2025

TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIES

DATA PROFILE

From Occupations to Skills

A Collaboration Between:

FARGO MOORHEAD
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Lightcast

In Partnership With:

FM
DATA & ANALYTICS

POWERED BY innovate28

TABLE OF CONTENTS

We are pleased to share the latest installment in the ongoing collaboration between the Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corporation and Lightcast, as we work together to strengthen the region's economic vitality and workforce readiness.

This report focuses on the technology sector—an essential driver of innovation that cuts across nearly every part of our metro economy. Whether in manufacturing, wholesale trade, information, or professional, scientific, and technical services, technology plays a critical role in shaping how businesses operate and grow.

Joe Raso
President & CEO
GFMEDC

Josh Wright
Head of Growth
Lightcast

The Fargo-Moorhead region stands at a pivotal moment—defined by both rapid opportunity and rising demand. As employers continue to invest and expand, we see a strong number of current job openings and even greater projected growth in fields such as manufacturing and trades, bioscience and healthcare, autonomous systems, and ag-tech. But meeting this demand with a skilled, adaptable workforce remains a challenge—and one that requires coordinated, data-informed solutions.

Through our partnership, we've analyzed recent labor market data to better understand the qualifications, skills, and certifications employers are seeking. From technical expertise to digital fluency and from industry credentials to soft skills like communication and problem-solving, today's workforce must be equipped for the evolving demands of the job market.

To support this effort, we've developed the Promising Practices Toolkit—a streamlined resource featuring real-world examples of training models, employer-education partnerships, inclusive hiring strategies, and data tools that can help close skill gaps and improve alignment between talent and business needs.

We believe that with shared insight and collective action, our region can not only meet current workforce needs but build a stronger, more resilient future of work for all.

We invite you to explore the insights in this report, engage with the tools provided, and join us in shaping what comes next.

Timeless Truths & New and Old Challenges

Acknowledging adjacent factors and relentless workforce challenges

We can't talk about the need for workforce in the FM MSA without acknowledging other workorce-adjacent topics. Let's recognize those now so as to not shift our focus.

While the primary objective of the June 5th Workforce Summit was to address the workforce needs of industry, it is essential to acknowledge a set of interconnected factors that significantly impact workforce participation, development, and sustainability.

ADJACENT FACTORS

Affordable & Available Housing Supply
Access to affordable housing is foundational to workforce participation. Housing insecurity can lead to increased absenteeism, job turnover, and reduced employee engagement. Workforce strategies are more effective when aligned with regional housing support and planning.

Childcare Availability & Affordability
The shortage of affordable and available, quality childcare remains a barrier to consistent employment, particularly for working parents. Workforce participation among parents, especially mothers, is directly linked to reliable childcare options. Employers and community stakeholders benefit from recognizing and addressing this constraint.

Livable Wages and Economic Mobility
Jobs that do not provide a livable wage contribute to workforce instability, turnover, and limited economic mobility. Sustainable workforce strategies must consider wage thresholds that support basic needs and incentivize long-term employment and skill advancement.

PERSISTENT WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Lack of Clear Career Pathways
Without visible, accessible, and supported career ladders, workers are less likely to pursue long-term advancement or invest in upskilling. Clearly defined pathways help individuals understand how to grow within industries, increasing retention and aligning personal goals with employer needs.

Foundational Skill Gaps
Deficits in basic literacy, numeracy, digital skills, and English proficiency limit the ability of individuals to enter training programs or qualify for employment. Bridging these foundational skill gaps is a prerequisite to building a robust and inclusive talent pipeline.

Soft Skill Deficits
Employers consistently cite gaps in communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and dependability. These soft skills are essential for workplace success across industries and should be integrated into workforce readiness efforts to meet employer expectations effectively.

HUMAN AIDED WORK

Artificial Intelligence and Automation
The rapid advancement of AI is transforming job functions, automating tasks, and reshaping skills requirements across many sectors. Proactive workforce strategies must account for these changes by investing in upskilling, reskilling, and digital literacy to prepare workers for the future. Automation has the potential to significantly reshape workforce needs by reducing demand for certain routine tasks while increasing the need for advanced technical and analytical skills.

On the next page, we'll take a closer look at the ground gained by AI skills and their impact on market wages.

AI Skills Are Gaining Ground in the FM Job Market

With positing for AI skills on the rise, the Fargo market is poised to surpass more AI job postings than in 2024 and 2023.

Salaries for postings that mention AI skills are 28% higher than posting that do not, representing $18,000 more per year. - Lightcast

Similarly, AI skills are driving salary premiums in the Fargo job market as well.
In the first half of 2025, the median salary for all job postings was $26.18/hr while the postings with AI skills garnered a median salary of $40.00/hr.

Median Salaries for Job Postings in Fargo MSA

● Median Salary Across All Postings   ● Median Salary- AI Skills

	2023	2024	YTD 2025
Median Salary- AI Skills	~$33	~$38.5	$40
Median Salary Across All Postings	~$23	~$25	~$26
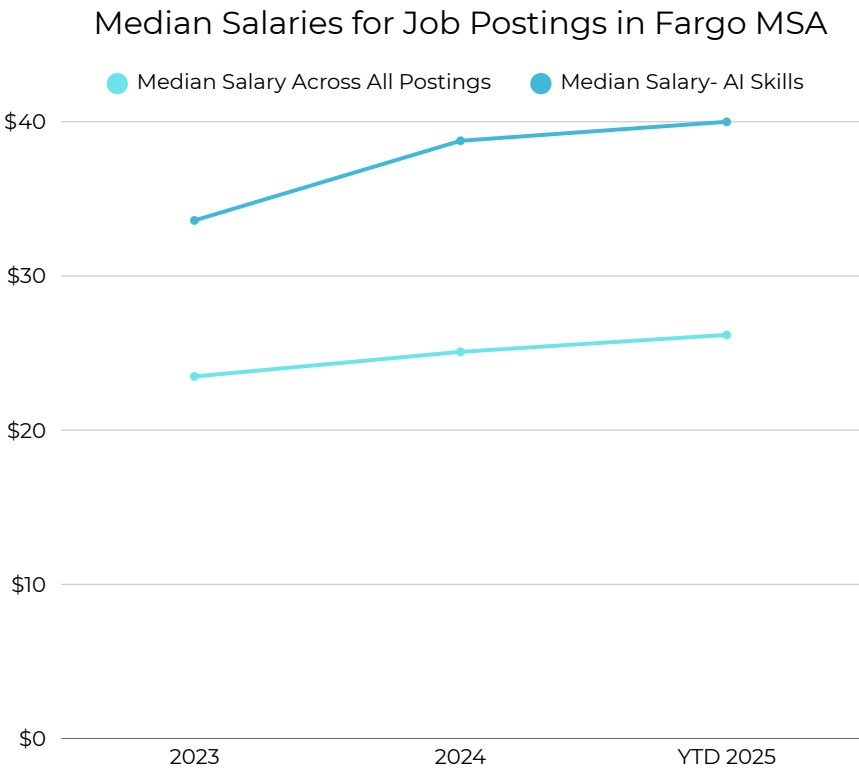
INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE? Check out these resources from Lightcast:

The Generative AI Job Market: 2025 Data Insights

AI: Beyond the Buzz

↪ **With this in mind, we now turn to workforce demand—over 47,000 job postings in the past year highlight the pressing need to align talent with industry needs.**

Current State of Affairs:
FM MSA Job Postings in All Industries

Over the last year, our region has seen a wide array of open positions across different industries. From August 2024 to July 2025, there were **48,500 unique job postings** in the FM MSA across all industry sectors. Over **3,900 employers** competed for talent during this time.

August 2024 - July 2025

Industry	Unique Postings
Health Care and Social Assistance	9,426
Administrative and Support and Waste Management	7,041
Retail Trade	4,705
Wholesale Trade	2,588
Manufacturing	2,402
Construction	2,059
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,057
Accommodation and Food Services	1,957
Finance and Insurance	1,730
Educational Services	1,529
Public Administration	1,005
Transportation and Warehousing	959
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	832
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	825
Information	694
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	402
Utilities	144
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	101
Management of Companies and Enterprises	80
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	35

It should be noted that there were likely more openings than noted in this table due to hiring processes that couldn't be captured by online hiring.

Knowing what industries are posting the most jobs is the first step. To understand how to prepare people for these jobs, we also need to look at what employers are asking for --the kind of education, work experience, and skills needed to get hired.

Education and Experience

From August 2024 to July 2025, these 48,500 unique job postings in the FM MSA required job seekers to have certain levels of education and work experience. Looking at these requirements, we can see what's expected for the jobs in demand.

More than half (52%) of job postings in the MSA last year did not specify an education requirement, while approximately 31% requested an Associate's or Bachelor's degree. This suggests a significant portion of opportunities are accessible to individuals without a formal degree. However, many of these roles may still require specific skills or technical training, highlighting the importance of strong alignment between employers and talent providers for workforce readiness.

August 2024 - July 2025

Education Level	Unique Postings	% of Total*
No Education Listed	25,599	52%
High school or GED	10,341	21%
Associate's degree	4,617	10%
Bachelor's degree	10,358	21%
Master's degree	2,308	5%
Ph.D. or professional degree	1,140	2%

*Includes any mention of an education level in the job posting and will total more than 100%.

Over half (63%) of job postings in the FM MSA last year didn't require any prior experience. Nearly 30% asked for just 0–3 years of experience.

July 2024 - June 2025

Minimum Experience	Unique Postings	% of Total
No Experience Listed	30,422	63%
0 - 1 Years	7,164	15%
2 - 3 Years	6,894	14%
4 - 6 Years	3,008	6%
7 - 9 Years	584	1%
10+ Years	500	1%

While understanding current job requirements helps us see what employers are looking for today, it's just as important to look ahead.

Next, we'll look at projections for all industry occupations to 2031.

Staffing Patterns Now and Through 2031

According to Lightcast, our region is projected to need an additional 6,800 positions across all occupations in the next five years. This growth underscores the urgent need to prepare for the future—ensuring we have the right mix of talent, training, and support systems in place to meet industry demand. With the acceleration of AI across many occupations, it will be important to keep updated information on the projections.
Note: Change in the table below is the net difference for the occupation; inclusive of exits and growth.

Description	Employed in Industry (2025)	Employed in Industry (2031)	Change (2025 - 2031)	% Change (2025- 2031)
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	17,200	16,881	(319)	(2%)
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	13,692	14,747	1,056	8%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	12,694	13,057	362	3%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	12,633	13,671	1,038	8%
Sales and Related Occupations	12,481	12,466	(15)	(0%)
Management Occupations	9,341	9,848	506	5%
Production Occupations	8,877	9,316	439	5%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	8,625	9,353	728	8%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	8,591	8,858	266	3%
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	7,518	7,934	416	6%
Healthcare Support Occupations	6,821	7,481	660	10%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	6,261	6,701	440	7%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupation	4,892	5,219	327	7%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	4,328	4,560	233	5%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	3,883	3,798	(85)	(2%)
Community and Social Service Occupations	2,592	2,820	228	9%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	2,412	2,579	167	7%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports and Media Occupations	2,410	2,515	105	4%
Protective Service Occupations	1,999	2,087	88	4%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,621	1,723	101	6%
Legal Occupations	716	741	25	3%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	628	695	67	11%

Job Postings in Technology in Fargo-Moorhead MSA

Nearly 900 unique job postings in Technology industries were posted in the last year (August 2024-July 2025) in the FM MSA. Over 190 employers competed for talent across the metro.

Openings By Occupation Group 20+ Postings

Occupation Group	Unique Postings (August 2024 - July 2025)
Non-Technical Sales	48
Software Development	42
Network and Systems Support	36
Accounting Professionals	35
Network and Systems Engineering	34
Account Managers and Executives	32
Customer Service Representatives	31
Sales Managers	31
Accounting Support	24
Retail Sales and Service	22
Project and Program Managers	21

Top Job Titles

- Sales Consultants
- Help Desk Analysts
- Account Managers
- Business Development Representatives

After reviewing overall job posting trends, we now examine the qualifications employers seek—specifically the education, experience, and skills required for these roles.

Technology Industry
Education, Experience and Qualifications

In the past year, approximately 42% of job postings in the various Technology sectors did not specify any formal education requirement, while 18% requested a minimum of a high school diploma or GED. Additionally, about 40% of all postings in these fields did not list any prior work experience as a requirement, indicating a significant number of entry-level opportunities within the sector.

Education Level	Unique Postings	% of Total*
No Education Listed	380	42%
High school or GED	161	18%
Associate's degree	92	10%
Bachelor's degree	315	35%
Master's degree	78	9%
Ph.D. or professional degree	27	3%

*This includes any mention of an education level and may total more than 100%.

Minimum Experience	Unique Postings	% of Total
No Experience Listed	368	41%
0 - 1 Years	92	10%
2 - 3 Years	220	24%
4 - 6 Years	144	16%
7 - 9 Years	49	5%
10+ Years	25	3%

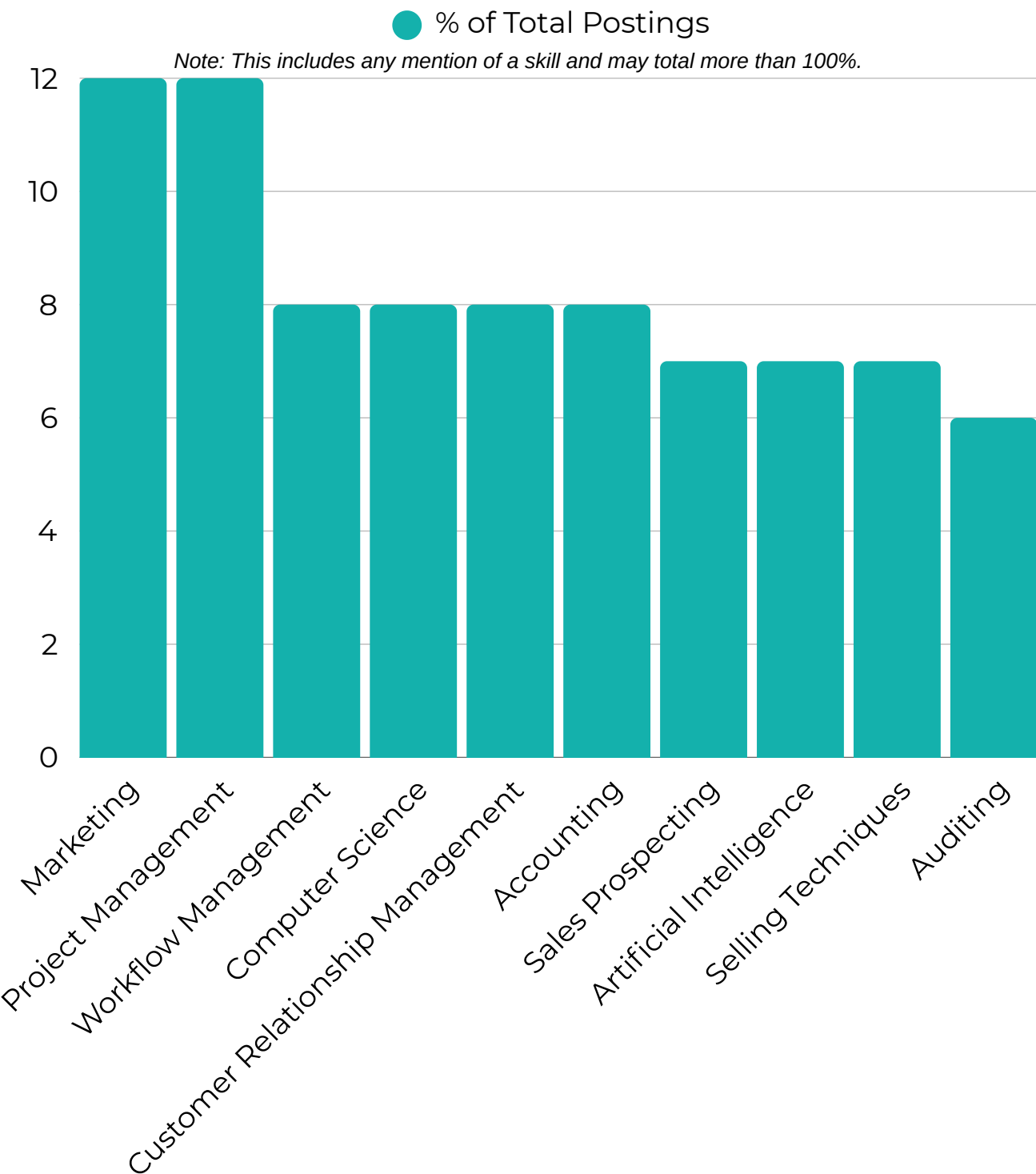| Qualification	Postings with Qualification
Valid Driver's License	94
Certified Public Accountant	26
Security Clearance	25
Public Trust Clearance	15
Master of Business Admin.	15

The top qualification for job postings in the last year was a valid driver's license, followed by a certified public accountant credential and security clearance. A public trust clearance and a master's of business administration and rounded out those qualtifications with 15+ postings.

While entry-level opportunities are abundant in technolgy, there are crucial occupations where a degree is required, such as Software Developers, as noted on page 14. This is where a skills-based/credential based career pathways could benefit technology industries.

Specialized Skills Needed in Technology

Top specialized skills in technology industries include project management, marketing, computer science, workflow management, and accounting among others.

● % of Total Postings

Note: This includes any mention of a skill and may total more than 100%.

With a clearer view of the qualifications employers require, we now shift to examining post-secondary completion data to assess how well the current education and training pipeline aligns with labor market needs.

Technology Industries: Pipeline Gap

Attempting to assess the surplus or gap of talent takes a lot of variables. Assessing the occupation's weight in the industry (% of total jobs in industry group), quantity of average annual openings, median hourly earnings and projected change in jobs give us a lens from which to evaluate surplus or gaps. For reference, there are 4,040 people currently employed in Technology Industries in the FM MSA.

Top 15 Occupations in Technology by % of total Jobs in Industry Group

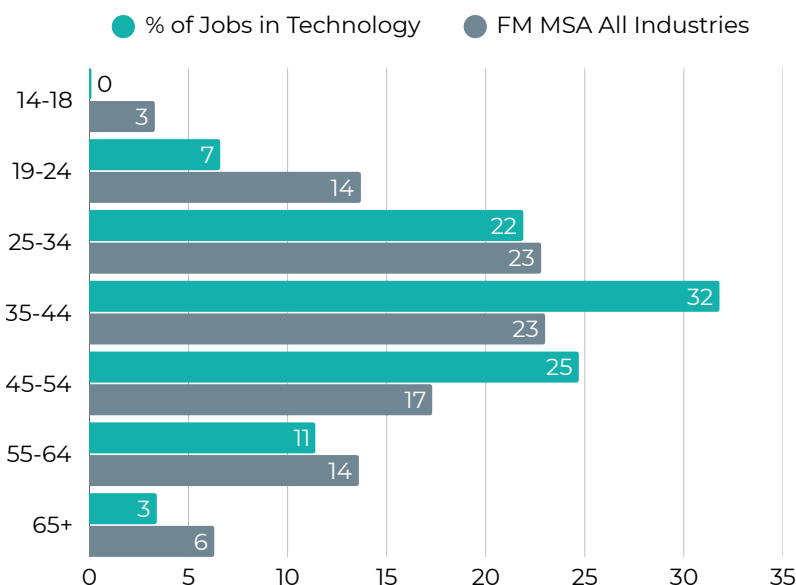| Description	% of Total Jobs in Industry Group (2024)	Entry Level Education	Average Annual Openings	Post-Secondary Surplus/ (Gap)	Median Hourly Earnings	Change in Jobs (2025-2031)
Software Developers	12.60%	Bachelor's Degree	55	154	$49.56	(15)
General and Operations Managers	5.20%	Bachelor's Degree	323	468	$45.52	(29)
Computer User Support Specialists	5.10%	Some college, no degree	35	259	$29.79	(30)
Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	4.40%	Bachelor's Degree	16	193	$39.30	(31)
Customer Service Representatives	3.70%	HS diploma	387	*	$20.41	(28)
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	2.80%	Bachelor's Degree	75	496	$31.03	(14)
Computer Occupations, All Other	2.80%	Bachelor's Degree	23	450	$32.96	(14)
Computer and Information Systems Managers	2.70%	Bachelor's Degree	22	245	$69.61	(7)
Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	2.60%	HS Diploma	54	*	$35.78	(9)
Project Management Specialists	2.50%	Bachelor's Degree	60	632	$43.58	(12)
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	2.30%	Bachelor's Degree	14	164	$39.61	(18)
Computer Network Support Specialists	2.20%	Associate's Degree	13	138	$35.06	(13)

Data note: National trends like large technology layoffs, restructuring and economic uncertainty (as well as advancements in AI and automation) are also present in the Fargo market where occupations important to the technology industry are seeing negative projected job growth.

**This surplus/gap is arrived at taking the number of regional completions less the number of average annual openings. Due to lack of program information or that no post-secondary program is needed, we are unable to ascertain a surplus or gap for this occupation.

Technology Industry Demographics

Examining the age, gender, and race or ethnicity of an industry's workforce helps identify key challenges in recruitment, retention, and equity. These demographics reveal trends like aging workers, underrepresentation, or lack of diversity, all of which affect workforce stability and long-term growth.
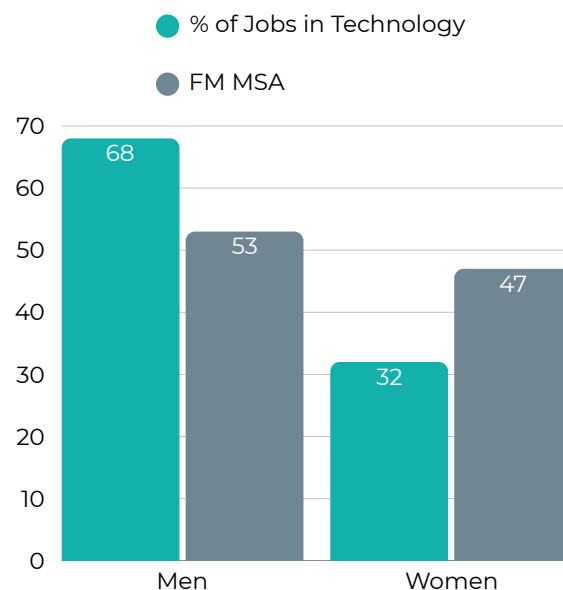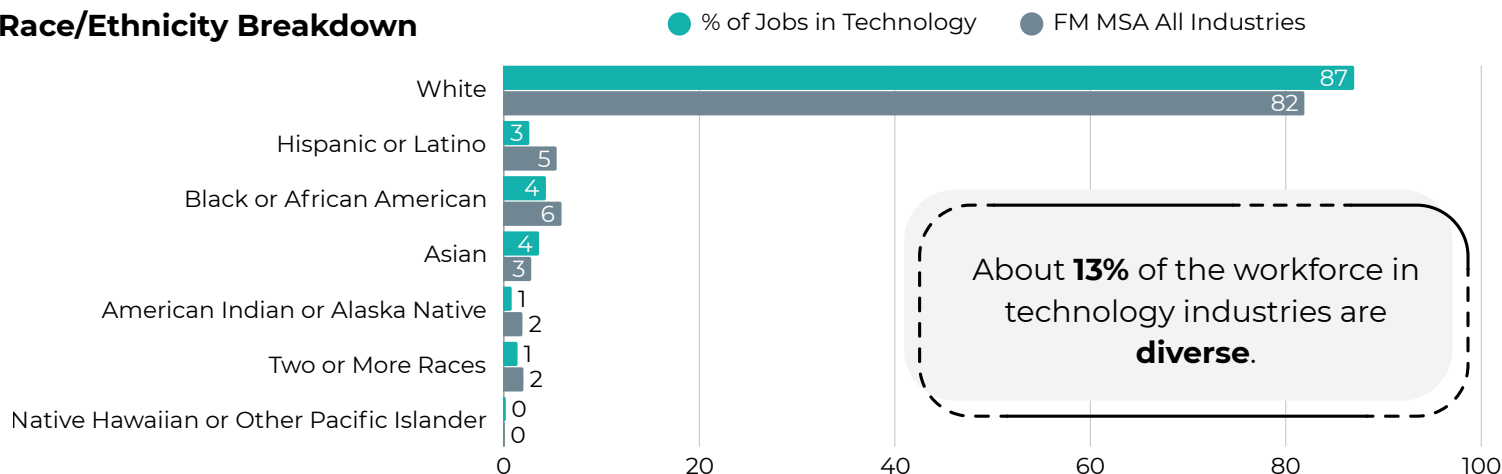
Industry Age Breakdown

● % of Jobs in Technology   ● FM MSA All Industries

Age	% of Jobs in Technology	FM MSA All Industries
14-18	0	3
19-24	7	14
25-34	22	23
35-44	32	23
45-54	25	17
55-64	11	14
65+	3	6

Nearly 70% of the workforce in technology industries are **male**.

Gender Breakdown

● % of Jobs in Technology
● FM MSA

Gender	% of Jobs in Technology	FM MSA
Men	68	53
Women	32	47

Nearly 15% of the workforce in technology industries are **over the age of 55.** This indicates a significant portion of the workforce is nearing retirement age with the industries facing a loss of experienced workforce.

Race/Ethnicity Breakdown

● % of Jobs in Technology   ● FM MSA All Industries

Race/Ethnicity	% of Jobs in Technology	FM MSA All Industries
White	87	82
Hispanic or Latino	3	5
Black or African American	4	6
Asian	4	3
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	2
Two or More Races	1	2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0

About **13%** of the workforce in technology industries are **diverse**.

By combining demographic factors with data on annual openings, wages, and projections, we can identify a strategic list of targeted occupations.

Target Occupations in Technology

This section focuses on occupations with the **greatest number of job openings,** the **fastest projected growth,** and the **highest number of expected retirements** in the coming years—key indicators of where workforce demand will be strongest.
Note: Change in the table below is the net difference for the occupation; inclusive of exits and growth.

Top 5 Occupations in Technology Industries by % of Total Jobs in Industry Group

Description	% of Total Jobs in Industry Group (2024)	Entry Level Education	Average Annual Openings	Annual Post-Secondary Surplus/ (Gap)	Median Hourly Earnings	Change in Jobs (2025-2031)
Software Developers	12.60%	Bachelor's degree	55	154	$49.56	(15)
General and Operations Managers	5.20%	Bachelor's degree	323	468	$45.52	(29)
Marketing Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	2.80%	Bachelor's Degree	75	496	$31.03	(14)
Proejct Management Specialists	2.50%	Bachelor's Degree	60	632	$43.58	(12)
Accountants and Auditors	1.90%	Bachelor's degree	113	384	$34.51	(12)
Sales Representatitves of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	2.60%	HS Diploma	54	*	$35.78	(9)

As we contemplate how to address the needs of the technology industries, we can't overlook the demand for key positions and the role they play in these sectors. However crucial, these positions have median hourly earnings under $30/hour and pose difficulties to fill now and in the future without intentional action.

Top Occupations with High Volume of Openings, Less than $30/hr

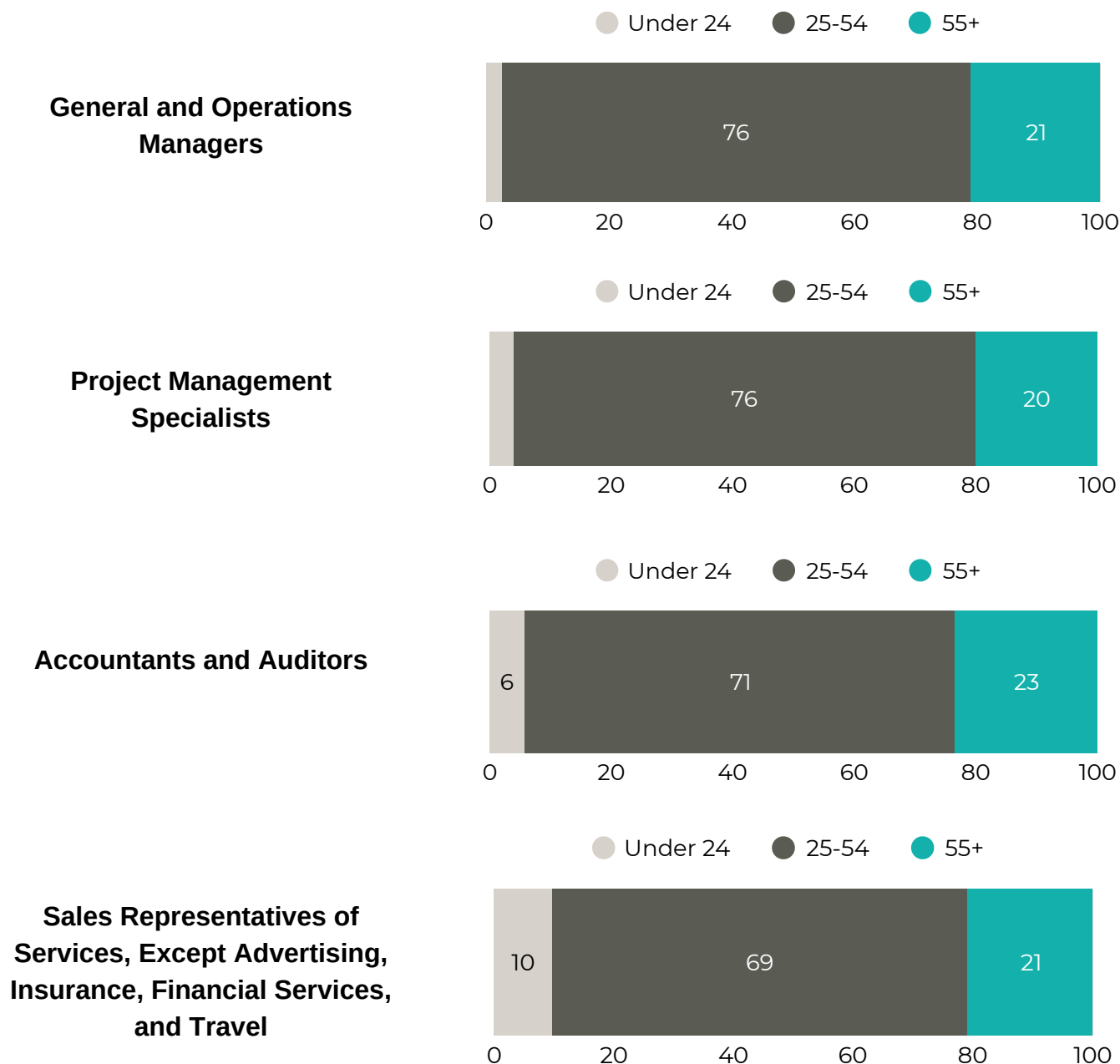| Description	% of Total Jobs in Industry Group (2024)	Entry Level Education	Average Annual Openings	Annual Post-Secondary Surplus/ (Gap)	Median Hourly Earnings	Change in Jobs (2025-2031)
Computer User Support Specialists	5.10%	Some College, no degree	35	259	$29.79	(30)
Customer Service Representatives	3.70%	HS diploma	387	N/A	$20.41	(28)

What about those exiting the workforce via retirement? The next page illustrates who among these occupations is poised to see an exit of mature talent.

Upcoming Retirement Considerations

In addition to job openings and projected growth, future workforce planning must account for the impact of an aging workforce. As many experienced workers approach retirement—especially in agtech and autonomous systems—replacing their skills and knowledge will be a key challenge. Identifying where these retirements will create the biggest gaps is essential for effective workforce development.

How did these occupations make the following list? Of the top 5 target occupations, they have 20% or more workers age 55+.

General and Operations Managers

Under 24 ● 25-54 ● 55+

25-54	55+
76	21

Project Management Specialists

Under 24 ● 25-54 ● 55+

25-54	55+
76	20

Accountants and Auditors

Under 24 ● 25-54 ● 55+

Under 24	25-54	55+
6	71	23

Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel

Under 24 ● 25-54 ● 55+

Under 24	25-54	55+
10	69	21

With targeted occupations identified, the next step is to explore career pathways that build the skills needed to reach these roles. This ensures a clear route for talent development and supports a stronger, more aligned workforce pipeline.

Career Pathways Mapping

Career Pathways Mapping, a Lightcast tool, helps address in-demand occupations by focusing on the skills that occupations need. Many adjacent occupations have similar skill sets that can be developed, or up-skilled to move workers into in-demand careers.

These occupations that have relevant skills toward a target occupation are called Feeder Jobs.

Example of Career Mapping for:
Software Developers

Feeder Occupations

Computer Systems Analyst

Skill Relevance: 76%
Category: Advancement

Earnings Gained: $45,000/year

Computer Network Architect

Skill Relevance: 73%
Category: Advancement

Earnings Gained: $24,000/year

Target Occupation

Software Developer

Median Advertised Salary: $113,400

Next Step Occupations

Computer and Information Research Scientists

Skill Relevance: 81%
Category: Advancement

Earnings Gained: $32,000/year

Computer and Information Systems Managers

Skill Relevance: 72%
Category: Lateral Advancement

Earnings Gained: $27,000/year

Having reviewed the data, it's now important to consider how these insights can inform action. The following promising practices offer strategic approaches to address the challenges and opportunities identified.

Promising Practices

What are promising practices?

When we refer to promising practices, we're talking about a collection of strategies that have the ability to move the needle when tracking occupation completions/additions to the market. While not suggesting that these are ALL of the practices that would help encourage more participation in a particular occupation, they are helpful as building blocks of a successful approach to workforce challenges.

Please note that while examples of promising practices are included in this report, there are many other promising practices that can yield successful results.

Examples:

- Skills-Based Hiring Approaches
- Talent Recruitment
- Accelerated Credentialing
- Virtual Reality Experiences

How do we make a collective impact with promising practices?

- Aligning resources, expertise and training for scalable and replicable programs that target in-demand skills and occupations
- Streamline pathways from skills to microcredentials to employment expanding the talent pool
- Create a network of data and information ensuring companies know about state-wide programs that can expand talent pools (Ex. ND's Childcare Program and ROOTS Talent Attraction Program).

Skills-Based Hiring

A skills-based approach is primarily used in the hiring process. It's put into practice when a hiring manager places a greater emphasis on the skills a candidate has over their degree or previous job titles. In evaluating a candidate by the skills needed for the job, as opposed to using degree title and job title filters, companies can expand their talent pool for skilled candidates.

According to Lightcast's report, "The Speed of Skill Change," 32% of the skills required for the average job in 2024 differ from those in 2021. In the top 25% of occupations, 75% of skills have changed, highlighting the necessity for employers to focus on current, relevant skills rather than outdated qualifications.

Required Skills Changed
32%

Required Skills Stayed the Same
68%
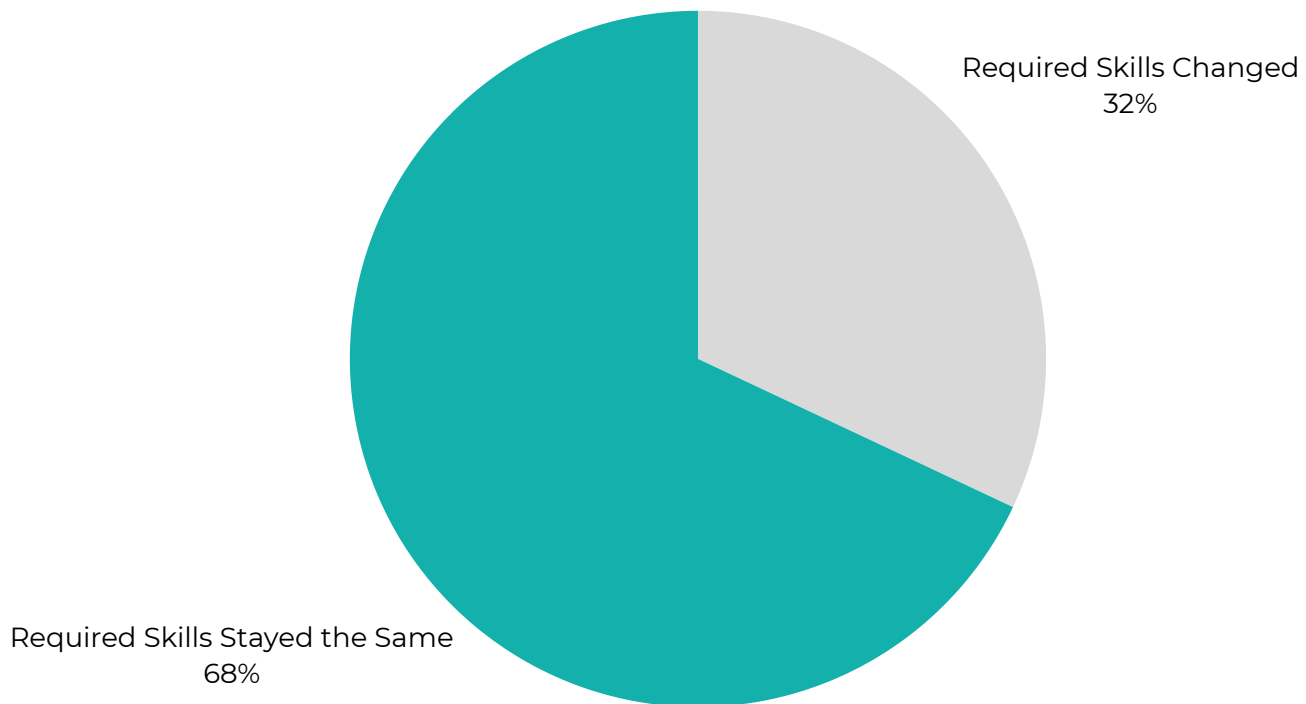
Learn More:
Read about Lightcast's Skills-Based Hiring Toolkit here:

Promising Practices

Talent Recruitment

The GFMEDC has been engaged in talent recruitment strategies that have both built awareness of the FM Region and helped companies engage in talent outreach.

Talent Outreach Solutions Using:

Advanced Analytics

Skilled Talent Recruitment

Supported Talent Attraction

FARGO MOORHEAD
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Building the FM Brand

Marketing Campaigns:

Small Towns

Alumni Recruitment

LIVE IN FARGO.
NORTH OF NORMAL.

WORK IN FARGO.
NORTH OF NORMAL.

GFMEDC LIGHTNING RECRUITMENT PROGRAM:

1

Tailored Approach

Your talent needs aren't one-size fits all, and neither is our approach. We analyze what you've been doing and suggest different markets to recruit from based on data.

2

Thorough Analysis

Are you advertising in areas where FM has a positive wage differential? Are there pockets of talent that are untapped? Let us help you gain the knowledge to supplement your current recruitment efforts.

3

**Candidate Contact Information**

Our deliverable consists of a curated list of names and contact information for individuals possessing the required skills, specifically selected from markets that align with your recruitment needs.

SEE YOURSELF WORKING HERE.

PartnerHighlight

Community Concierge
powered by
THE CHAMBER
FARGO · MOORHEAD · WEST FARGO

Community Concierge Program

The FMWF Chamber's Community Concierge Program helps employers retain top talent by ensuring new hires—and their families—feel connected from the start. This customizable, all-inclusive service complements onboarding strategies by offering personalized community tours, tailored local insights and introductions that make relocating easier and more meaningful. Whether you're hiring one key leader or growing a team, the Community Concierge Program enhances the new employee experience and supports long-term retention. Learn more: fmwfchamber.com/community-concierge
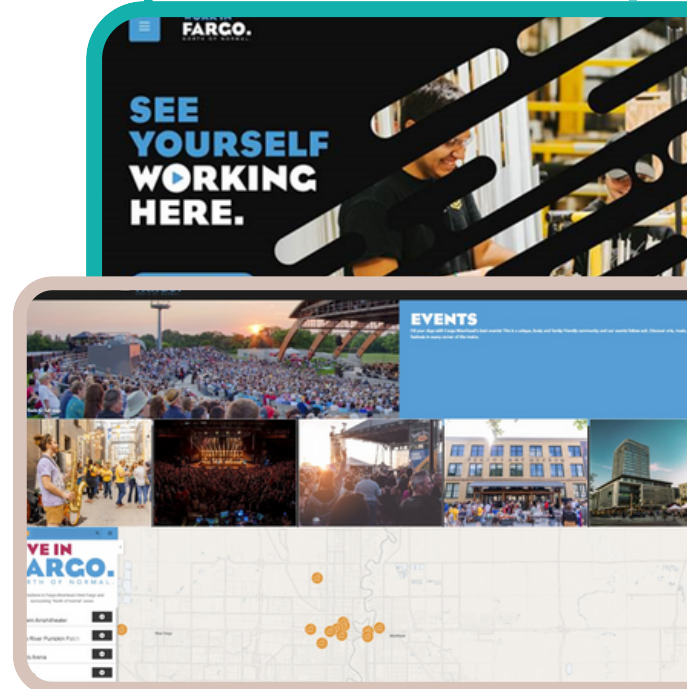
Accelerated Credentialing

Accelerated credentialing refers to streamlining the process that workers learn skills and are tested on those skills for entry into a profession. Below are some benefits of accelerated credentialing and examples of how they have worked in other regions.

Faster Entry to the Workforce

By reducing the time it takes to verify education, training and experience, workers can get to work faster to meet industry demand.

Can Recognize Prior Learning and Experience

Workers with diverse learning and experience can benefit from accelerated credentialing. On-the-job-training, military experience or apprenticeship may allow for workers to by-pass redundant courses, saving time.

Micro-Credentials and Credential Stacking

Rapid, targeted training programs can upskill workers. For example, a nursing aide might quickly earn a certificate and begin working, then pursue additional training to become a licensed practical nurse (LPN).

Who can we learn from? Let's use AI to help us find examples:

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

UTC launched an accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program designed for individuals with a bachelor's degree in any field who wish to transition into nursing. The intensive program spans three semesters, or one calendar year, compared to the traditional five-semester pathway.

Missouri Works Initiative--Apprenticeship Ready Program

This six-week program introduces individuals to manufacturing trades, providing industry-recognized entry points into the field. The curriculum, inspired by the Machinists Institute, covers comprehensive information relevant to apprenticeship programs, aiming to create a more skilled and equitable workforce.

Promising Practices
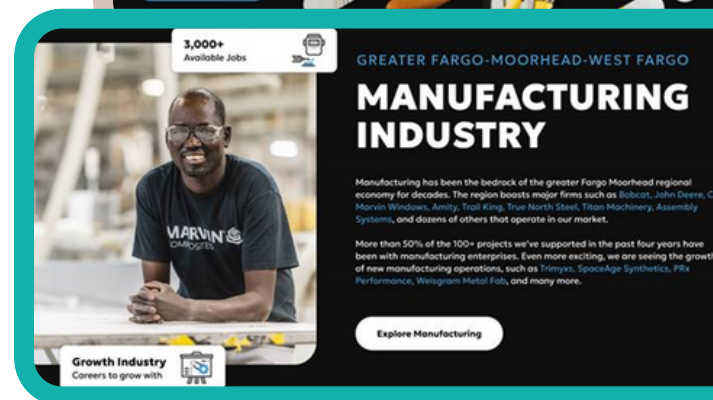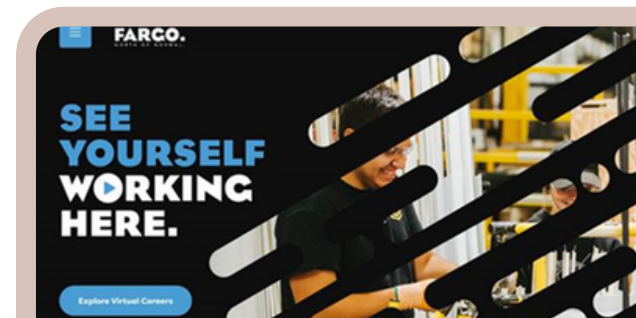
Career Exposure

Virtual Reality Experiences

Virtual reality experiences allow students to experience various professions virtually, aiding in career exploration and decision making by providing insights into different job roles.

With the goal to attract more people in to the region's manufacturing careers, GFMEDC created a website that will provide immersive virtual tours to allow users to more fully experience what it's like working at local companies. Companies also have virtual reality headsets to provide candidates a virtual experience at career fairs and other events.

Visit www.workinfargo.com to check it out.

CareerViewXR is an immersive career exploration platform that brings field trips to the classroom through 360-degree web-based tours and companion virtual reality videos. Students and adult job seekers alike can explore dozens of engaging tours highlighting in-demand industries.

The GFMEDC was awarded grant funds in 2023 from the ND Department of Commerce and has partnered wiht Be More Colorful and Golden Path Solutions.

Work-Based Learning

PartnerHighlight · **GOLDEN PATH SOLUTIONS**

Golden Path is a connection company, working with employers, schools, students, colleges, and communities.

Goals:
- Give students a tool to understand their skills & potential career fits
- Allow employers to connect with schools & students at scale
- Facilitate work-based learning management for school and industry
- Match students and employers through data
- Help students prepare for the future and employers develop future workforce
- Help students understand careers offered by employers, and any associated incentives

These connections are made through their web application Compass, which is available to every North Dakota middle and high-school student and some MN schools. In ND, Compass integrates with RUReadyRUReady (used by K12, post-secondary, VoRehab, Job Service with funding provided by ND CTE and DPI). Moorhead Public Schools will be joning Compass this fall, and will complete a broader rollout with students.

The Good Jobs Challenge

PartnerHighlight · **THE CHAMBER** FARGO MOORHEAD WEST FARGO

The Good Jobs Challenge allows the FMWF Chamber to partner with employers to build a stronger regional workforce. Funded by a $9.62 Million grant through the U.S. Economic Development Administration, this initiative strives to connect over 900 individuals from across North Dakota and Northwest Minnesota to training and career opportunities in Advanced Manufacturing, Cybersecurity/IT and Precision Agriculture/Food Systems—all by September 30, 2026.

How Employers Benefit:
Participating employers can access support to upskill new or existing employees, helping fill in-demand positions and reduce turnover. The program offers up to $5,000 per eligible employee for:
- training, certification, and educational expenses
- support services that reduce barriers to completing training - such as childcare, transportation, and equipment.

This is a no-cost or cost-share opportunity for employers to invest in their workforce while helping individuals overcome barriers to employment and thrive in high-demand industries.

Learn more: fmwfchamber.com/good-jobs-challenge

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COMPANY CULTURE PROGRAM

WHY WE DEVELOPED IT

FARGO MOORHEAD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In the 2024 workforce survey conducted by the EDC and FMHRA, data supported the need for such a program, with working on company culture being rated as the second highest priority of company HR officers.

Feedback from HR professionals stated the importance of culture in attracting and retaining talent. In fact, a recent Qualtrics study found that 46% of job seekers said a company's culture was one of the deciding factors when applying for a job.

The importance of a platform to communicate and learn from one another was also expressed.

WHAT IS IT?

NETWORK

A networking space, virtual and in-person, where HR professionals can learn from each other, explore different aspects of company culture and have a group of like-minded individuals to share best practices.

ASSESSMENT & SUPPORT TOOLS

A way for employers to evaluate their culture based on employee feedback. Utilizing an employer-developed survey tool, a set of Likert scale questions are divided amongst six distinct pillars, plus one net promotor score question.

PILLARS:
- Vision & Values
- Communication
- Respect & Inclusivity
- Leadership
- Compensation & Growth
- Environment

The assessment tool is available in multiple languages and all responses will be kept anonymous. The GFMEDC will analyze responses and provide a report to company leaders.

PROGRAM GOALS

- Recognize and celebrate companies that embrace great culture as a valuable component of their organization and our region.

- Provide a platform for collaboration amongst companies to share best practices and ideas, ask questions, and learn from one another.

- Improve our regions ability to attract and retain the talent needed by our employers.

For more information, visit:
gfmedc.com/about-us/culture-program/

FARGO MOORHEAD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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FULL DATA PROFILE

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FARGO MOORHEAD
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Thank You

Common Themes and Action Items from the Regional Data and Analytics Summit

While the Summit was not exclusively focused on the technology industry, several themes and action items from the AgTech and Autonomous Systems breakout sessions are broadly applicable and highlighted below.

TECHNOLOGY ADVANCING FASTER THAN TALENT READINESS

- Rapid advancements in AI, automation, and UAS (Uncrewed Aerial Systems) are widening the skills gap.

GENERATIONAL MINDSETS AND RETENTION

- Employee churn is no longer always a red flag—it reflects a generational shift in how careers are viewed.

- Younger workers move quickly between roles, often prioritizing appreciation, culture, and flexibility over compensation.

- Retention strategies must now reflect values-based incentives, such as mission alignment, career development, and meaningful recognition.

TRAINING OVER EXPERIENCE: BUILDING FROM WITHIN

- Many businesses are hiring people without prior experience and focusing on building skills in-house.

- There's a strong pivot toward culture-based hiring: find the right fit, then train the skills.

- Integrating work-based learning (WBL), mentorships, and partnerships with tech schools are top priorities.

- Faculty positions and high-skill tech roles increasingly rely on international talent—though policy dynamics are adding friction.

WHAT THE EDC IS GOING TO DO…NOW AND INTO 2026

TALENT ATTRACTION

We're putting the FM region on the map with talent attraction marketing, alumni recruitment-focused campaigns, and targeted recruitment of critical occupations.

- With our Lightning Recruitment program, the GFMEDC is helping numerous companies locate and message individuals in hard to fill occupations. Let us know how we can support your company.

- Brand marketing of the region through www.LiveInFMArea.com. We are communicating with more than 21,000 individuals who have shown an interest in the region, and those relationships continue to grow.

- We are working on a student recruitment program to support our higher education institutions and are doing this in partnership with the Chamber and the Metro College Alliance.

TALENT RETENTION

- Company Culture Program – We currently have more than a dozen companies working with us to develop a survey and networking group to support great company culture.

POLICY ADVOCACY & DATA

- The GFMEDC is assisting The Chamber with gathering and analyzing policy-driven data from our Business Retention and Expansion Surveys (with company approval). Aggregating this information means more data getting into the hands of legislators to make informed decisions on what businesses in FM need.

- With the creation of the FM Data & Analytics Team, the GFMEDC is committed to gathering and analyzing data that continues to tell the story of the FM economy. This Fall, the GFMEDC along with partners will be conducting our second annual workforce survey.

Appendix:
NAICS Codes for Technology Industries

Code	Description		Code	Description
334111	Electronic Computer Manufacturing		519290	Web Search Portals and All Other Information Services
334112	Computer Storage Device Manufacturing		541511	Customer Computer Programming Services
334118	Computer Terminal and Other Computer Peripheral Equipment Manufacturing		541512	Computer Systems Design Services
334210	Telephone Apparatus Manufacturing		541513	Computer Facilities Management Services
334220	Radio and Television Broadcasting and Wireless Communications Equipment Manufacturing		541513	Computer Facilities Management Services
334290	Other Communications Equipment Manufacturing		541519	Other Computer Related Services
334413	Semiconductor and Related Device Manufacturing		541612	Human Resources Consulting Services
334416	Capacitor, Resistor, Coil, Transformer, and Other Inductor Manufacturing		541713	Research and Development in Nanotechnology
334417	Electronic Connector Manufacturing		541715	Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering,a nd Life Sciences (Except Nanotechnology and Biotechnology)
334418	Printed Circuit Assembly (Electronic Assembly) Manufacturing		541720	Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities
334419	Other Electronic Component Manufacturing		611420	Computer Training
423430	Computer and Computer Peripheral Equipment and Software Merchant Wholesalers		811210	Electronic and Precision Equipment Repair and Maintenance
513210	Software Publishers			
517111	Wired Telecommunications Carriers			
517112	Wired Telecommunications Carriers (except Satellite)			
517410	Satellite Telecommunications			
517810	All Other Telecommunications			
518210	Computing Infrastructure Providers, Data Processing, Web Hosting, and Related Services			