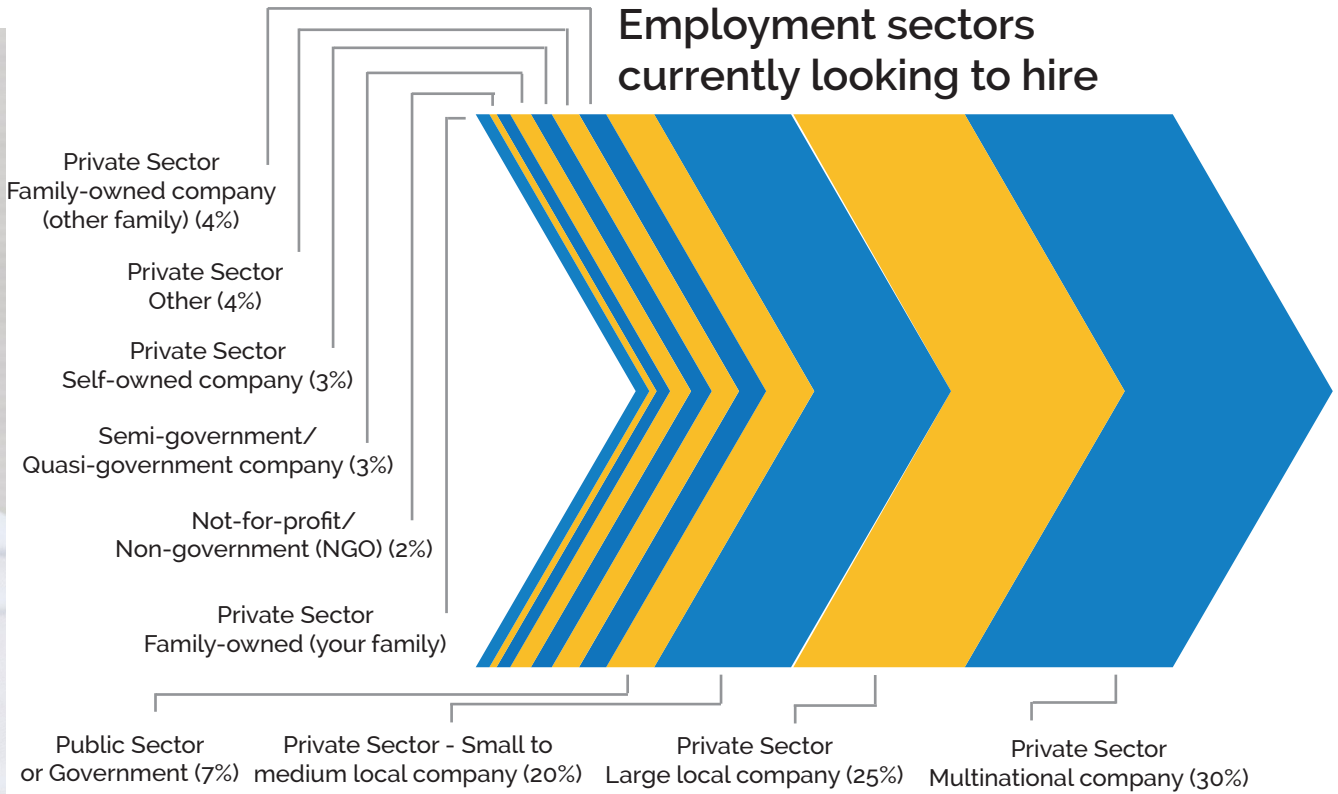
### Propensity to hire by sector, industry, position and job role

Results suggest that across the MENA region just under two in 10 companies (17%) surveyed are currently searching for new employees. As illustrated, those working for multinational companies, large local companies and local SMEs were most likely to claim their company is currently looking to hire (30%, 25% and 20%, respectively).

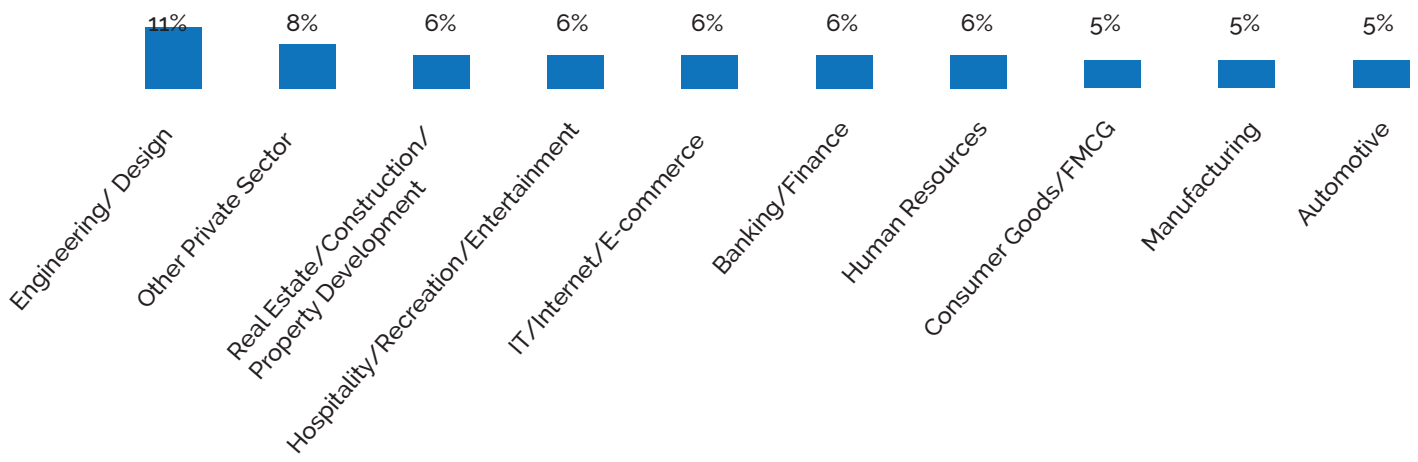
In terms of company size, results suggest the most demand for new employees comes from either large companies with over 400 employees (33%) or smaller companies with 100 employees or less (34%). The industry that emerged as the one most likely to hire was Engineering, at 11%.

“The industry that emerged as the one most likely to hire is **engineering.**”

## Employment sectors currently looking to hire



## Industries currently looking to hire



As illustrated, aside from Engineering/ Design (11%), demand for new employees tended to be fairly even across most key industry sectors.

As may have been expected, most demand was seen for entry-level positions (Junior Executives and Executives, 52% and 30%, respectively), with only 10% of Employers surveyed currently searching for Director-level candidates. As illustrated below, while GCC employers showed a greater need for Senior Executives, Co-Ordinators and Managers, the higher demand for entry-level positions was largely consistent across the region.

## Positions currently in demand

Overall   GCC   Levant   North Africa

### Junior Executive



52%   52%   59%   48%

### Executive



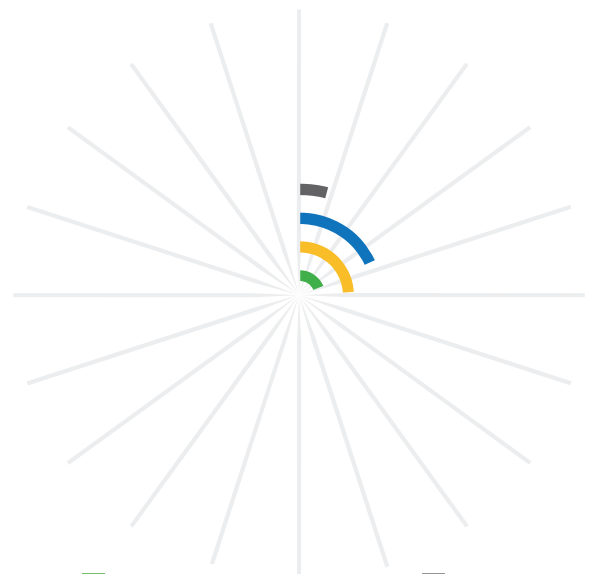
30%   32%   36%   18%

### Senior Executive



22%   26%   14%   12%

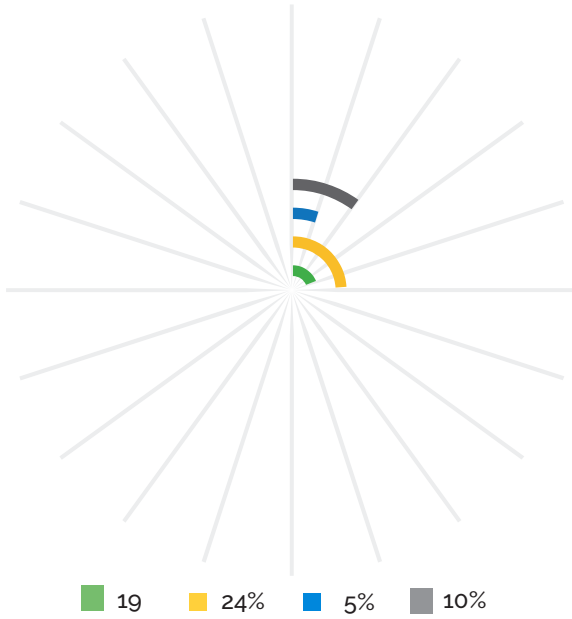
### Coordinator



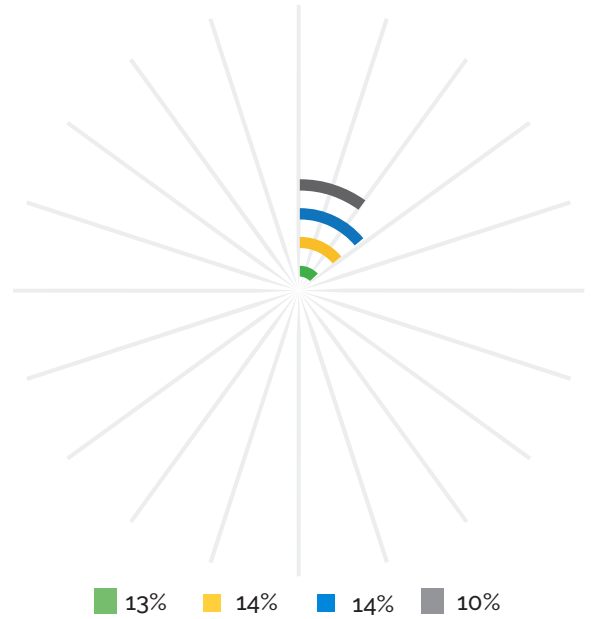
19%   24%   18%   4%

Overall   GCC   Levant   North Africa

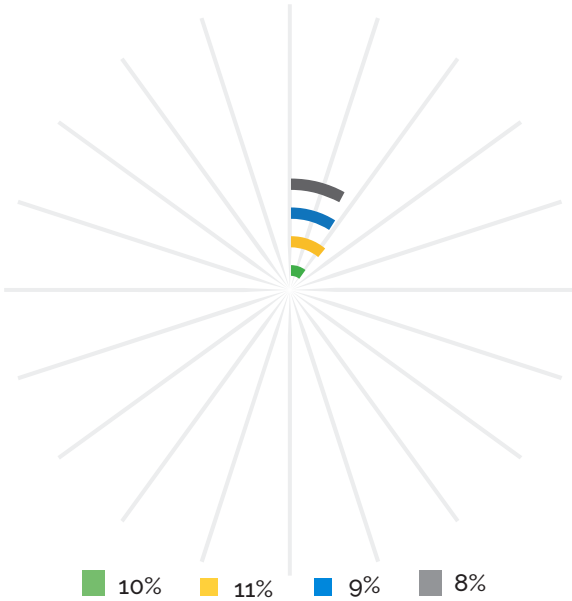
**Manager**



**Analyst**



**Director**



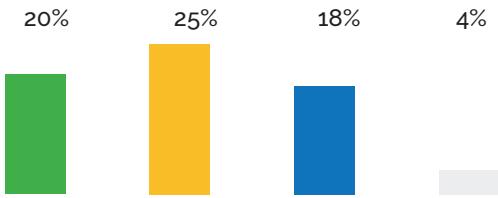
**Job roles currently in demand**

As illustrated, sales positions appear to be in most demand. Project Managers, Engineers, Accountants and Administrative Assistants seem to be also sought after.

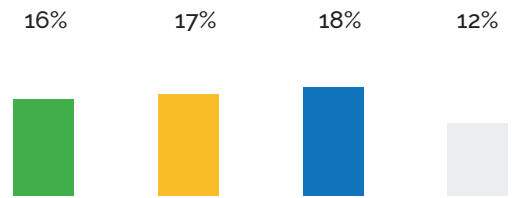
Results suggest that, aside from some exceptions, demand for most positions was generally highest among GCC employers, with demand in the GCC being especially high for Sales Executives (25%) and Project Managers (19%).

Overall GCC Levant North Africa

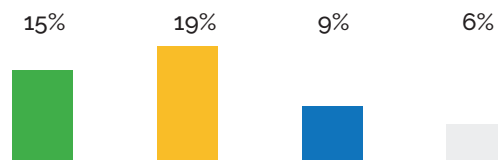
### Sales Executive



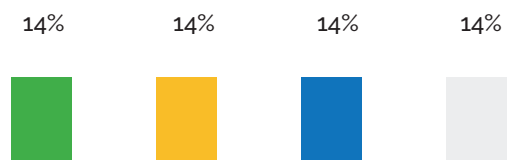
### Sales Manager



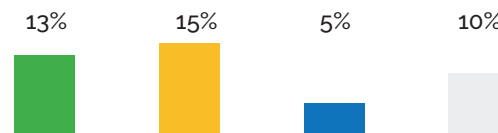
### Project Manager



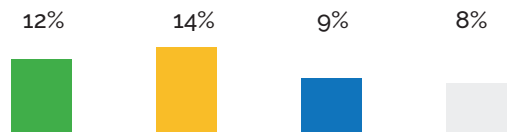
### Mechanical Engineer



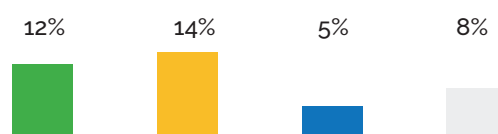
### Electrical Engineer



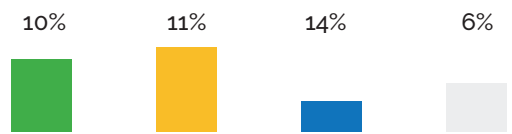
### Accountant



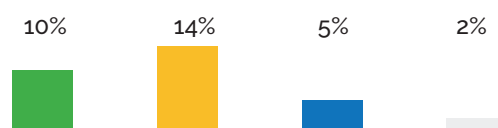
### Administrative Assistant



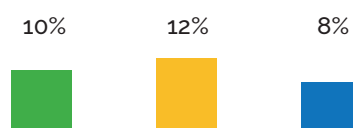
### Director



### Executive Assistant



### Engineer



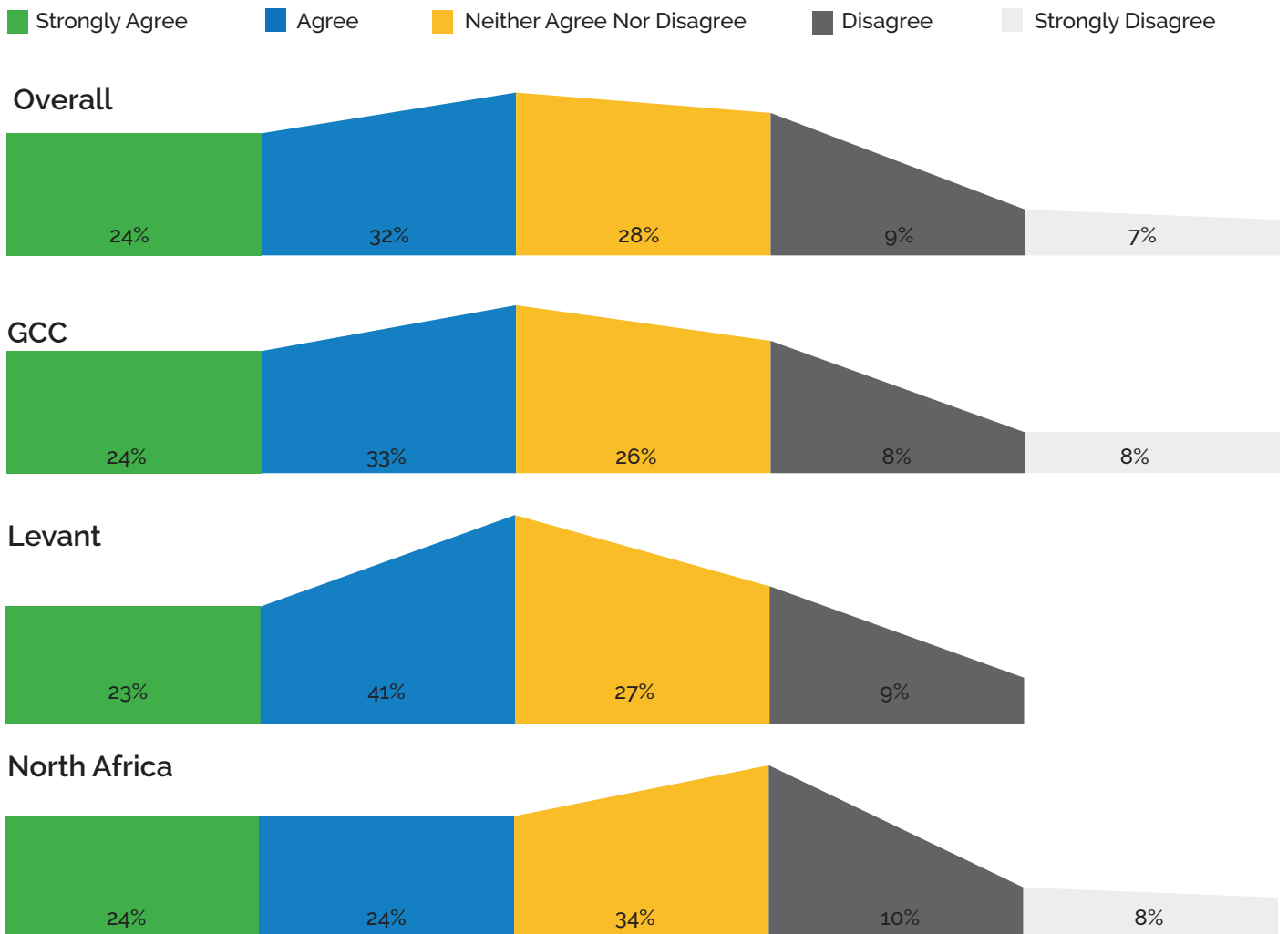


# Human capital and skills shortages: An employer's feedback

Across the MENA region, just over half (56%) of employers surveyed believed their company had sufficient skilled employees to achieve this year's goals. On the other hand, 28% were unsure, and 16% felt their company did not have sufficient skilled employees to meet their goals.

As shown below, GCC employers were generally more confident their company had sufficient skilled employees to help them achieve their goals when compared to their North African counterparts. The number of employers surveyed in the Levant was too small to draw robust conclusions on this front.

**I feel that my company has sufficient skilled employees to achieve this year's goals...**



When asked to rate the importance of various skills when looking to hire for senior versus mid-level or junior positions, employers across the region said they have higher expectations of senior hires across various skills (see below).

As illustrated, collaboration/teamwork (88%), efficiency (87%), communication skills (85%), overall personality and demeanour (85%), leadership qualities (84%), the ability to work under pressure (84%) and planning/organisational skills (84%) were regarded as the most important attributes in a senior hire. These skills were also among the most valued for mid- to junior-level positions, however, to a lesser degree - efficiency (81%), communication skills (80%), collaboration/teamwork (80%) and the ability to work under pressure (79%).

The biggest gap in expectations between senior and mid- to junior-level positions were seen for planning/organisation skills (84% for senior-level positions vs. 70% for mid- to junior-level); relevant industry experience (78% for senior-level positions vs. 67% for mid- to junior-level); negotiation skills (78% for senior-level positions vs. 68% for mid- to junior-level); and overall personality and demeanour (85% for senior-level positions vs. 75% for mid- to junior-level).

### Most important skills for senior vs. mid- to junior-level positions - MENA overview



As illustrated in the table below, employers' amplified expectations of potential senior recruits is consistent across all regions (GCC, Levant and North Africa). However, results suggest that employers in the GCC tend to be generally more demanding of senior recruits than those in North Africa, with the pattern being evident across all skills. The sample in the Levant was too small to allow conclusions to be drawn.

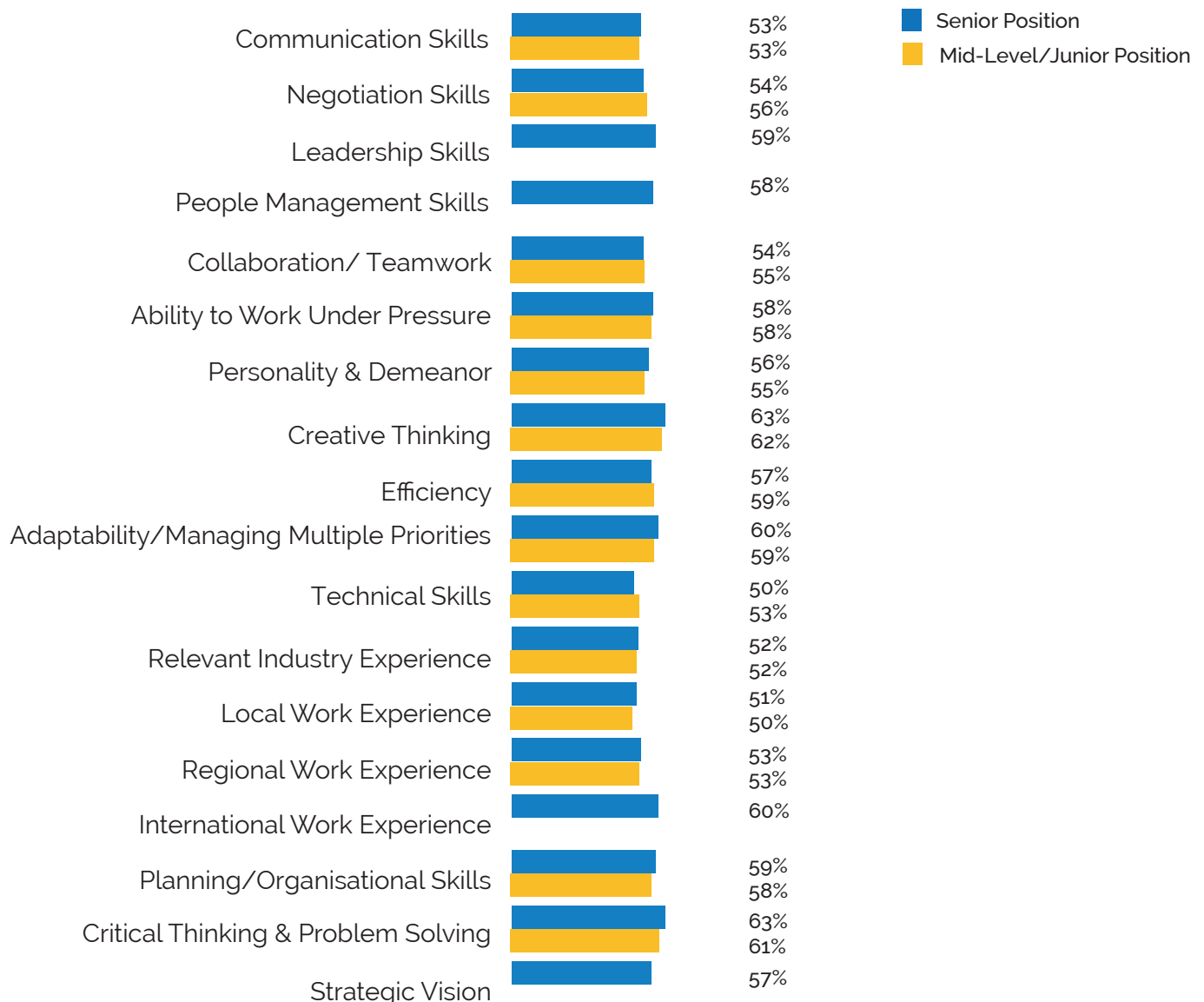
### Most important skills for senior vs. mid- to junior-level positions - Regional split

	GCC		Levant		North Africa	
	Senior Position	Mid-Junior Level Position	Senior Position	Mid-Junior Level Position	Senior Position	Mid-Junior Level Position
	125		22		50	
Communication Skills	87%	79%	100%	86%	74%	78%
Negotiation Skills	79%	70%	100%	77%	64%	60%
Leadership Skills	83%	-	95%	-	80%	-
People Management Skills	82%	-	86%	-	78%	-
Collaboration/Teamwork	89%	79%	100%	91%	78%	78%
Ability to Work Under Pressure	85%	78%	91%	91%	80%	76%
Overall Personality / Demeanor	86%	75%	86%	82%	80%	72%
Creative Thinking	80%	75%	95%	73%	74%	66%
Efficiency	88%	79%	100%	95%	80%	78%
Adaptability/Managing Multiple Priorities	85%	75%	95%	82%	74%	76%
Technical Skills	77%	76%	82%	73%	68%	70%
Relevant Industry Experience	79%	69%	86%	68%	70%	62%
Local Work Experience	75%	70%	77%	77%	58%	54%
Regional Work Experience	72%	65%	73%	59%	54%	60%
International Work Experience	57%	-	59%	-	48%	-
Planning/Organisational Skills	85%	71%	95%	77%	76%	64%
Critical Thinking / Problem Solving	86%	77%	95%	77%	68%	66%
Strategic Vision	81%	-	95%	-	60%	-

Employer feedback suggests it can be challenging to find the candidates with the required skill sets. Findings suggest the difficulty experienced is similar for both senior and mid- to junior-level positions.

Interestingly, 'technical skills' were often seen as posing the least challenge (50% and 53% finding these difficult to find in senior and more junior hires, respectively). 'Soft skills', on the other hand, are regarded as most lacking.

### Difficulty in finding certain skills in candidates – MENA overview



When looking for senior hires, employers in the GCC tend to have greater difficulty than those in North Africa in finding candidates with creative thinking (65% vs. 58%), critical thinking and problem solving (65% vs. 56%), leadership skills (61% vs. 56%), and a strategic vision (57% vs. 48%).

On the other hand, employers in North Africa appear to have greater difficulty in finding senior candidates with strong collaboration/teamwork (60% vs. 52%) and adaptability/managing multiple priorities (64% vs. 58%). The sample in the Levant is too small to draw robust observations on this front.

### Difficulty in finding certain skills in candidates - Regional split

	GCC		Levant		North Africa	
	Senior Position	Mid-Junior Level Position	Senior Position	Mid-Junior Level Position	Senior Position	Mid-Junior Level Position
	125		22		50	
Communication Skills	55%	54%	50%	59%	48%	48%
Negotiation Skills	52%	56%	64%	59%	54%	54%
Leadership Skills	61%	-	59%	-	56%	-
People Management Skills	57%	-	64%	-	58%	-
Collaboration/Teamwork	52%	55%	50%	64%	60%	52%
Ability to Work Under Pressure	59%	57%	55%	63%	56%	58%
Overall Personality / Demeanor	57%	55%	64%	59%	48%	54%
Creative Thinking	65%	63%	64%	59%	58%	60%
Efficiency	55%	58%	73%	64%	56%	62%
Adaptability/Managing Multiple Priorities	58%	57%	68%	55%	64%	64%
Technical Skills	48%	52%	64%	64%	52%	52%
Relevant Industry Experience	52%	52%	68%	68%	46%	46%
Local Work Experience	51%	49%	64%	59%	46%	48%
Regional Work Experience	52%	49%	64%	82%	50%	54%
International Work Experience	59%	-	82%	-	56%	-
Planning/Organisational Skills	59%	59%	55%	55%	60%	56%
Critical Thinking / Problem Solving	65%	63%	64%	59%	56%	54%
Strategic Vision	57%	-	77%	-	48%	-

# The Bayt.com Skills-Matching Formula: A Case Study

## Bayt.com's Multi-faceted Approach to Skills Matching

Bayt.com has been facilitating between employers and job seekers in the MENA for over 16 years. How? The Bayt.com skills-matching formula uses multiple ways to assess whether the skills of a job seeker are relevant to an employer's needs:

1. Equipping **algorithms** that employers can use to **auto-screen candidates** that do not match their needs on Bayt.com Job Postings
2. Enabling employers to **manually filter down to the perfect candidate using over 33 data filters** including years of experience, previous industry of work, and languages spoken, in products like Job Postings and CV Search.
3. Empowering employers with **powerful assessment tools to qualify candidates before they even get to the interview stage**. Employers can create questionnaires that they can send out to their candidates, or use pre-written Bayt.com Tests, Employers are encouraged to test for soft skills like time management; technical skills like accounting; and business skills like organizational behavior.
4. Taking the skills-verification process outside the one-dimensional CV with **Bayt.com Specialties, a networking and knowledge-sharing platform that enables employers to see how much a candidate really knows** about their professional specialties.

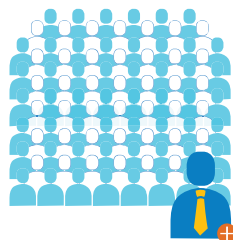
**BAYT.COM IS THE FASTEST, EASIEST, & MOST COST-EFFECTIVE WAY TO RECRUIT QUALITY TALENT.**



**Make Recruitment  
Really Simple.**

It is really easy to work with Bayt.com. We provide you with optimized, powerful technology & on-the-ground support like no other.

**13 OFFICES IN THE  
MIDDLE EAST**



**Make Recruitment  
Really Effective.**

Bayt.com offers you endless choice: use our powerful technology to search through the largest community of job seekers in the Middle East.

**24,000,000+  
JOBSEEKERS**



**Make Recruitment  
Really Cost Effective.**

Hire the best talent while maximizing your ROI. Choose from a recruitment solution that works with your time and budget.

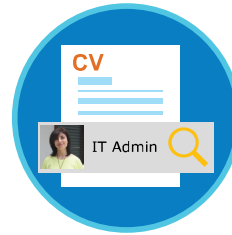
**15+ WAYS TO RECRUIT  
AND ATTRACT.**

## Bayt.com's Multi-faceted Approach to Skills Matching



### Post Your Job Vacancies Using Bayt.com Job Postings

Posting a job to millions of people has never been any easier! Just share your vacancy online and see immediate results, auto-filtered. Also available with branding opportunities.



### Find Candidates Instantly Using Bayt.com CV Search

Specify who you are looking for by using over 30 super-charged filters, and our platform will instantly bring up a list of relevant candidates for you.



### Qualify Candidate Skills with Bayt.com Tests

Cut your screening process to a fraction, and find the best talent by qualifying the skills of your candidates. Features include automatic grading, and detailed reporting.

**MORE THAN 500 TESTS AVAILABLE**

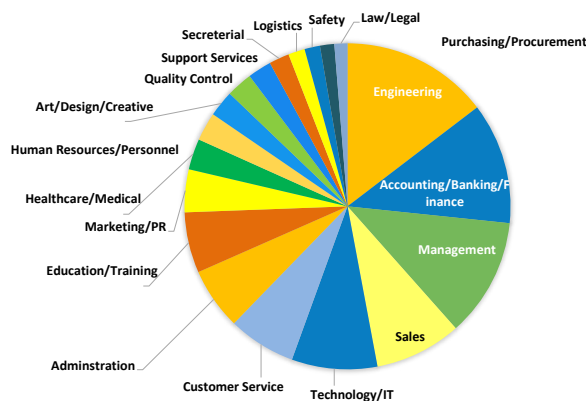


### Experience Social Recruiting with Bayt.com Specialties

Hire from top-ranked specialists in your country in your industry. Discover stories that go way beyond a CV, and get to know job seekers more personally before you hire them.

**MILLIONS OF ENGAGED SPECIALISTS**

## FIND TALENT YOU NEED FROM ACROSS ALL CAREER-LEVELS AND THE INDUSTRY SPECTRUM



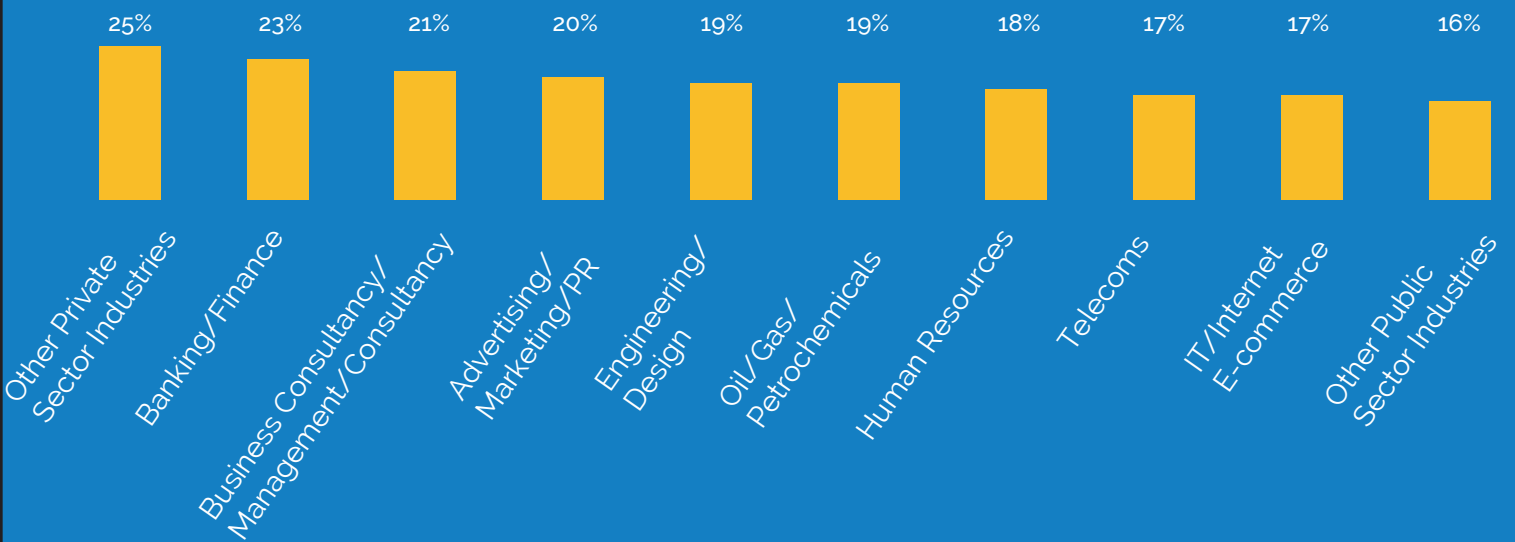
## Skills in Supply: What job seekers think will help them find a job



### Industries, career levels and positions job seekers are after

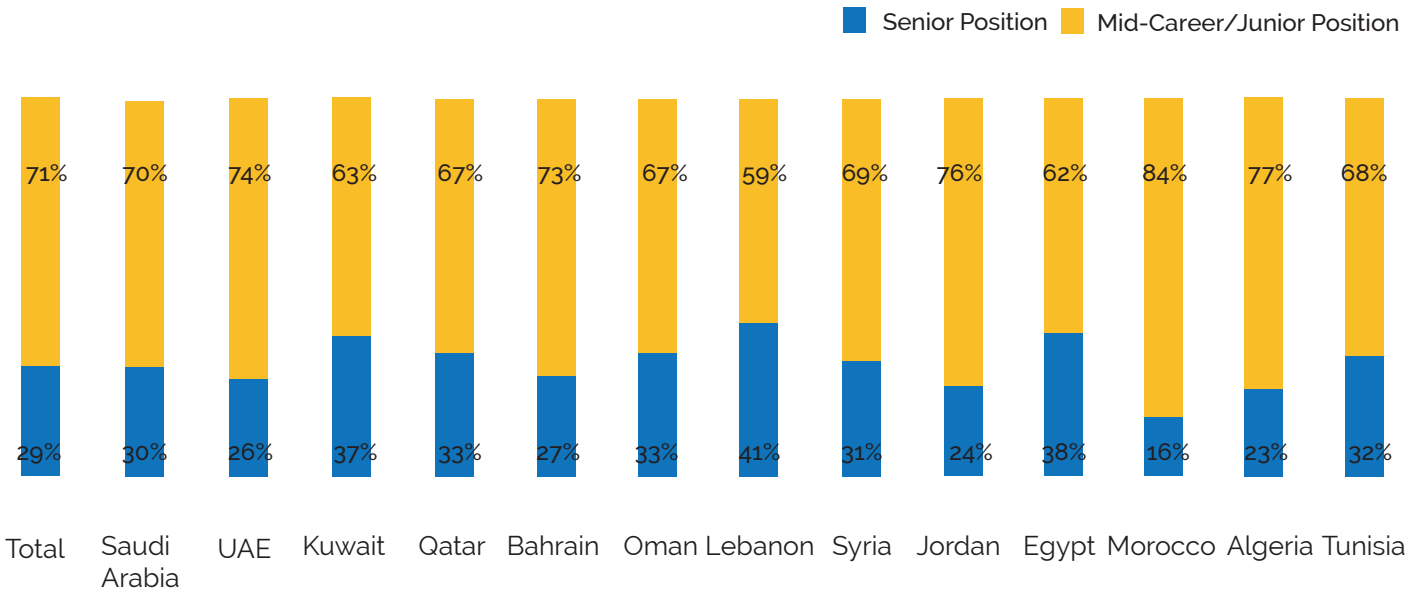
Banking/Finance (23%), Business Consultancy/ Management/ Consultancy (21%), Advertising/ Marketing/PR (20%), Engineering/Design and Oil/Gas & Petrochemicals (19% each) emerged as the most popular industries among job seekers in the MENA.

#### Industries seeking employment in - MENA overview



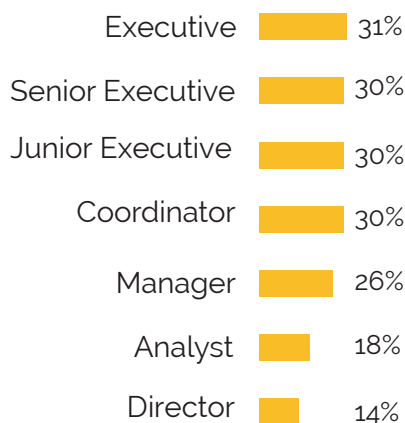


As illustrated below, most job seekers are looking for mid-career or junior positions (71% vs. 29% looking for senior positions). Among respondents, those in Lebanon (41%), Egypt (38%) and Kuwait (37%) were most likely to be looking for senior opportunities.



The job seekers surveyed in this report are mostly looking for Executive positions across a range of seniority levels (31% are looking for Executive positions; 30% are looking for Senior Executive positions; and 30% are looking for Junior Executive positions). Conversely, a smaller proportion are looking for more senior positions (26% are looking for Manager positions and 14% are looking for Director positions).

**Career levels most in demand by job seekers – MENA overview:**



As illustrated below, a greater proportion of job seekers surveyed in Egypt (20%), Oman (18%), Lebanon (17%), Algeria (17%) and KSA (16%) are looking for Director positions. In contrast, job seekers in the UAE and Qatar are mostly looking for Mid- or Junior-Executive positions.

Country Level													
	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Kuwait	Qatar	Bahrain	Oman	Lebanon	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia
Base	1365	1354	134	195	124	147	170	29**	374	740	215	402	93
Executive	27%	37%	34%	42%	40%	24%	27%	34%	34%	25%	27%	28%	24%
Senior Executive	31%	29%	33%	29%	31%	27%	22%	17%	34%	32%	35%	31%	29%
Junior Executive	24%	42%	30%	38%	28%	22%	31%	24%	29%	20%	35%	33%	23%
Co-ordinator	31%	32%	24%	33%	36%	31%	22%	21%	29%	25%	27%	28%	27%
Manager	30%	25%	23%	27%	34%	30%	32%	28%	22%	24%	16%	22%	25%
Analyst	20%	18%	15%	22%	20%	15%	18%	14%	17%	17%	21%	18%	15%
Director	16%	7%	13%	7%	11%	18%	17%	14%	14%	20%	12%	17%	14%

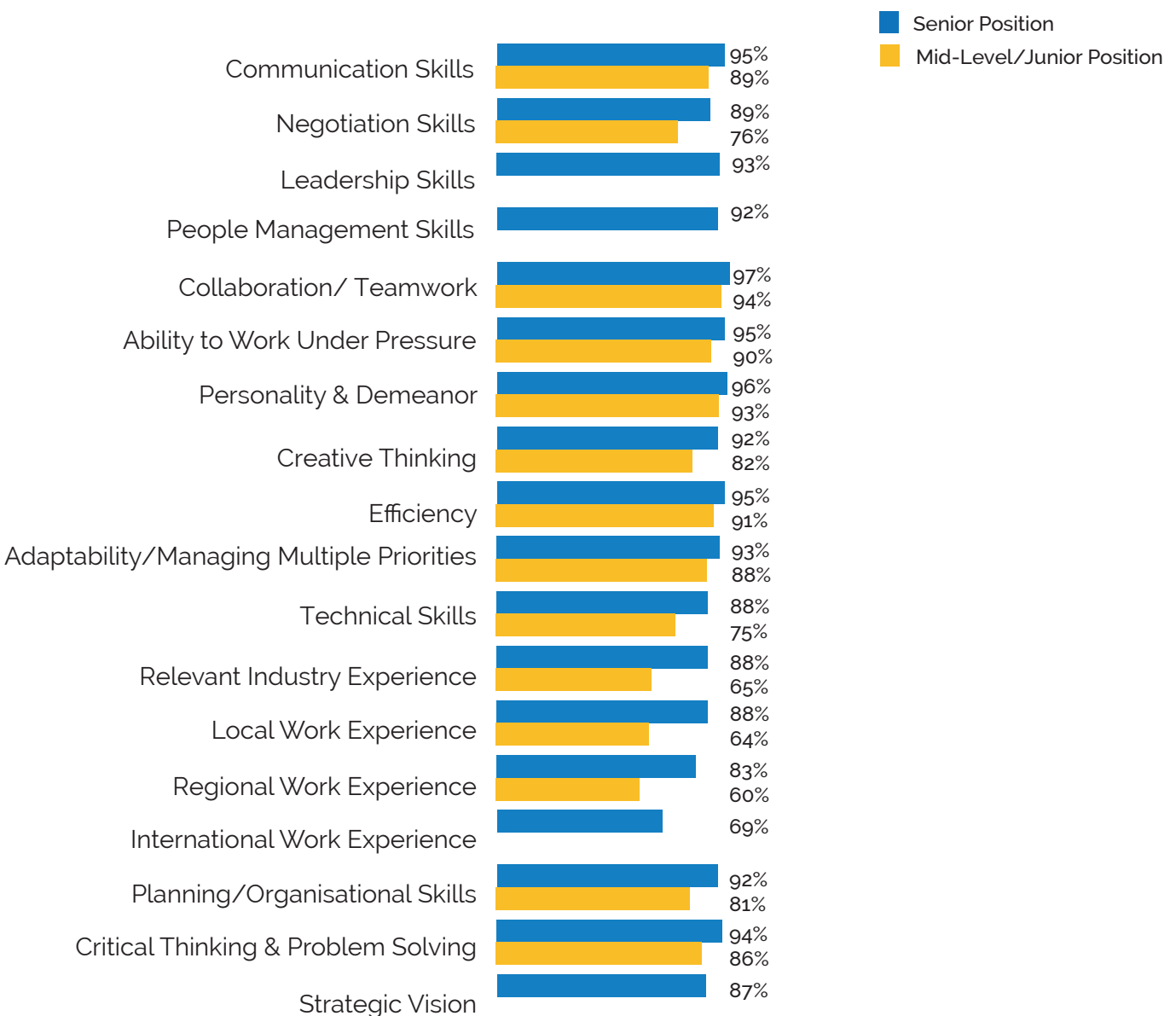
\*\*Low Base

## Level of confidence in current skill sets: Job seeker's feedback

Contrary to employer feedback, job seekers generally regard themselves as having a high degree of competency across most skills, with those seeking senior positions being more confident regarding their skills and rating themselves higher on all skills, when compared to more junior job seekers.

Across all skills tested, those looking for senior level positions rated themselves relatively lower in terms of international and regional work experience (83% and 69%, respectively). In parallel, those seeking mid-level or junior positions also rated themselves somewhat lower on work experience (relevant industry experience: 65%; local and regional work experience: 64% and 60%, respectively).

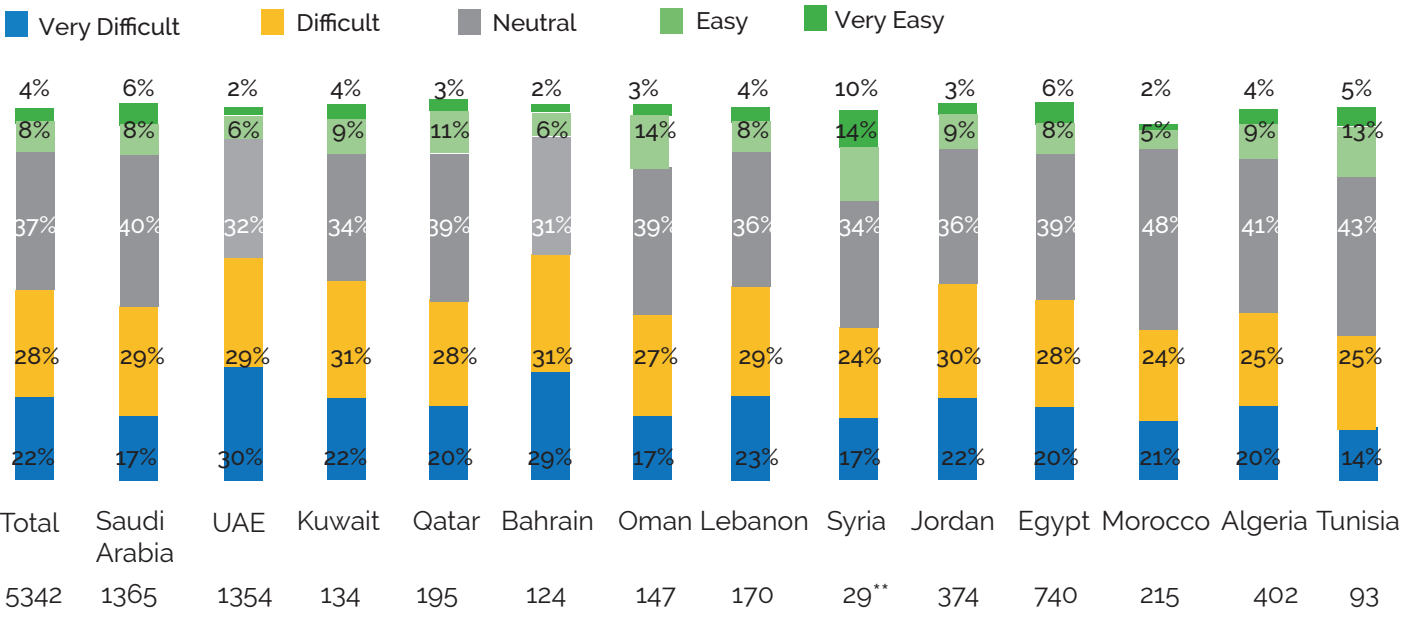
### Job seeker's self-ratings on a range of skills



Despite their generally positive view of their own skill level, half (50%) of the job seekers surveyed across the MENA region find it difficult to secure a job with their current skill set, 22% claiming it is 'very difficult'.

As illustrated below, job seekers in the UAE and Bahrain were most likely to claim they find it 'very difficult' to find a job with their current skills (30% and 29%, respectively).

### Difficulty in finding a job with current skills - Country split



\*\*Low Base

### Key skills when looking for a job - Job seeker's perspective

When asked to rate the importance of various skills in improving their chances of finding a job, those looking for senior positions placed most importance on 'communication skills' (91%), 'efficiency' (91%), 'collaboration/teamwork' (90%) and 'ability to work under pressure' (90%).

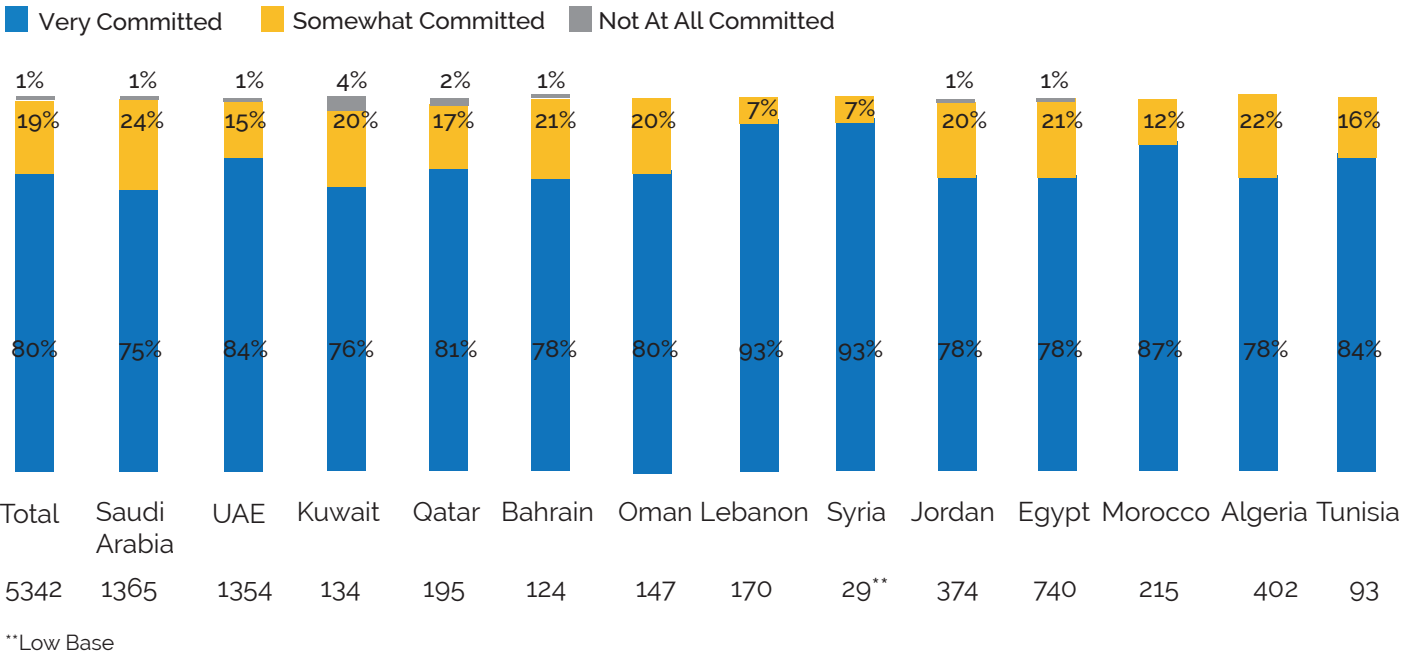
Similar perceptions were noted among job seekers looking for mid- or junior-level positions, with the majority believing that soft skills are more likely to give them an advantage when looking for a job as opposed to 'technical skills' (79% rated 'technical skills' as important vs. 89% for 'communication skills', 88% for 'efficiency', 88% for 'collaboration/teamwork', 87% for 'ability to work under pressure').

These findings are in line with employer's feedback which suggested that, in terms of skills, the greatest challenge employers face is finding candidates with good 'soft skills', rather than a shortage of 'technical skills'.

**Most important skills when looking for a job - Career-level split**

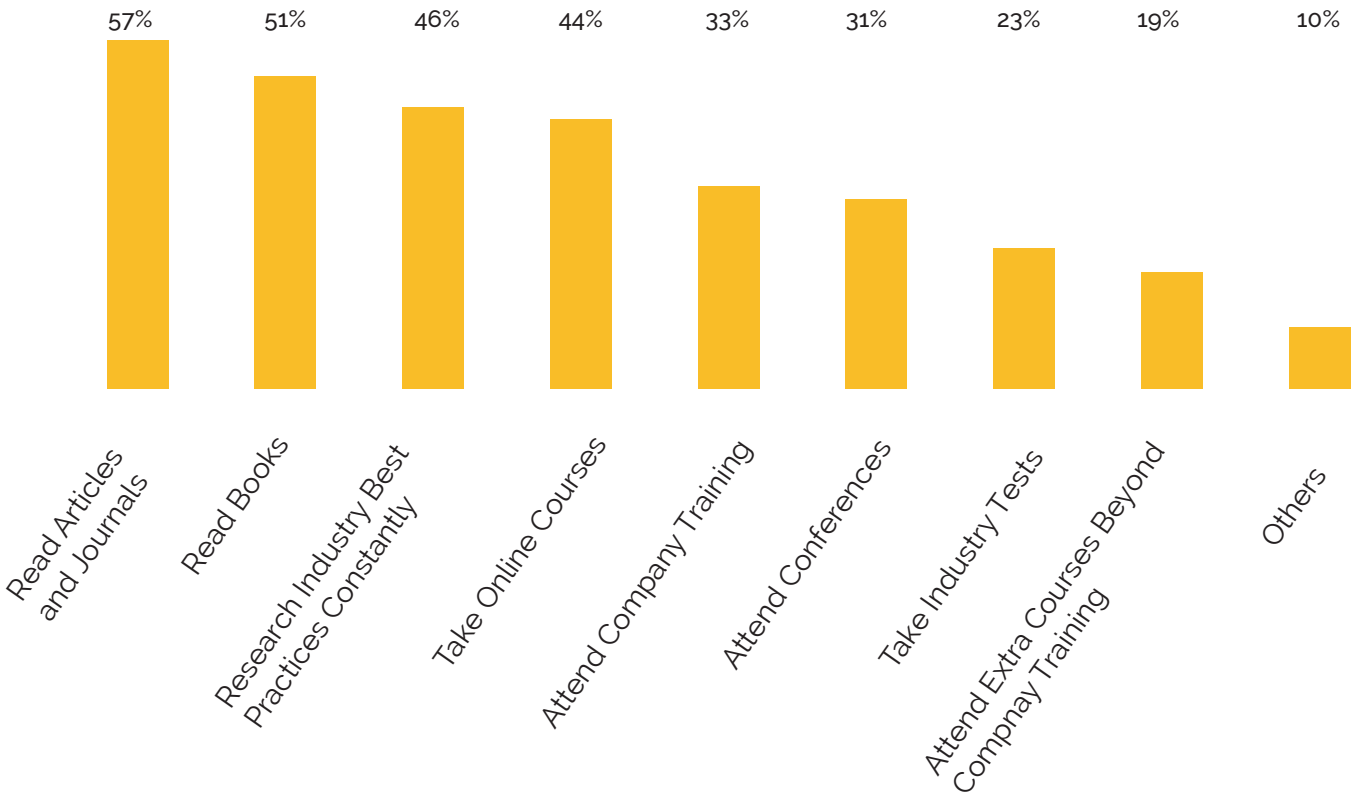


### Level of commitment to acquiring new skills - Country split



When asked what they do to keep their skills current, job seekers committed to self-improvement, rated reading articles and journals (57%), reading books (51%), researching industry best practices (46%) and taking online courses (44%) as the most popular learning activities.

### Activities undertaken to keep skills current - MENA overview



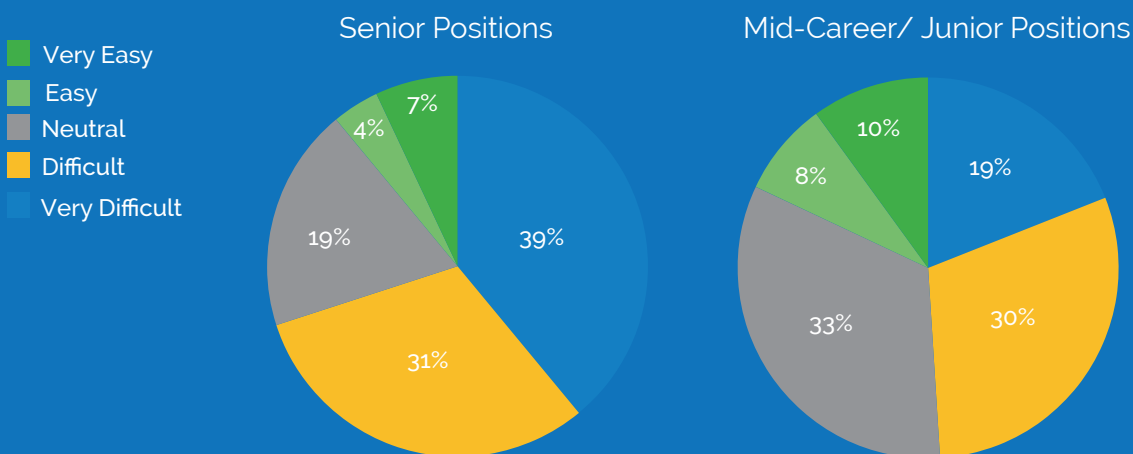
# Skills Mismatch in the MENA: How Can We Close the Gap?



## Recruitment challenges, perceived skills gaps and proposed solutions for the skills mismatch

Evidence suggests it is challenging for employers across the MENA region to find candidates with the required skill sets. As illustrated below, this difficulty is accentuated when looking to recruit for senior positions, with 39% of respondents claiming they find it 'very difficult' to find senior candidates with the required skills. The situation seems to be a little easier when recruiting for more junior positions.

### Overall ease of finding candidates with required skills – MENA overview



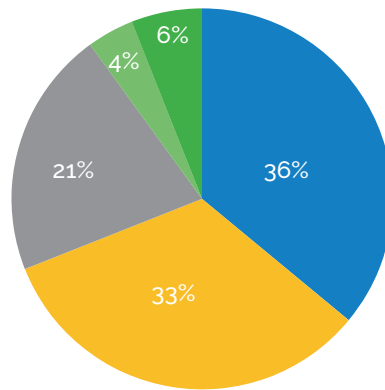
The study's findings suggest a similar degree of difficulty in recruiting senior level candidates with the required skill sets across the three MENA regions, with 69% of employers in the GCC rating the task as 'very difficult/difficult' vs. 72% of employers in the Levant and North Africa rating it as 'very difficult/difficult'.

**Overall ease of finding candidates with required skills – Regional split**

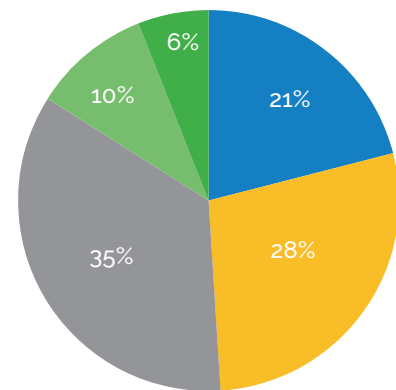
- Very Easy
- Easy
- Neutral
- Difficult
- Very Difficult

**GCC**

Senior Positions

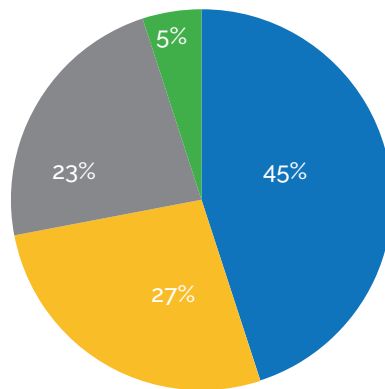


Mid-Career/ Junior Positions

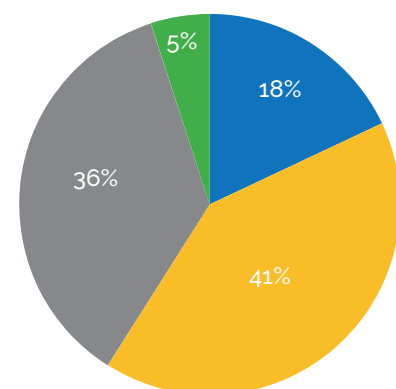


**Levant**

Senior Positions

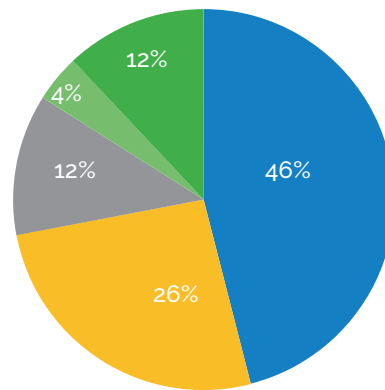


Mid-Career/ Junior Positions

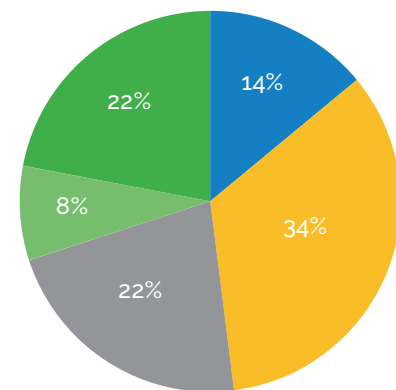


**North Africa**

Senior Positions



Mid-Career/ Junior Positions





## Most important skills when looking to recruit senior positions - Employer's perspective

Employers' feedback suggests that a considerable 'skill gap' exists at a senior level. Here's a breakdown of the importance and difficulty to find for each of the skills employers are looking for:

- **Collaboration/teamwork** (88% rated it as 'important' and 54% rated it as 'difficult' to find)
- **Efficiency** (87% rated it as 'important' and 57% rated it as 'difficult' to find)
- **Communication skills** (85% rated it as 'important' and 53% rated it as 'difficult' to find)
- **Personality and demeanour** (85% rated it as 'important' and 56% rated it as 'difficult' to find)
- **Leadership qualities** (84% rated it as 'important' and 59% rated it as 'difficult' to find)
- **Ability to work under pressure** (84% rated it as 'important' and 58% rated it as 'difficult' to find)
- **Planning/organisational skills** (84% rated it as 'important' and 59% rated it as 'difficult' to find)

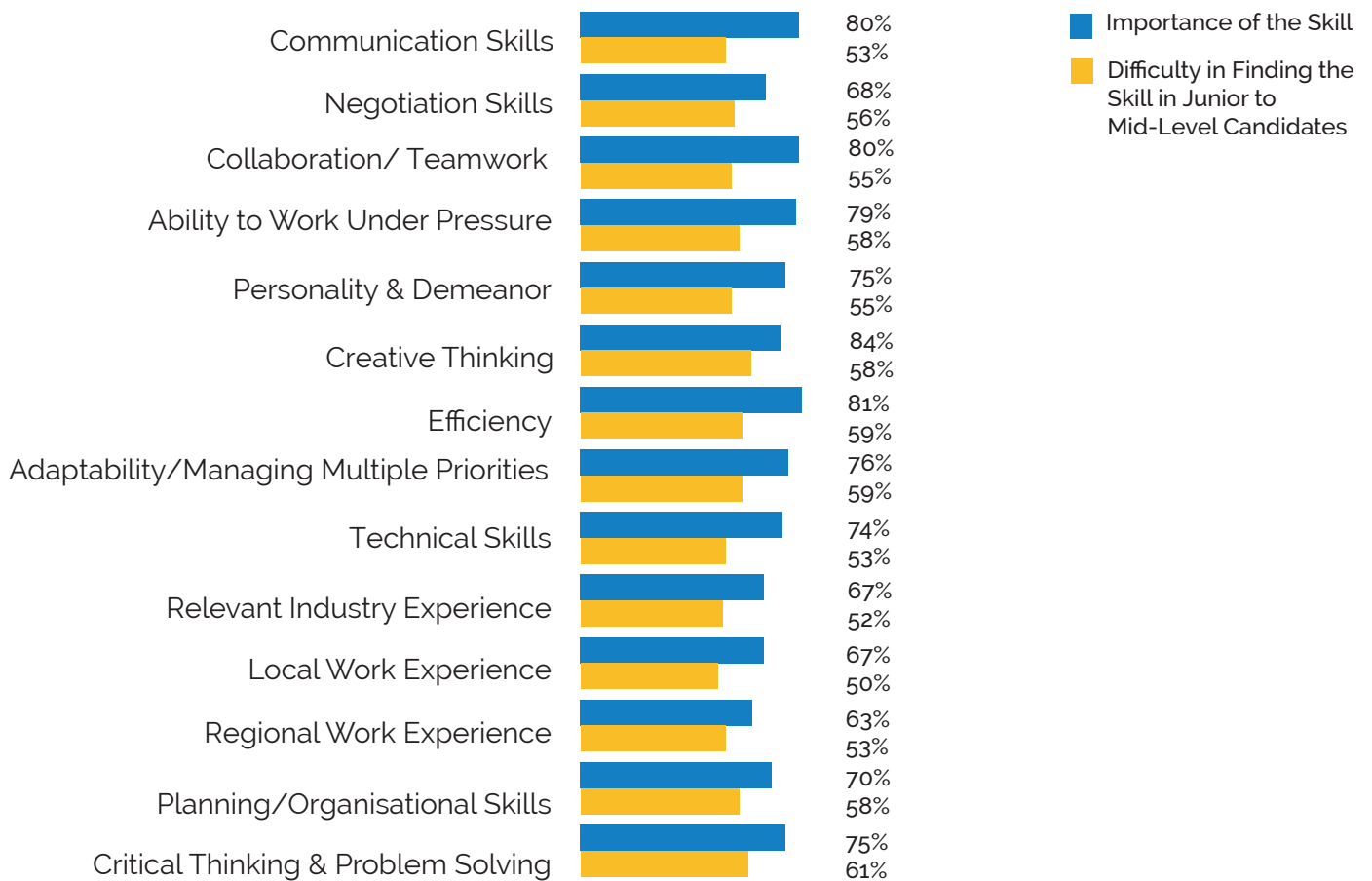
As previously noticed, 'technical skills' were often seen as posing the least challenge, with 'soft skills' seen as most lacking. 'Critical thinking/problem solving' (63%), 'creative thinking' (63%) and 'adaptability/managing multiple priorities' (60%) were seen as the most difficult skills to find at a senior level.



## Most important skills when looking to recruit mid- to junior-level positions – Employer’s perspective

Consistently, the study’s results also highlighted a marked ‘skill gap’ for junior to mid-level recruits, with employers having difficulty in finding more junior candidates with the skills they regard as most important, namely:

- **Efficiency** (81% rated it as ‘important’ and 59% rated it as ‘difficult’ to find)
- **Communication skills** (80% rated it as ‘important’ and 53% rated it as ‘difficult’ to find)
- **Collaboration/teamwork** (80% rated it as ‘important’ and 55% rated it as ‘difficult’ to find)



## Main reasons why companies have difficulties in finding the perfect candidate

Looking beyond skill sets, employers’ feedback suggests they perceive the recruitment difficulties experienced by their companies to result from a combination of factors, with ‘weak recruitment processes’ (30%), ‘lack of relevant work experience’ (23%) and ‘candidates’ lack of interest in developing their skills’ (23%) as the most critical reasons at a regional level. Interesting to note, that compared to the above factors, lack of soft or technical skills do not seem to be great barriers to recruitment.

Specifically, employers in North Africa were more likely than their GCC counterparts to mention candidates’ lack of interest in developing their skills as a major recruitment obstacle (30% vs. 20% in GCC). In contrast, GCC employers were more likely to blame ‘weak recruitment processes’ for the difficulties experienced in hiring talent (32% vs. 26% for North Africa).

	Total	GCC	Levant	North Africa
Base	227	155	22**	50
Weak Recruitment Process	30%	32%	27%	26%
Lack of Relevant Work Experience	23%	24%	36%	14%
Candidates' Lack of Interest in Developing their Skills	23%	20%	27%	30%
Lack of Soft Skills	9%	8%	-	18%
Lack of Technical Skills	7%	6%	9%	10%
Others	7%	10%	-	2%

### Main reasons why job seekers have difficulties in finding jobs that match their skills

When respondents were asked to select the main reasons why they felt job seekers have difficulty in finding jobs matching their skills, 'not knowing what employers are looking for' (34%) and 'educational institutions do not teach students the skills they need to enter the job market' (22%) topped the list of the main reasons job seekers cannot find suitable jobs. 'Lack of government support in offering programs for the unemployed to develop their skills' also emerged as an important barrier, at 17%.

When looking at country-specific responses, results suggest 'job seekers not knowing what skills employers are looking for' is more of an issue in the UAE (42%) and Qatar (42%), while those in Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia were most likely to claim 'educational institutions do not teach students the skills they need to enter the job market' (30%, 29% and 28%). Lack of government support was much more likely to be highlighted as an issue in Morocco (45%) and Tunisia (38%).

#### Job seekers don't know which skills employers are looking for:

34% 36% 42% 35% 42% 27% 31% 25% 21% 30% 27% 22% 26% 22%

#### Educational institutions do not teach students the skills they need to enter the job market:

22% 21% 16% 16% 18% 16% 24% 22% 31% 25% 30% 25% 29% 28%

#### Governments do not offer enough programs for the unemployed to develop their skills:

17% 13% 11% 15% 11% 20% 23% 22% 21% 19% 19% 45% 29% 38%

#### Companies do not provide enough training opportunities to employees:

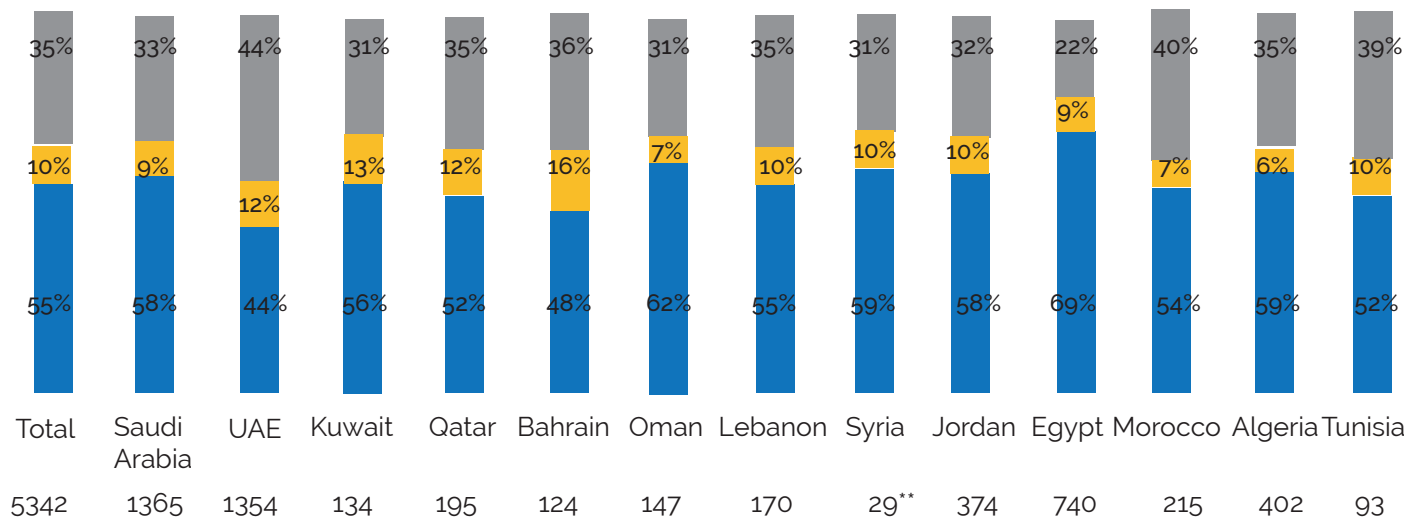
15% 18% 15% 25% 14% 23% 15% 15% 21% 12% 13% 3% 8% 5%

Total Saudi Arabia UAE Kuwait Qatar Bahrain Oman Lebanon Syria Jordan Egypt Morocco Algeria Tunisia

## Is there a 'skills gap' in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region?

Ultimately, the study demonstrates there is a clear 'skills gap' in the region (55% of respondents across the region claim that there is a skills gap). This appears to be a sentiment that is shared by both employers and job seekers. Across the various countries surveyed, respondents in Egypt (69%), Oman (62%), Algeria (59%) and Saudi Arabia (58%) were most likely to believe a skills gap exists in the region. On the other hand, while still acknowledging the existence of a skills gap, those in the UAE were the least likely to subscribe to this view (44%).

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't Know/Can't Say



Base: Both those whose company is currently searching for new employees and current job seekers.

## How to solve the skills gap crisis in the MENA: Solutions

Aside from 'companies providing enough training opportunities to employees' (42%), most respondents who believed a skills gap does exist felt the best solution to tackle the skills gap issue in the MENA would be through better cooperation among various stakeholders (companies, educational institutions and governments) (40%), and by providing students with the skills they need to enter the current job market (39%).

Calls for companies to provide enough training opportunities to employees were strongest in Bahrain (62%), while the desire for greater cooperation across key players was fairly consistent across all countries.

### Companies should provide enough training opportunities to employees:

42%	43%	50%	47%	51%	62%	44%	38%	59%	42%	35%	28%	34%	38%
Total	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Kuwait	Qatar	Bahrain	Oman	Lebanon	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia

### Companies, educational institutions and governments should work together to predict future skills needs:

40%	42%	37%	43%	43%	33%	38%	41%	29%	37%	40%	35%	43%	42%
Total	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Kuwait	Qatar	Bahrain	Oman	Lebanon	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia

### Companies and educational institutions should work together to provide students with the skills they need to enter the job market:

39%	40%	38%	44%	30%	30%	38%	44%	53%	38%	42%	41%	35%	31%
Total	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Kuwait	Qatar	Bahrain	Oman	Lebanon	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia

### Governments should offer programs for the unemployed to develop their skills:

25%	24%	22%	13%	16%	30%	26%	26%	18%	28%	28%	38%	30%	35%
Total	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Kuwait	Qatar	Bahrain	Oman	Lebanon	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia

### Educational institutions should teach students the skills they need to enter the job market:

24%	23%	18%	13%	18%	23%	25%	25%	12%	32%	28%	32%	31%	23%
Total	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Kuwait	Qatar	Bahrain	Oman	Lebanon	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia

### Candidates should demonstrate an interest in taking relevant courses to update their skills:

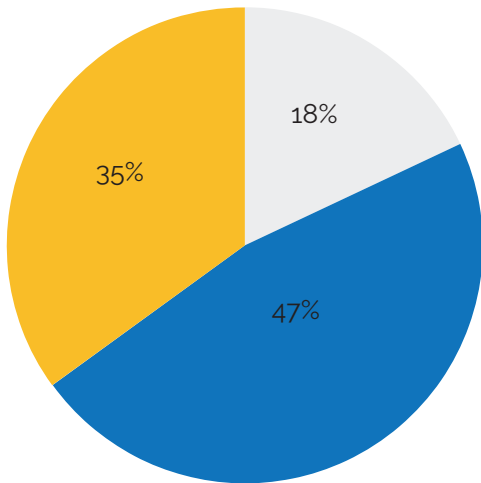
2%	2%	2%	1%	4%	-	2%	1%	6%	2%	1%	-	0%	2%
Total	Saudi Arabia	UAE	Kuwait	Qatar	Bahrain	Oman	Lebanon	Syria	Jordan	Egypt	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia

# Appendix A

## Detailed Profile of Respondents

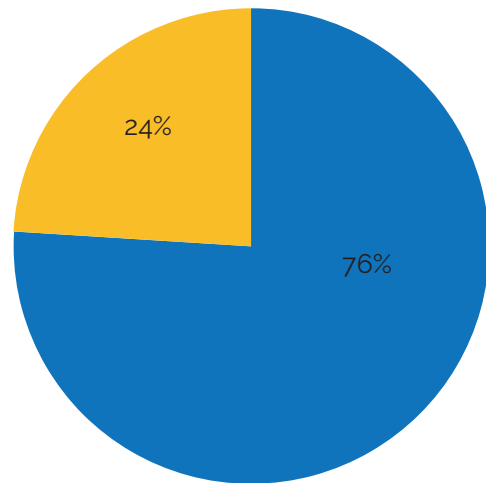
### Age Group

40+ years   30-39 years   Below 30 years



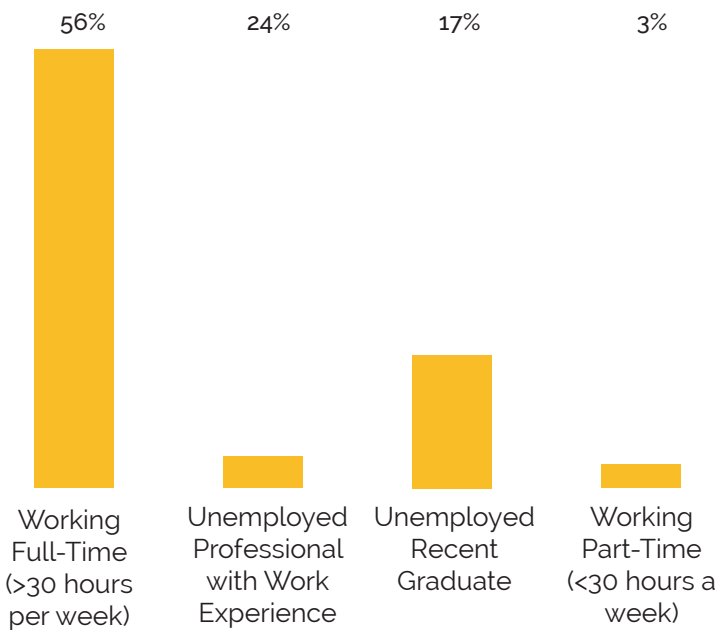
### Gender

Female   Male

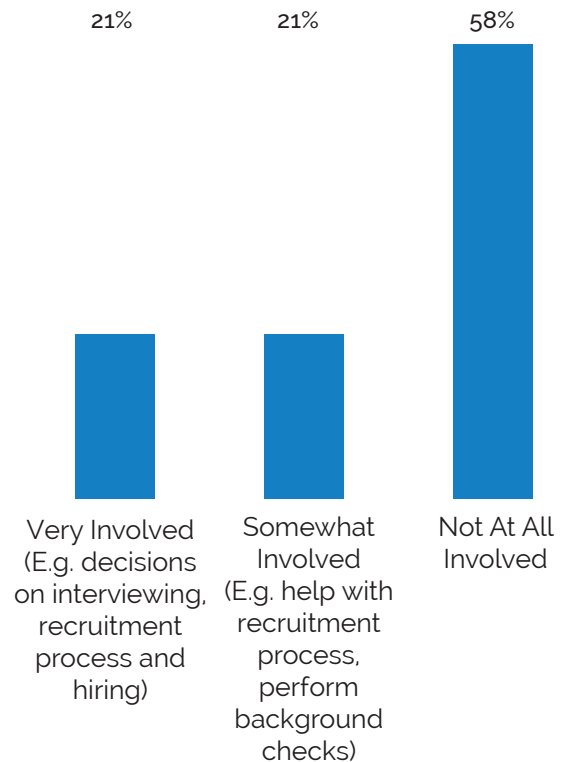


Base: All respondents - 5345

### Working Status

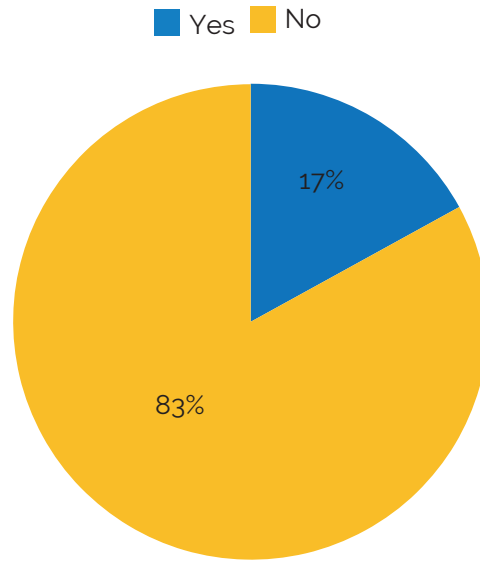


### Involved in the Hiring Process?



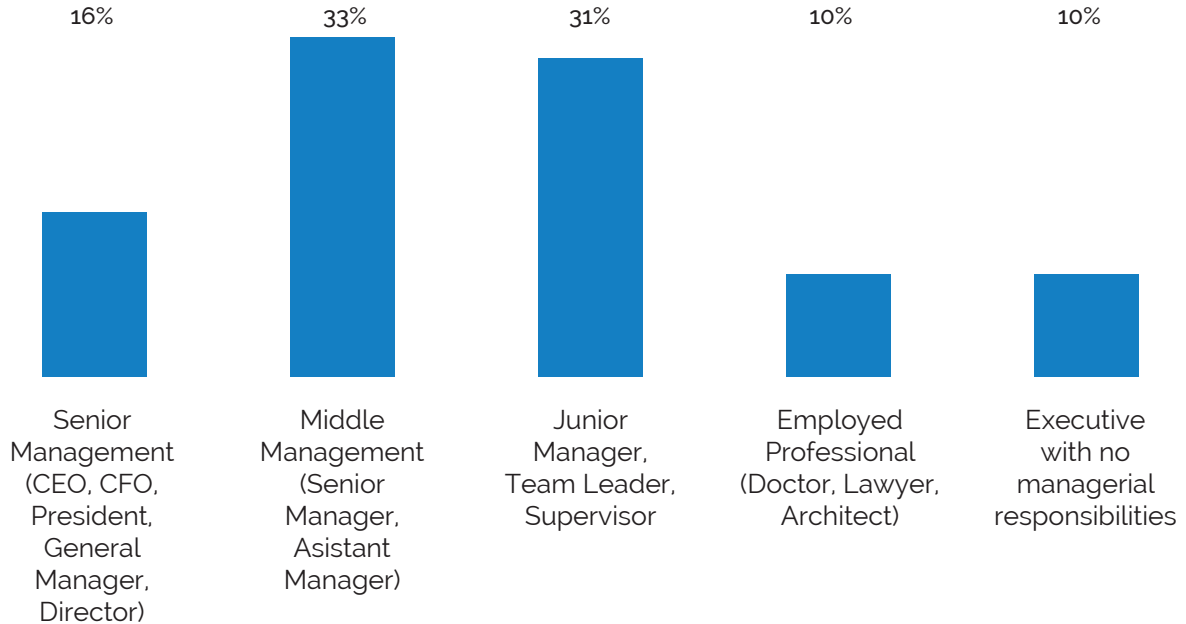
Base: All current employees - 3194

## Is your company currently looking for new employees?



Base: All those who are involved in the hiring process - 1350

## Level of Seniority at Work

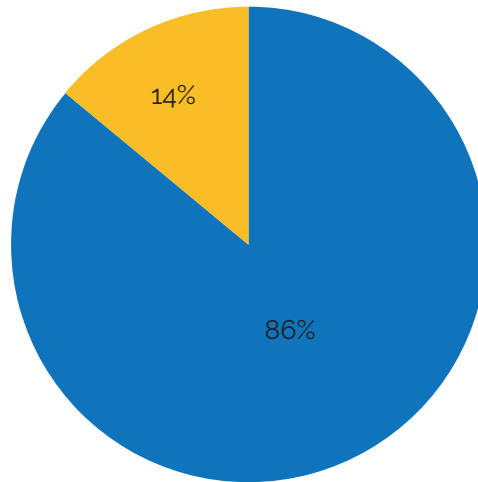


Base (All those whose company is currently searching for new employees) – 236

## Are you currently looking for a job?

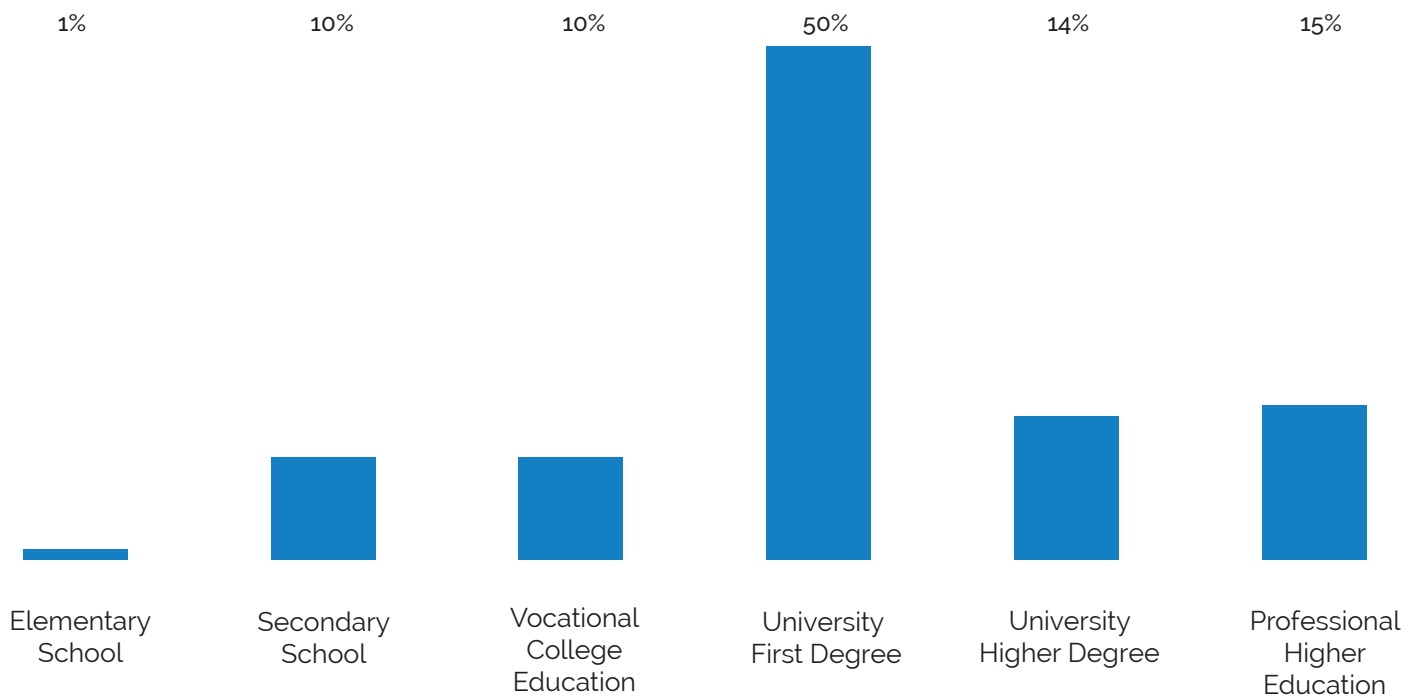
■ I am actively looking for a job (several times a week)

■ I am looking for a job but not actively



Base: All current employees or unemployed - 5345

## Level of Education



Base: All respondents - 5345



