MRA SURVEYS

2025

Industrial & Production Trades Survey Results

MRA
The Trusted HR Experts

2025

INDUSTRIAL & PRODUCTION TRADES SURVEY

MRA SURVEYS

CONFIDENTIAL SURVEY REPORT

This survey is provided with the understanding that the information will:

- Remain strictly confidential.
- Be restricted to authorized personnel only.
- Not be used in collective bargaining or grievance proceedings.
- Protect completely organizational identity.

For a complete list of surveys available from MRA, please visit our website at www.mranet.org. Survey questions can be directed to 800.488.4845, ext. 3508 or Surveys@mranet.org.

MRA – THE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION
SURVEYS & BUSINESS RESEARCH

PARTICIPATION MATTERS!

Your participation in MRA surveys provides critical survey input for reliable market data to help your organization stay competitive. Our data is the result of our strong partnerships with members like you. By participating, you receive:

- Free survey results for member participants.
- MRA's online survey tools—MRAPay and On-Demand Salary Tool.
- HRCI credit for recertification or SHRM Professional Development Credit (PDC) for qualifying surveys.

MRA SURVEYS RELY ON US

Since 1901, MRA has produced high-quality, trusted surveys that help provide confidence of data-driven decisions within member organizations. Our team of professionals, with expertise in survey design, statistical analysis, compensation, and market research, provides accuracy and insights that help your organization succeed.

ABOUT OUR SURVEYS

POLICIES, BENEFITS, AND TRENDS DATA

Staying current on policies, benefits, and trends can be daunting. We offer a variety of surveys to help you keep current and compliant.

COMPENSATION DATA

We offer compensation data for over 1,000 unique jobs—providing you with accurate data for all areas within your organization.

BUSINESS INSIGHT & INTELLIGENCE

What would you like to ask your customers or employees today? We can help provide answers to your most desired questions about your business.

800.488.4845 www.mranet.org

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Organizations that employ industrial, production, maintenance, and trade workers face different challenges in attracting and retaining qualified talent from other industries. These fields constantly evolve due to technological shifts, supply chain demands, and customer expectations. As a result, employers can be pressured to recruit and retain skilled workers who can meet current needs and future growth.

Compensation, primarily base pay, is the largest component of employers' total reward commitment to employees. Organizations should consistently review and understand their compensation strategy to ensure it is also the most valuable component to employees. Ensuring pay practices are aligned with current market trends, regional differences, and skill levels can help employers gain a higher advantage over their counterparts who do not.

Many industrial and production environments operate beyond the standard 9-to-5, with second, third, or weekend schedules. These less desirable shifts can present additional challenges. To help offset this, the majority of organizations offer shift differentials. Shift differentials are a way to add extra compensation to an employee's base pay for various shifts they may work. Depending on an organization's compensation strategy, these differentials may come in the form of a flat dollar amount per hour or a percentage increase over base pay.

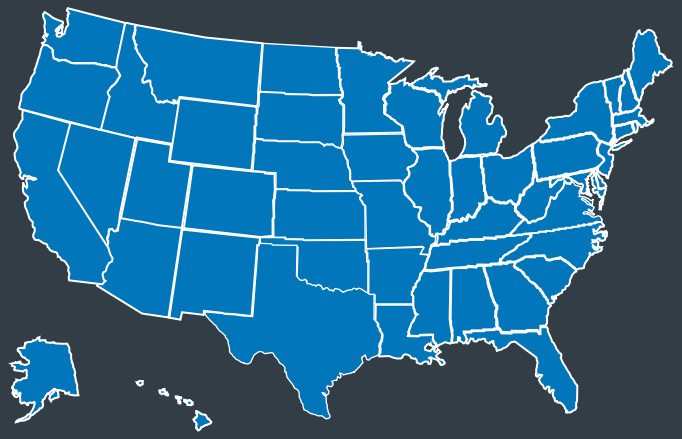
Relying on outdated compensation structures or infrequent market reviews can leave organizations vulnerable to losing talent to better-paying competitors. Reviewing compensation data regularly is a practice for organizations that want to remain competitive, retain their workforce, and avoid the costly impact of high turnover or unfilled roles.

MRA's history of producing meaningful and reliable compensation data can be relied on as the source for benchmarking your organization's jobs and comparing them to the current market while ensuring adjustments align with your compensation philosophy.

Our goal is to help your organization determine the best compensation strategy for your business. Use this data to help you stay competitive in this ever-changing market. The results of the survey questions are shown in the tables following this summary. State-specific data is also provided when the responses are sufficient to support it.

SURVEY PARTICIPATION

Fig. 1

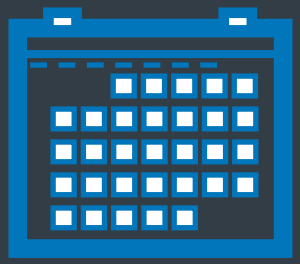


556
ORGANIZATIONS

876
DIVISIONS/LOCATIONS

TIMELINE OF THE SURVEY

Fig. 2



MARCH–
APRIL 2025
SURVEY CONDUCTED

ABOUT THE SURVEY

Fig. 3

326
JOBS SURVEYED

12
QUESTIONS SURVEYED

ALIGNING PAY WITH OPERATIONAL DEMANDS

Organizations that operate on multiple shifts, such as second, third, or weekend schedules, can often face unique workforce challenges. These nontraditional hours can be less desirable to employees due to their impact on personal routines and work-life balance, making recruiting and retaining talent for these roles more challenging. As a result, many employers turn to shift differentials or premium pay to help attract candidates and maintain adequate staffing.

A shift differential is additional compensation for employees who work designated shifts outside standard hours. This added pay can be a flat dollar amount or a percentage of the employee's base hourly wage, depending on the employer's policy. The employer determines the specific rate of the differential, which can vary based on shift type, industry norms, or regional competitiveness.

While the law doesn't require extra pay for these shifts, it can help recruit and retain workers for these jobs. This year, more employers are paying for shift differentials as a flat amount over a percentage of base pay. The trend of paying a premium for shift differential dollar amounts continues to increase steadily.

Shift Differential Premium by Percentage of Industrial & Production Trades Workers *Fig. 4*

The average second-shift premium is $1.47, compared with $1.47 last year. Third-shift premiums are at an average of $1.85, which has decreased slightly since last year's average of $1.88.

Flat Amount Shift Differential/Premium for Each Shift *Fig.5*

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
2nd Shift	$0.86	$1.35	$1.30	$1.47	$1.52
3rd Shift	$1.17	$1.55	$1.75	$1.88	$1.85

Shift differential pay can be more than an additional expense; it can be a strategic investment. Offering premiums for nonstandard hours can help organizations attract and retain skilled workers, maintain continuous operations, and enhance employee satisfaction. When employees feel valued and fairly compensated, their engagement and productivity levels are more likely to increase.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HIRING THE RIGHT TALENT

Finding qualified employees can be challenging in industries that depend on skilled labor, like manufacturing, maintenance, and trade. A shrinking labor pool, growing demand for specialized skills, and evolving job expectations have made the competition for top talent more pressing over the last several years.

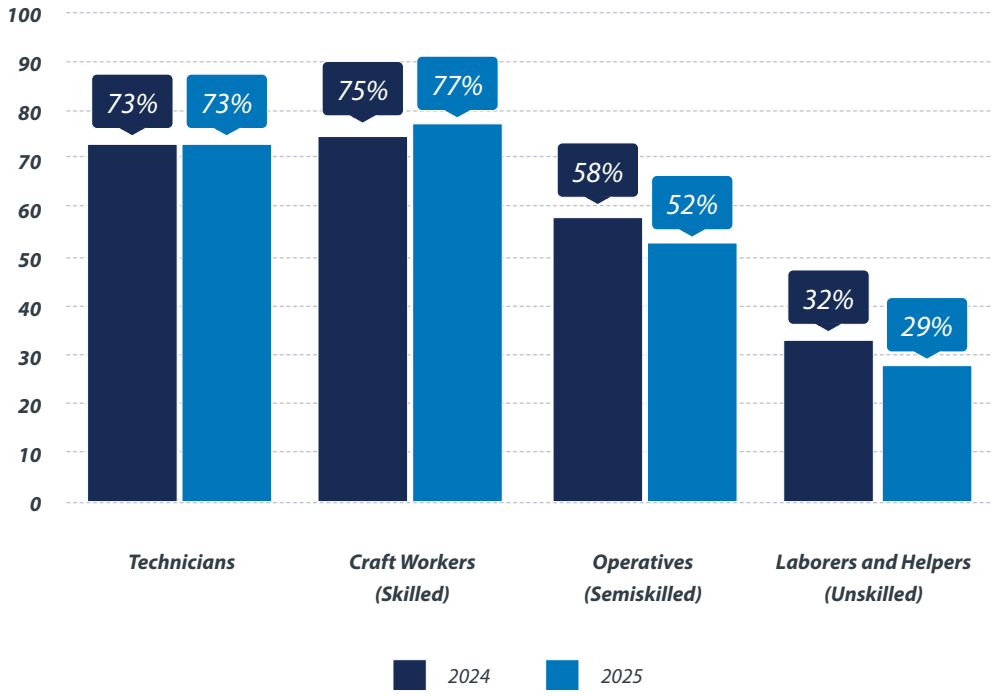
Organizations struggling to find or keep qualified workers can slow production, increase overtime costs, strain current staff, and impact customer satisfaction. Successfully identifying and hiring employees is more than just posting job openings. It demands a proactive strategy that aligns with an organization's unique culture, goals, and workforce needs.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Some organizations may benefit from partnerships with technical schools or apprenticeship programs, while others may prioritize internal promotion pipelines or targeted outreach campaigns. Regardless of the tactic, finding individuals whose skills, values, and work ethic align with the role's demands can take time.

This year, some employee groups found recruiting easy, while others found it more challenging or much the same as in previous years. Seventy-seven percent of companies said it was very difficult or somewhat challenging to recruit their craft workers (skilled), an increase from last year (75 percent).

Implementing a structured recruitment process can help to streamline recruiting efforts for success. Having a well-defined hiring policy can ensure consistency while helping to reduce the likelihood of bias and improving the quality of hires. This can include defining clear job descriptions, standardized interview processes, and criteria for evaluating candidates. For more information on recruitment methods, see our Recruiting Toolkit.

Very to Somewhat to Recruit Employees 2-Year Trend *Fig. 6*



INDUSTRIAL & PRODUCTION TRADES SURVEY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONCLUSION

As organizations across industrial, production, maintenance, and trade industries continue to deal with a competitive and changing labor market, recruiting and retaining qualified employees has remained challenging, even if it has eased a bit. These roles are critical to daily operations, yet the talent pipeline is narrowing, and the workforce's expectations are evolving.

Compensation is not a one-and-done decision. Setting pay structures and leaving them unchanged for years can lead to falling behind the market, especially in industries driven by physical labor, technical skills, and 24/7 operations. To remain competitive, employers should review compensation data, benchmark against current trends, and adjust pay practices to reflect changes in demand, location, and workforce expectations.

Industrial and trade environments frequently operate across multiple shifts, which can be a significant barrier to recruitment. Many employers offer shift differentials to make these roles more appealing, which provides additional pay for employees working outside traditional daytime hours.

Ultimately, every organization must find the right tactics to fit its workforce, culture, and operating model. Organizations that evaluate the market and refine their pay strategies are better positioned to attract top talent, reduce costly turnover, and build a more engaged workforce.

MRA SURVEYS

RELY ON **US**

Have questions on the data? Contact the Survey Department at 800.488.4845, ext. 3508 or email us at Surveys@mranet.org.

Want to talk it out? Call our HR Hotline 24/7 at 866-HR-Hotline (866.474.6854) to get the conversation going or email us at InfoNow@mranet.org.

MRA SURVEY RESEARCH

COMPENSATION & BENCHMARKING

BUSINESS INSIGHTS

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & SATISFACTION

POLICY & BENEFITS

COMPANY CULTURE

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Feel like you are in the dark?
MRA Surveys have the light to guide you to solutions.

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