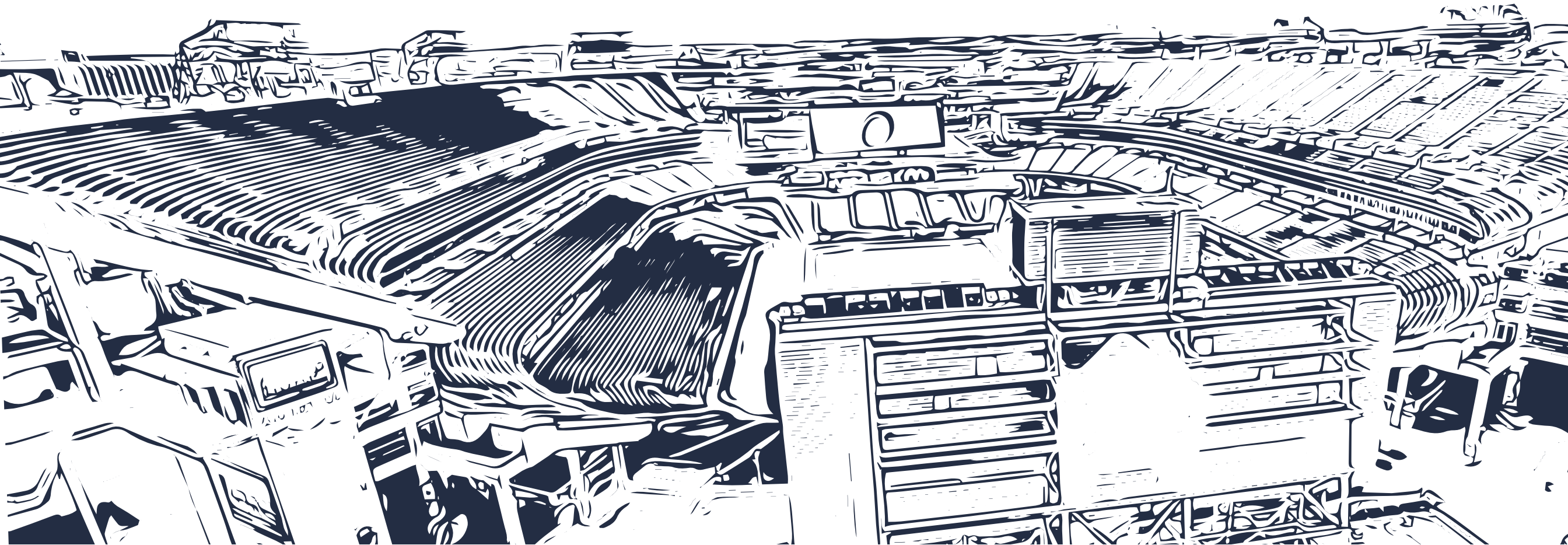


2ND ANNUAL EDITION

Work In
SPORTS
Powered by iHire

THE STATE OF SPORTS HIRING

2022





CONTENTS

'22

Introduction	3
Employment Status Scoreboard	4
Job Search Motivators	5
Job Search Resources	6
Job Search Hurdles	8
Posting Up: What Job Seekers Want in an Ad	9
Instant Replay: Job Seeker Retrospective	10
Fast Forward: What's Next for the Sports Job Market?	11
Job Search Trends	11
Hiring Trends According to Employers	12
Recap: Top 10 Plays	14

INTRODUCTION

Sports are back – *roaring back*.

From the pros and college athletics to rec leagues, the sports industry has returned to its glory days. Case in point: The spectator sports market is poised to register a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of **42.8%** and reach **\$181.47 billion by the end of 2022**. Atop that, new revenue streams and fan experiences stemming from sports betting, NFTs (non-fungible tokens), eSports, NIL (name, image, and likeness) deals, virtual reality, content creation, community relations, and athlete marketing are making the industry's comeback even more thrilling.

As a result, it's an exciting time to work in sports, and the field is stacked with career opportunities – from Jan. 1 to June 1, 2022, WorkInSports and iHireFitnessAndRec promoted **123,642 job postings**. These ads comprised roles in every aspect of the sports industry, including coaching, sport management, gameday operations, sales and marketing, media, human resources, and many more.

Meanwhile, the U.S. job market is experiencing some truly unique circumstances in 2022. Low unemployment rates (**3.6%** in June) and the unwavering Great Resignation (**21.8 million** workers voluntarily left jobs from January through May) have created a talent shortage and left employers with **11.3 million** unfilled positions. Although this is positive news for job seekers who are enjoying plenty of options for work, record inflation and talks of a recession linger as candidates navigate a highly competitive employment arena.

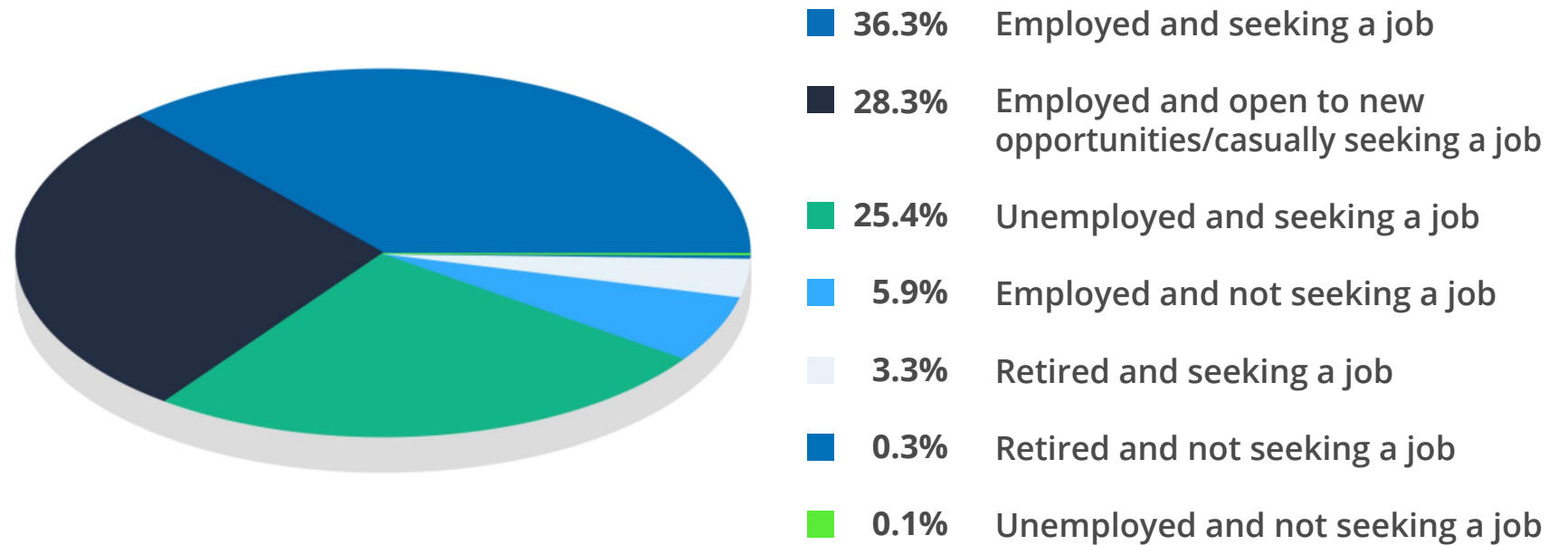
For a front-row perspective on today's sports employment landscape, WorkInSports surveyed 512 sports job seekers and spoke with dozens of industry experts in the talent management, HR, and recruitment marketing spaces. Key findings and takeaways are summarized here in **WorkInSports' 2nd Annual State of Sports Hiring Report**.



EMPLOYMENT STATUS SCOREBOARD

Unemployment continues to fall across industries, and sports is no exception. While 25.4% of survey respondents said they were unemployed and seeking a job, that figure is down from 32.5% in 2021's report. More interestingly, 64.6% of participants were employed and seeking a job either actively or passively ("open to new opportunities"), up from 51.8% in 2021, hinting that the Great Resignation will persist.

WHAT IS YOUR EMPLOYMENT STATUS?



EXPERT TAKE: THE GREAT RESIGNATION HITS SPORTS

"Candidates, more than ever before, are willing to explore what else is out there. While many may be simply dipping their toe into the job market, others are more likely to engage aggressively in the job search. While they may have leverage given that they are employed, they should be cautious about jumping simply in hopes of the grass being greener."

- Mark Gress, Jr., Partner, Prodigy Search



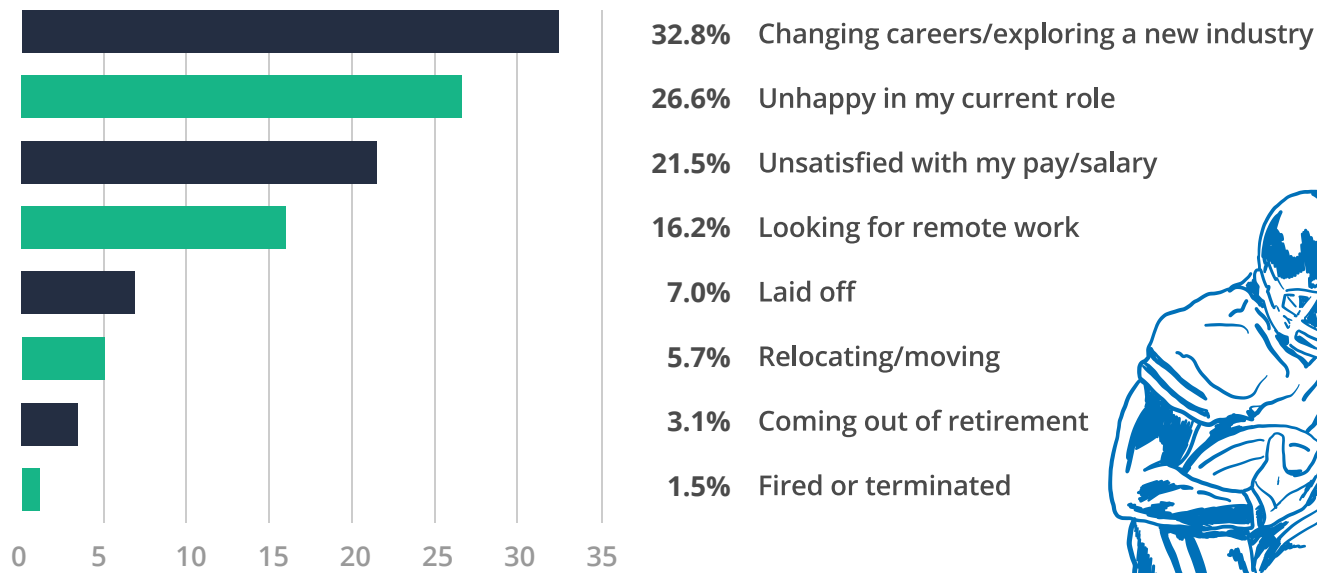
JOB SEARCH MOTIVATORS

What's driving sports job seekers to toss their hats into the ring? The most common reason survey participants gave for seeking a new job involved an interest in changing careers or exploring new industries (32.8%), while over a quarter of respondents (26.6%) expressed general unhappiness with their current role.

Whether job dissatisfaction is due to a toxic work environment, a need for more flexibility, or a desire to work for a company whose values are similar to their own, people want careers that align with their passion and provide a sense of purpose; they will take their talents elsewhere if their employer does not fulfill those needs.

IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY SEARCHING FOR A JOB, WHAT IS THE REASON?

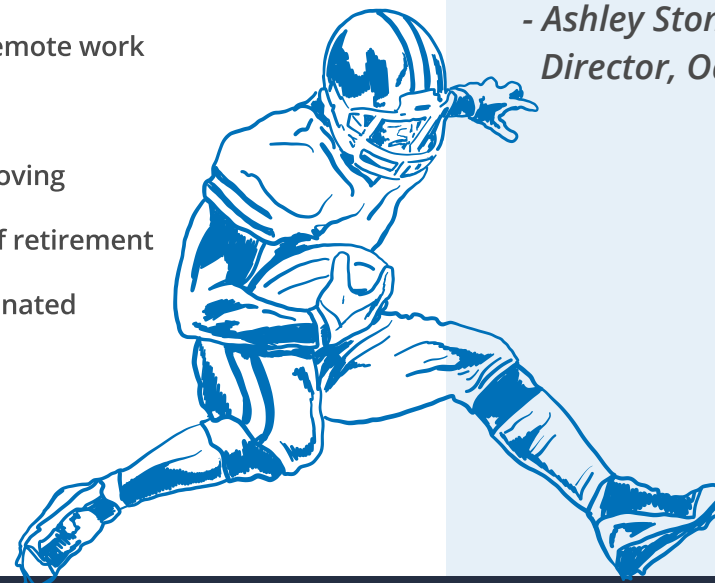
(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



EXPERT TAKE: PIVOT TO FIND HAPPINESS

"I initially felt called to go into professional sports, but that didn't end up being my right fit. I needed my values to align with my work. I pivoted into working directly with student-athletes and it fills my bucket to this day. Happiness isn't just working in sports; it's finding the right fit for you in sports."

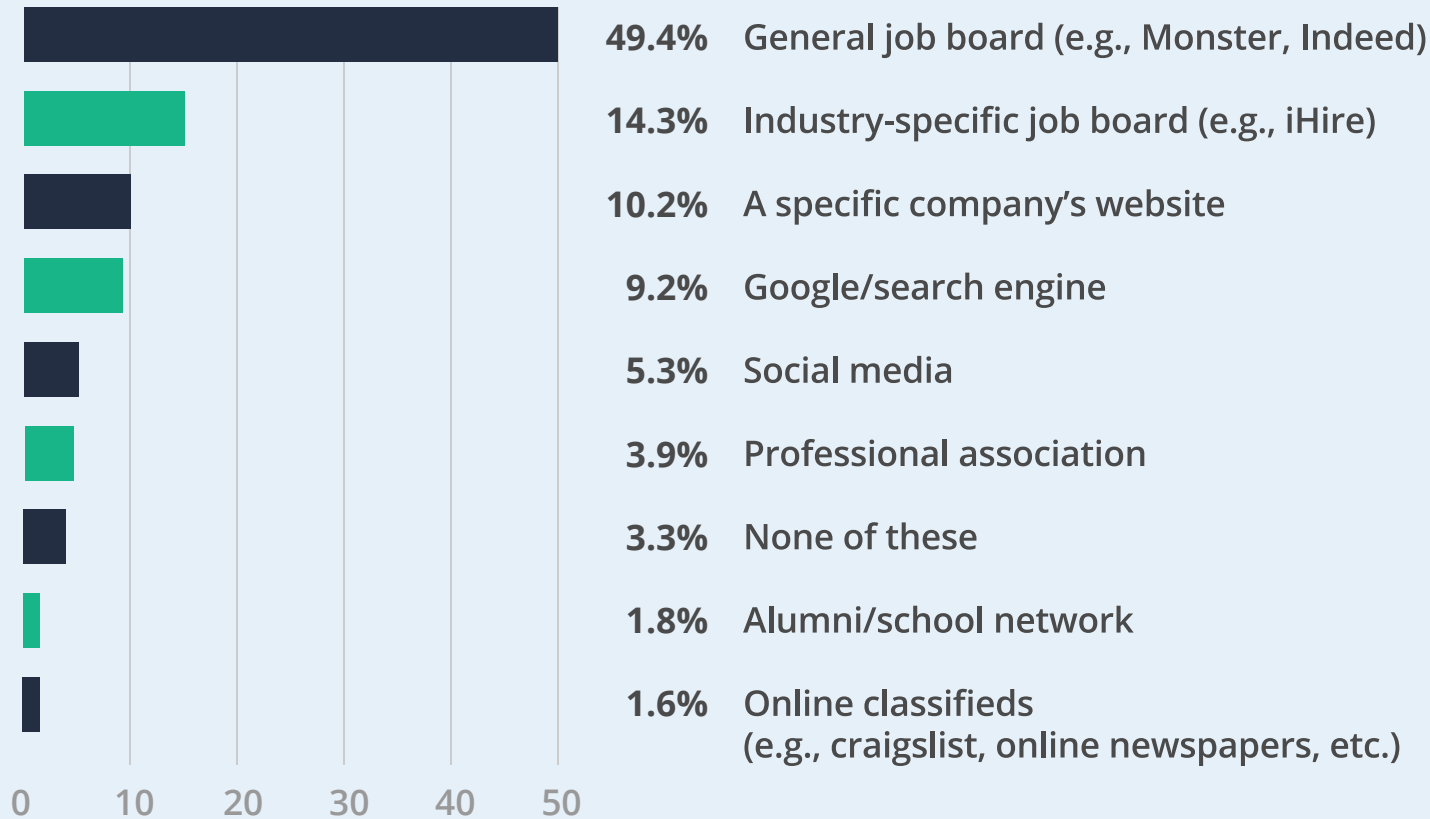
- Ashley Stone, Associate Athletic Director, Oakland University



JOB SEARCH RESOURCES

Job boards continue to serve as sports candidates' go-to online job search resources, with 63.7% saying they'd visit a general or industry-specific job board first if they needed to find work immediately (66.1% said the same in 2021's survey).

IMAGINE THAT YOU NEED A NEW JOB IMMEDIATELY. WHERE (ONLINE) WOULD YOU LOOK FIRST?



POPULAR SPORTS CAREER TITLES

The following career titles appeared the most frequently in job postings on WorkInSports and iHireFitnessAndRec from Jan. 1 – June 1, 2022:

- 1 *Coach*
- 2 *Athletic/Personal Trainer*
- 3 *Instructor*
- 4 *Lifeguard*
- 5 *Sales Associate*
- 6 *General Manager/Director*
- 7 *Program/Activity Coordinator*
- 8 *Counselor*
- 9 *Physical Therapist*
- 10 *Golf Pro*

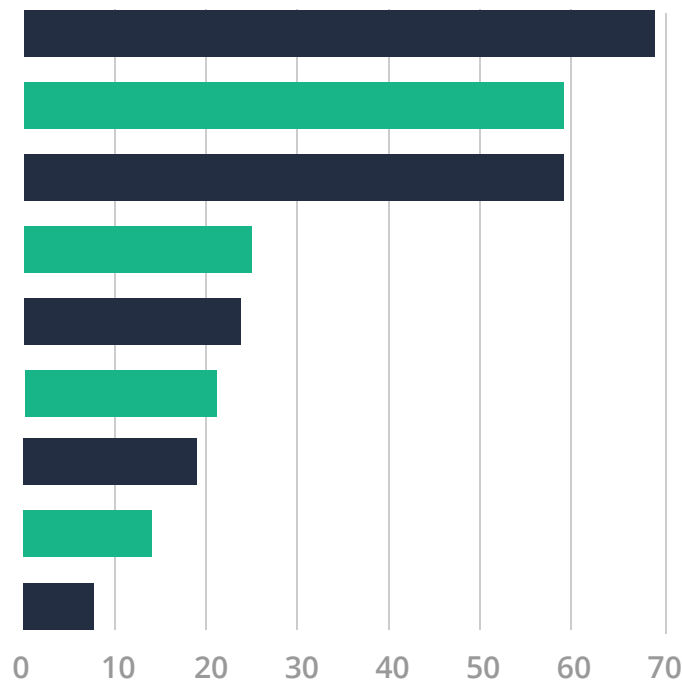


JOB SEARCH RESOURCES

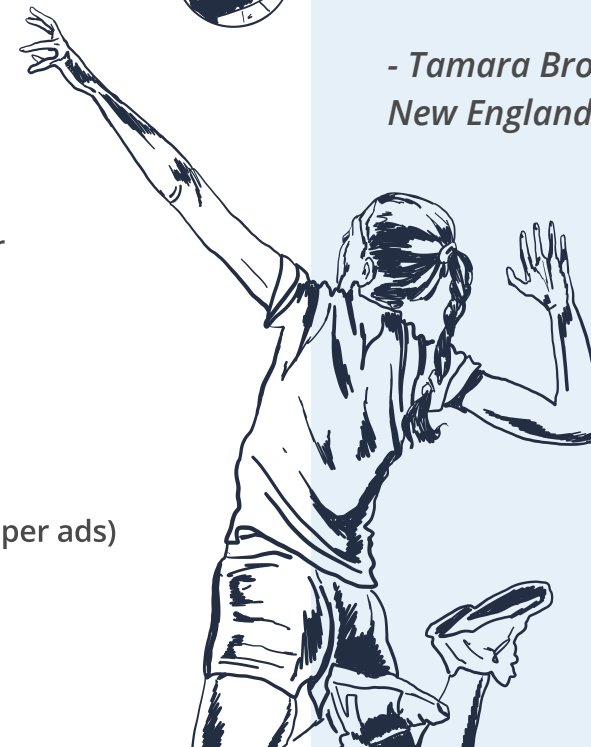
Although job boards are the clear job search MVP, sports candidates also lean heavily on potential employers' websites (68.6%), social media (59.2%), and networking (58.6%) when searching for work.

ASIDE FROM JOB BOARDS, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING RESOURCES DO YOU USE TO SEARCH FOR WORK?

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



- 68.6% Websites of companies I want to work for
- 59.2% Social media
- 58.6% Word of mouth/networking
- 25.9% Professional associations
- 24.2% Staffing firm/recruiter/headhunter
- 21.3% Alumni/school networks
- 18.9% Online classifieds (e.g., craigslist)
- 13.9% Job fairs
- 7.6% Print advertisements (e.g., newspaper ads)



EXPERT TAKE: BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

“The more people that you know in this industry, the better. I’ve met so many valuable people at every internship and career stop I’ve made, and I keep in touch with each one of them. We help each other grow. Relationships matter in this industry.”

- Tamara Brown, Reporter, New England Patriots

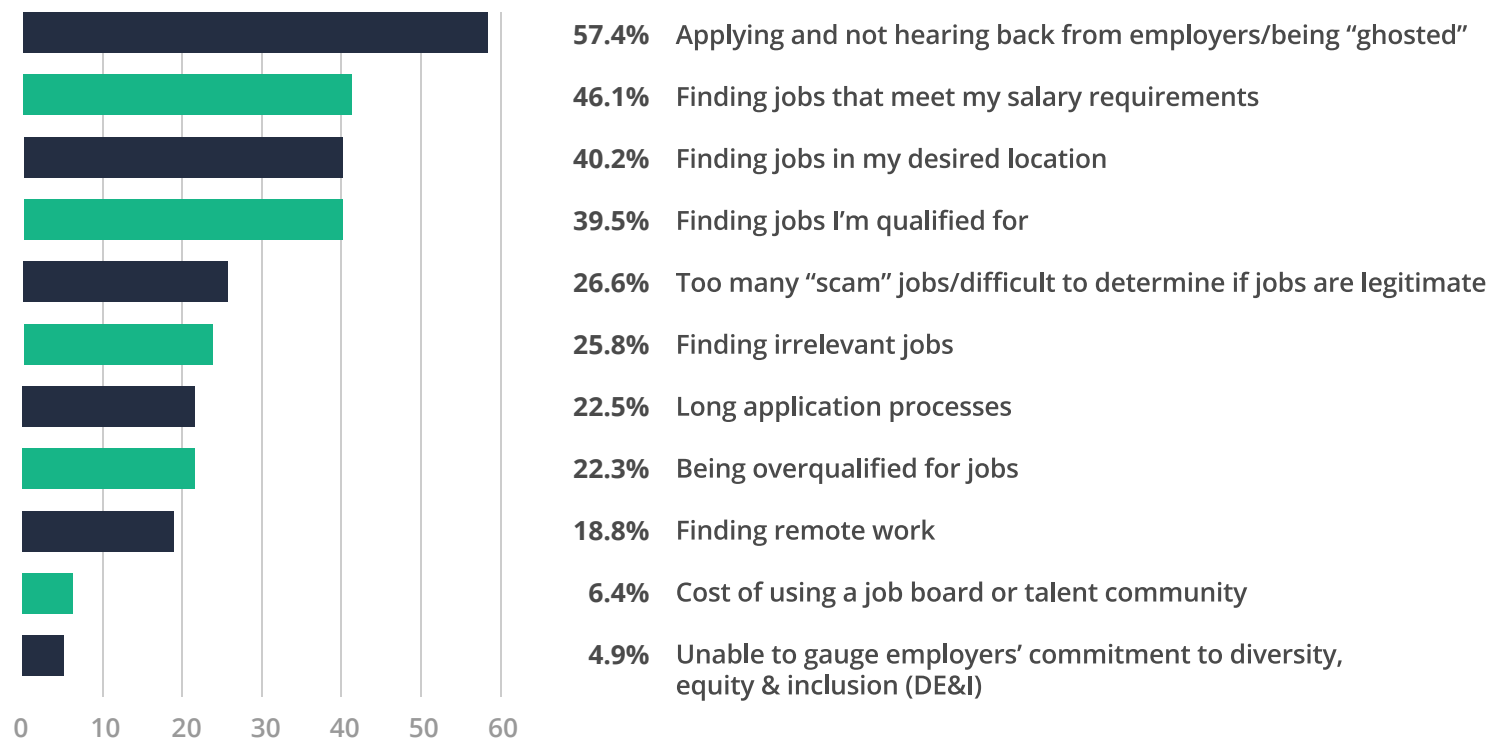


JOB SEARCH HURDLES

For the second straight year, “ghosting” (not hearing back from employers after applying) was sports industry job seekers’ biggest challenge (57.4% in 2022 and 54.0% in 2021). This suggests that either employers need to step up their communication game, or job seekers must make a stronger effort to follow up on their applications (or maybe a mix of both).

WHEN SEARCHING FOR WORK ON AN ONLINE JOB BOARD OR RECRUITING PLATFORM, WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES?

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



EXPERT TAKE: BEAT GHOSTING WITH A FOLLOW-UP PLAN

“If you’re a job seeker, these are the most common reasons you are ghosted: The employer filled the position internally, they decided not to hire, the interviewer isn’t confident enough to communicate bad news, or they fear being accused of discrimination, so they stay quiet. Bottom line: It likely has nothing to do with you personally. Executing a structured follow-up plan is all you can do. Don’t let ghosting get you down.”

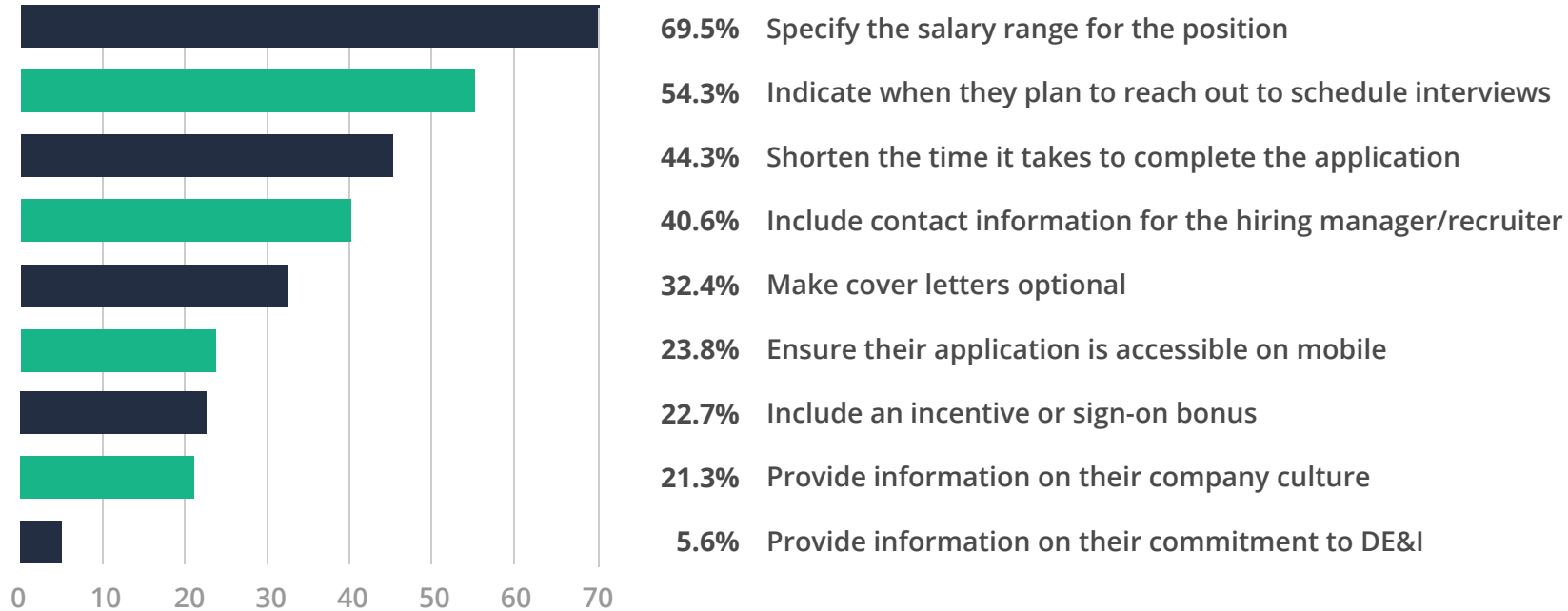
- *Dan Rossetti, President, Ascension Sports Partners*

POSTING UP: WHAT JOB SEEKERS WANT IN AN AD

The majority of sports job seekers (69.5%) would be more likely to apply for a job if the posting specified the salary range – up from 58.6% who said the same in 2021’s survey. As inflation and the cost of living rise, it’s no surprise that compensation is a priority. Respondents also valued an indication of when employers plan to reach out to schedule interviews (54.3%) and contact details for the hiring manager or recruiter (44.3%) – both responses related to tackling ghosting.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING COULD EMPLOYERS/RECRUITERS DO BETTER TO GET YOU TO APPLY FOR THEIR ONLINE JOB POSTINGS?

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



EXPERT TAKE: PROFIT WITH PASSION AND POSITIVITY

“Demand is high for sports jobs which is why entry-level jobs don’t always come with the best salary. But, if you are versatile in your skill set, bring your passion to work, have a positive attitude, and make the culture better with you in it, the money is there in the sports industry.”

- Kali Franklin, SVP, Head of Talent and Recruiting, Overtime Elite



**EXPERT TAKE: ARE
PRE-RECORDED VIRTUAL
INTERVIEWS THE 'NEXT
BIG THING?'**

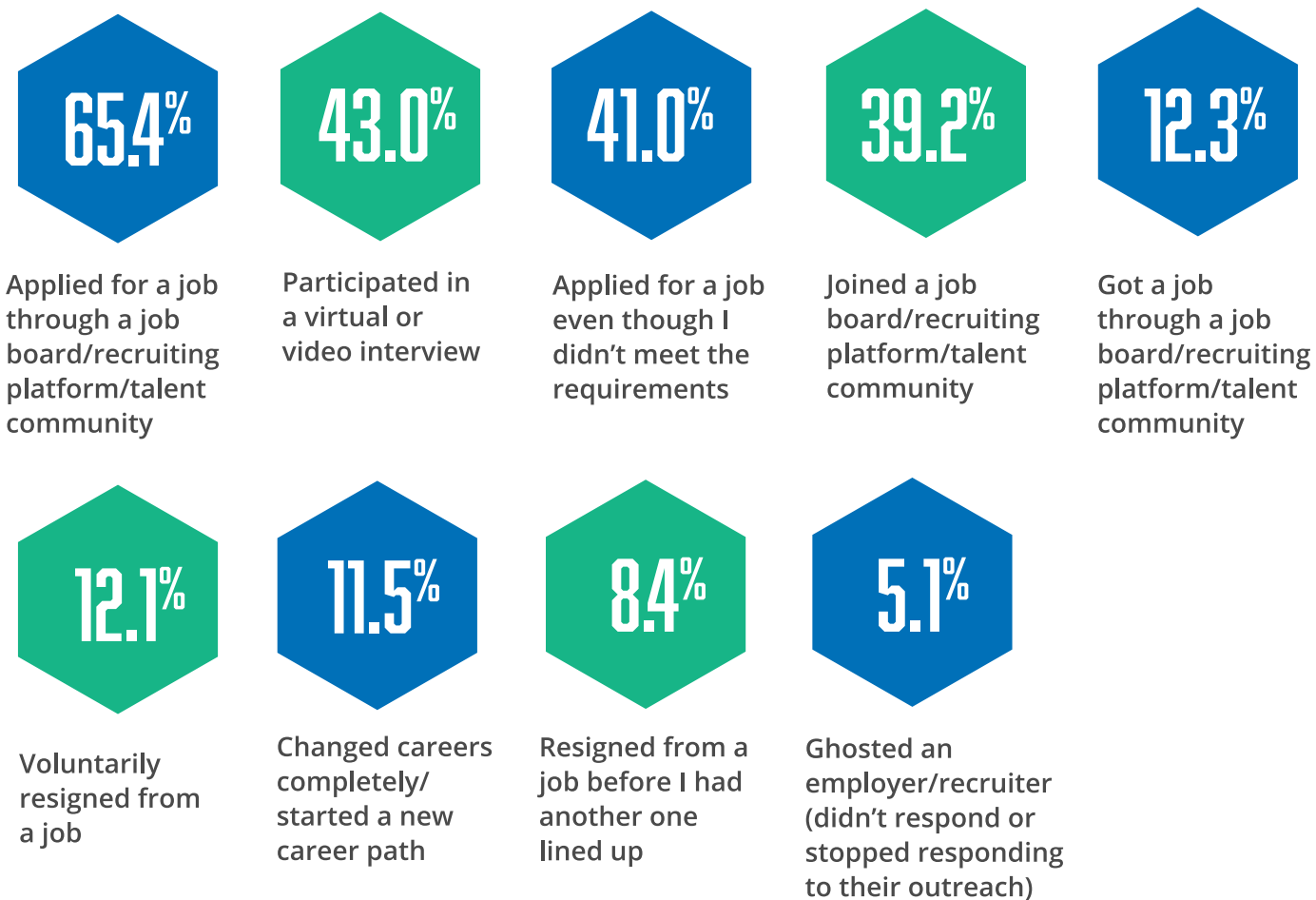
"[Pre-recorded] virtual interviews are here to stay. They are more efficient for our team, and they ensure every candidate has the same question. They remove bias from the recruiting process in a really effective manner."

- John Ferguson, Chief Human Resources Officer, NASCAR

INSTANT REPLAY: JOB SEEKER RETROSPECTIVE

Next, WorkInSports asked survey participants to identify which job search and career-related activities they'd done in the past year. Here's what they said:

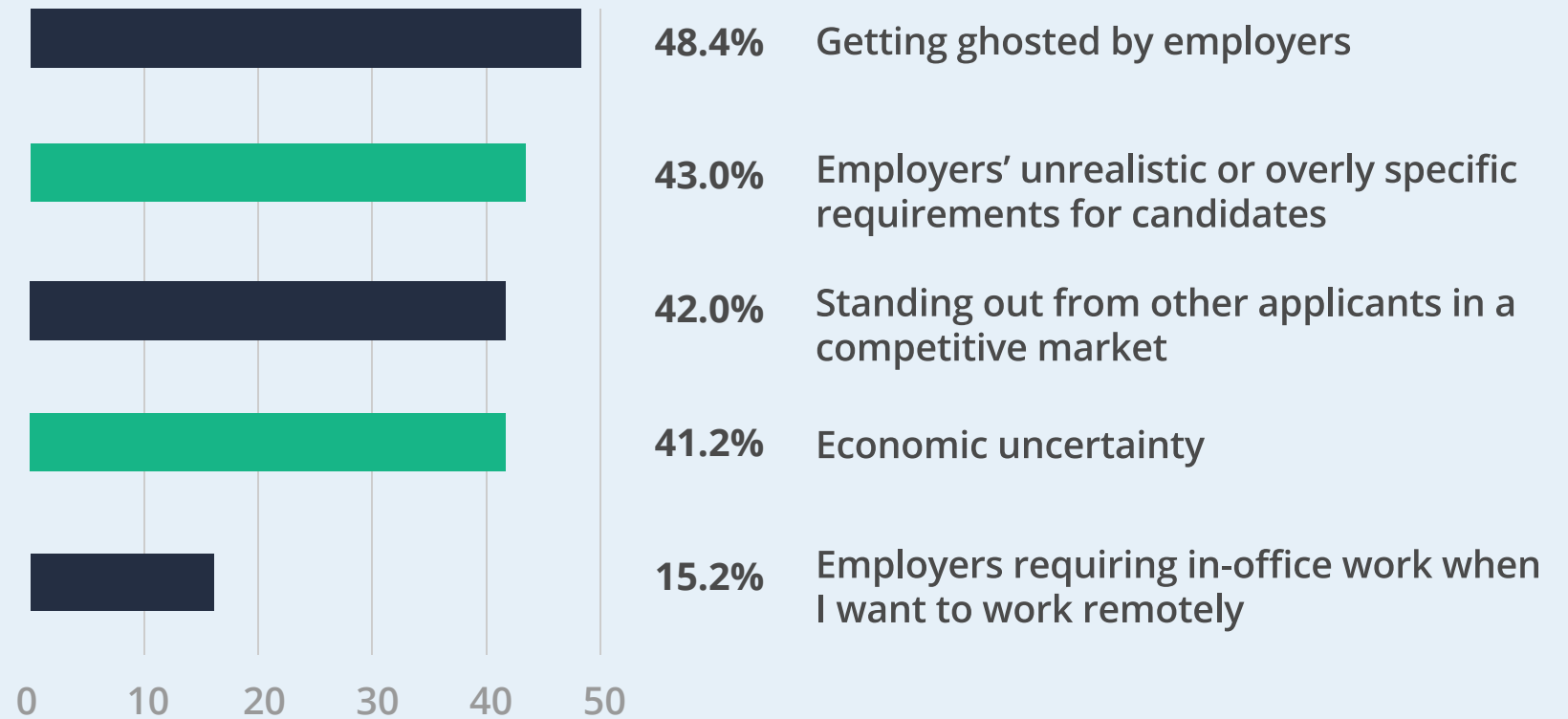
IN THE PAST YEAR, I HAVE:



FAST FORWARD: WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE SPORTS JOB MARKET?

JOB SEARCH TRENDS

In the coming year, sports industry candidates anticipate that the following trends will impact their job search efforts:



EXPERT TAKE: SLAM-DUNK ADVICE FOR ACCEPTING A NEW JOB

"You never know when you are going to be ready for a new job or promotion, but when the opportunity is presented to you, why would you say 'no?'" - *Camille Buxeda, Director, WSLAM*

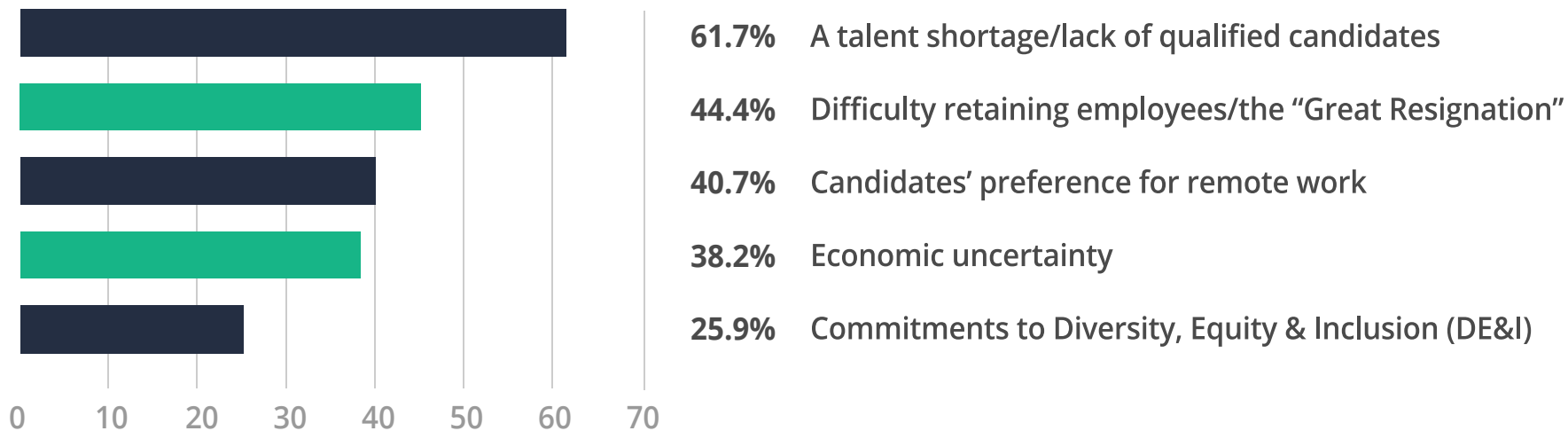


FAST FORWARD: WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE SPORTS JOB MARKET?

HIRING TRENDS ACCORDING TO EMPLOYERS

To supplement job seeker data, WorkInSports polled 81 sports industry leaders involved in hiring, talent management, and recruiting on their thoughts about what's to come for sports employment. A shortage of qualified talent was respondents' chief concern (61.7%), followed by challenges with employee retention (44.4%). Further, 53.0% of employers said sports betting will have the highest demand for staffing over the next five years, while 53.4% envision their organization hiring the most for roles in sales and operations.

IN THE COMING YEAR, WHICH TRENDS DO YOU EXPECT TO IMPACT YOUR HIRING EFFORTS? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



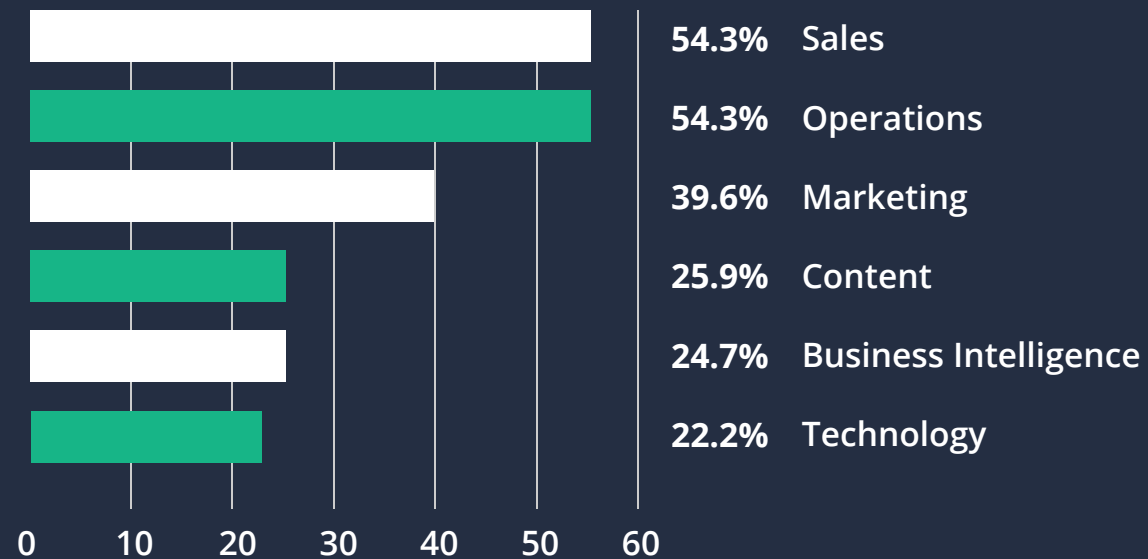
EXPERT TAKE: DE&I TAKES TIME

"DE&I work has always been a slow build. We see changes happen over decades, not weeks. If you get into DE&I work, it's important to realize you aren't going to make systemic changes immediately; it will take time and consistent effort."

-Dr. Chris Brown, Senior Associate Athletic Director, DE&I, University of Delaware

FAST FORWARD: WHAT'S NEXT FOR THE SPORTS JOB MARKET?

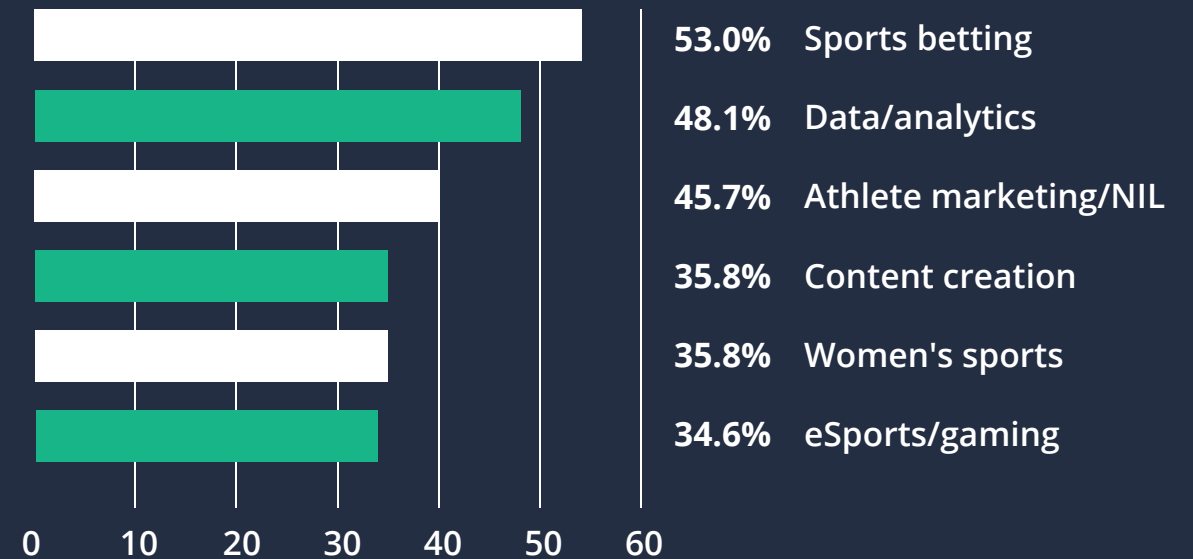
WHICH OF THESE AREAS DO YOU BELIEVE WILL HAVE THE HIGHEST STAFFING DEMAND OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



EXPERT TAKE: MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND

"This is a very exciting time in sports marketing, with name, image, and likeness (NIL) trends, NFTs, social influencer marketing... I do believe eSports is the opportunity we don't discuss enough. I've been fascinated by the valuations of these organizations and influence these gamers have with younger audiences." - *Mike Neligan, CMO, VaynerSports*

IN THE COMING YEAR, WHERE DO YOU ENVISION YOUR ORGANIZATION DOING THE MOST HIRING? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)



EXPERT TAKE: BET ON SPORTS BETTING GROWTH

"This market is just getting started in the U.S. If you look at Australia, which has had legalized gambling forever, they are still seeing year-over-year growth. In the U.S., sports betting is becoming a mass-market product." - *Johnny Aitken, CEO, PointsBet USA*



RECAP:

TOP 10 PLAYS

With 2022's State of Sports Hiring Report in the books, this countdown summarizes the most compelling findings and takeaways.

10 JOB SEEKERS VALUE THEIR TIME:

44.3% of candidates said they'd be more likely to apply for a job if the employer shortened the time it takes to complete an application. Related, 22.5% were frustrated by long application processes, and 34.2% want cover letters – often viewed as a time-consuming writing task – to be optional.

9 SALARY STAYS TOP OF MIND:

46.1% of sports job seekers said they struggled to find jobs that meet their salary requirements, and 21.5% said they are looking for a new job because they are unsatisfied with their pay. Additionally, 46.1% would be more likely to apply for a job if the employer specified the salary range for the position in their posting.

8 ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY LOOMS:

41.2% of job seekers and 38.2% of employers expect economic uncertainty to affect their job search and hiring efforts, respectively, in the coming year.

EXPERT TAKE: DON'T BE AFRAID TO TAKE RISKS

"If you are going to work and your goal is to stay in the center lane where it's safe, you'll never do anything amazing. If you want to do something amazing in life, there is some risk involved."

- Kali Franklin, SVP, Head of Talent and Recruiting, Overtime Elite



7 **JOB BOARDS ARE FIRST-ROUND PICKS:**

63.7% of candidates said they'd go to a job board before any other online resources if they needed to find work immediately. Additionally, 65.4% of candidates applied for a job through a job board, and 39.2% joined a job board in the past year.

6 **NEW SPORTS CAREER PATHS ARE EMERGING:**

53.0% of employers predicted that sports betting will have the highest staffing demand over the next five years, followed by data/analytics (48.1%) and athlete marketing/name, image, and likeness (NIL) (45.7%), creating additional career options for sports-minded professionals.

5 **REMOTE WORK REMAINS A FACTOR:**

40.7% of employers believe candidates' preference to work remotely will affect their ability to hire in the coming year, as most sports roles must be performed in person. However, remote work doesn't appear to be a dealbreaker – just 16.2% of job seekers are searching for a new role specifically because they want to work remotely, and 15.2% are concerned with employers requiring in-office work.

4 **CAREER CHANGERS HAVE ENTERED THE SPORTS ARENA:**

32.8% of sports industry job seekers are looking for a new job because they're changing careers or exploring a new industry, while 11.5% said they've changed careers completely or started a new career path in the past year.



3

THERE'S A GAP BETWEEN JOB REQUIREMENTS AND CANDIDATE SKILLS:

39.5% of sports job seekers are struggling to find jobs they're qualified for, and 41.0% said they've recently applied for a job although they didn't meet the requirements. Meanwhile, 61.7% of sports employers expect a talent shortage and a lack of qualified candidates to hinder their hiring efforts in the coming year. But are employers being overly picky? 43.0% of job seekers said employers' unrealistic or overly specific requirements for candidates will impact their job search efforts.

2

GHOSTING HAUNTS SPORTS JOB SEEKERS:

Applying for jobs and not hearing back from employers was the No. 1 frustration among sports job seekers (57.4%), while 48.4% of respondents said they expect ghosting to affect their search in the next year. Although candidates, too, have long been accused of unresponsiveness during the hiring process, just 5.1% of job seekers admitted to ghosting an employer or recruiter in the past year.

1

THE GREAT RESIGNATION CONTINUES TO SWEEP THE NATION:

The sports industry isn't safe from the talent retention challenges hitting just about every sector – 64.6% of survey respondents were employed but seeking a job either actively or passively (up from 51.8% in 2021). Moreover, 12.1% said they are hunting for work because they voluntarily resigned from a job, and 44.4% of sports industry employers expect employee turnover to impact their ability to hire in the coming year.



Job seekers, make your
passion your career

SEARCH SPORTS JOBS

Employers, fill your roster
with sports-minded talent

START HIRING



SURVEY METHODOLOGY

512 job seekers and 81 employers in the sports industry responded to WorkInSports' State of Sports Hiring Survey in May and June of 2022. The survey was conducted as part of parent brand iHire's 2022 State of Online Recruiting Report. Respondents came from iHire's job and job seeker databases comprising candidates and employers from the WorkInSports and iHireFitnessAndRec talent communities. Some employer responses came from WorkInSports' industry contacts, while supplemental employment data derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). All decimal points are rounded to the nearest tenth. For many questions, multiple answers could be selected, so percentages add up to a sum greater than 100%. In some instances, survey questions were skipped by an individual respondent.

ABOUT WORKINSPORTS

Since 2000, WorkInSports has been widely recognized as the #1 source for jobs in the sports industry. With over 8,000 sports employers nationwide actively posting their latest openings, WorkInSports has helped thousands of job seekers follow their passion and discover their dream careers in sports. WorkInSports is part of the iHire family of 57 industry-focused talent communities. Visit www.WorkInSports.com for more information.

