Oregon’s Forgotten Middle

Middle-skill jobs, which require education beyond high school but not a four-year degree, make up the largest part of America’s and Oregon’s labor market. Key industries in Oregon are unable to find enough sufficiently trained workers to fill these jobs.

Jobs by Skill Level, Oregon, 2015

- High-Skill: 33%
- Middle-Skill: 50%
- Low-Skill: 17%


Demand for Middle-Skill Jobs is Strong

Fifty percent of all jobs in 2015 were middle-skill.

Job Openings by Skill Level, Oregon, 2014-2024

- High-Skill: 23%
- Middle-Skill: 46%
- Low-Skill: 30%

Source: NSC analysis of long-term occupational projections from state labor/employment agency.

Demand for Middle-Skill Jobs Will Remain Strong

Between 2014-2024, 46 percent of job openings will be middle-skill.

A Middle-Skill Gap

Middle-skill jobs account for 50 percent of Oregon’s labor market, but only 45 percent of the state’s workers are trained to the middle-skill level.

Jobs and Workers by Skill Level, Oregon, 2015

- High-Skill Jobs
- High-Skill Workers
- Middle-Skill Jobs
- Middle-Skill Workers
- Low-Skill Jobs
- Low-Skill Workers