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Q2 2024

Labor Trend Report Professional Services

JOB GROWTH PROJECTED FOR 2024, JUST AT A SLOWER PACE.

The U.S. labor market added 303,000 jobs in March 2024, while the unemployment rate changed little at 3.8 percent, according to the April U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Employment Situation Summary. Employment in the professional and business services industry added 74,000 jobs in January, considerably higher than the average monthly increase of 14,000 jobs in 2023. Then, experienced a slowdown in February and March, adding 9,000 and 7,000 jobs, respectively.

The outlook for employment growth in 2024 remains positive, however it is projected to be at a much smaller pace than in recent years. Monthly job gains in the second half of 2023 averaged about 190,000, far below the 399,000 new jobs per month averaged in 2022. Some economists have forecast monthly payroll gains to average as low as 64,000 this year, while Flowers forecast an average of 100,000 jobs per month and Vachon predicted between 100,000 and 200,000 new jobs per month.

In addition, job openings reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics fell from a high of 12 million in March 2022 to 8.8 million in November 2023, and job postings on Indeed are down by over 20% from a peak at the end of 2021.

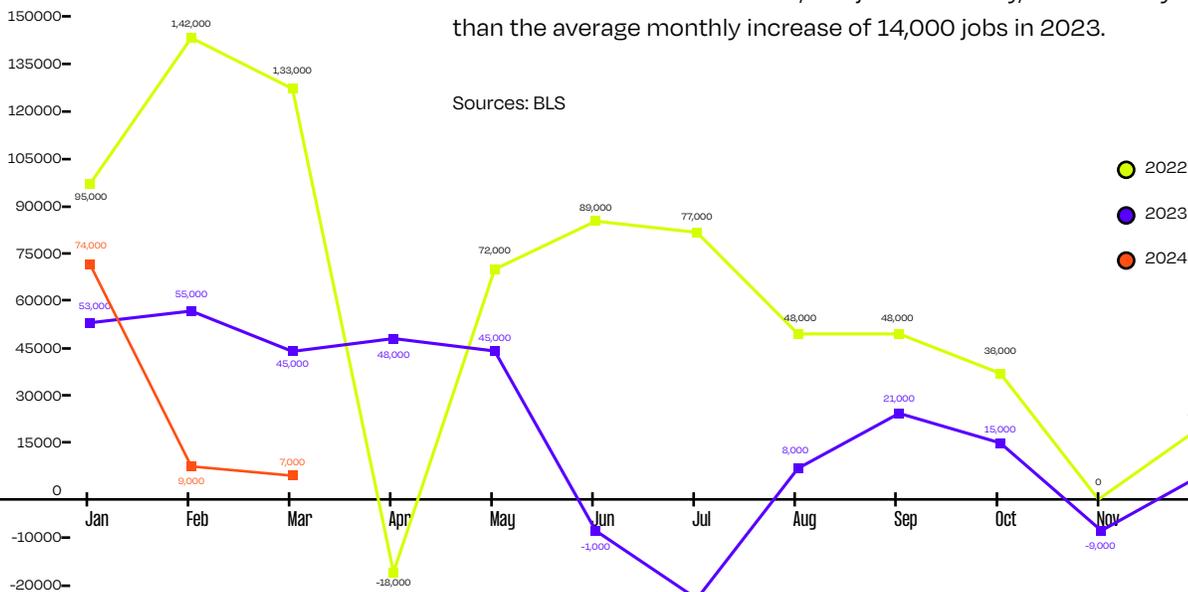
However, nonfarm payroll employment growth was 2% annualized in the three months ended February 2024, with about 275,000 jobs added in February. This is a significant acceleration from 1.5% in the prior three months and a bit higher than the 1.7% average annual growth from 2015 through 2019.

To assist employers in navigating the demands and challenges of today's landscape, Dexian continues to track key labor market trends that can influence the ability to secure and keep valuable talent in this Q1 Professional Services Labor Trends Report.

Key National Figures for Professional Services Employment

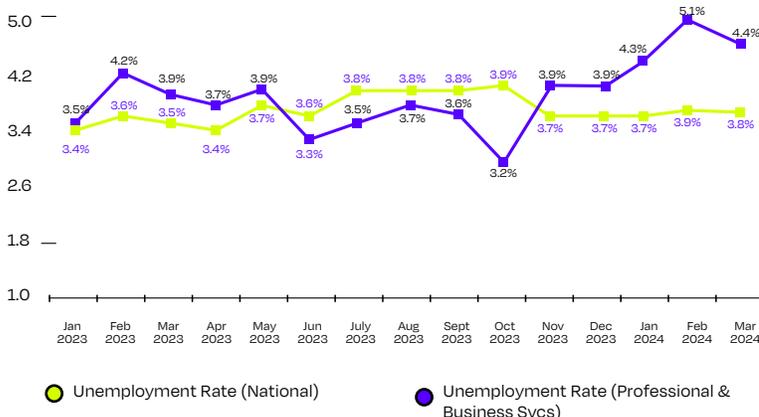
MONTHLY PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES JOB GAINS – YOY

After a strong start to the quarter, employment in professional and business services changed little in March, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The sector added 74,000 jobs in January, considerably higher than the average monthly increase of 14,000 jobs in 2023.



After holding steady at 3.7% in November, December, and January, the U.S. unemployment rate rose slightly in February and March to 3.9% and 3.8% respectively, according to the April BLS employment situation report. And the number of unemployed persons was essentially unchanged at 6.4 million. The national unemployment rate has been in a narrow range of 3.7% to 3.9% since August 2023. The professional and business services unemployment rate reached a high of 5.1% in February 2024 before dropping to 4.4% in March 2024.

NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT RATES



Sources: BLS

Professional Services Staffing Trends

PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SUPPORT SKILLS MOST IN DEMAND

	Q4 2023	Q1 2024
1	Business Analyst Technical	Program Manager
2	Program Manager	Business Analyst Technical
3	Project Manager – Non Technical	Project Manager – Non Technical
4	Data Analyst	Data Analyst
5	Business Analyst Non-Technical	Business Analyst Non-Technical
6	Administrative Assistant	Scrum Master
7	Accounting Management	Project Manager – APP DEV
8	Business Process Analyst	Administrative Assistant
9	Scrum Master	Business Process Analyst
10	Project Manager – APP DEV	Financial Analysis

Over the past two quarters, project and program managers, business analysts, and data analysts remain as the most in-demand skills tracked by Dexian. In addition, scrum master positions jumped three positions from 9th most in-demand in Q4 2023 to 6th in Q1.

Sources: Dexian

FASTEST/LONGEST TIME-TO-FILL SKILL SETS

Fastest	Slowest
Automotive Mechanic	Internal Audit
Dispatcher	Securities Services
Collections Support	Configuration Manager
Marketing & Sales	Tax Accounting
Advertising	Public Relations

Among the fastest time-to-fill positions we are tracking, automotive mechanic is the fastest this quarter with dispatchers and collection support professionals following closely behind. Accounting and finance-related positions – internal audit and tax accounting – are among the slowest to fill in Q1.

Sources: Dexian

JOB POSTINGS ACTIVITY		
Occupation	Unique Job Postings – Q1 2024	Change from Q3 2023
Call Center Agents	150,504	+6%
Recruiters	75,829	+10%
Administrative Assistants	97,130	+16%
General Clerks	41,366	+26%
Data Entry Clerks	10,486	+11%
Accounts Payable/Receivable Clerks	66,787	+27%
Financial Analysts	31,573	+14%
General Ledger Accountants	61,615	+0.04%
Compliance Specialists	13,442	+19%
HR Generalist	75,829	+10%
Accounting Managers	65,658	+19%
Total/Average Change	690,219	+14%

There were 690,219 unique active job postings online in select professional and business support related occupations in the U.S. during the 1st quarter of 2024, up by 14% from the previous quarter. Among all occupational categories, nearly all increased the number of job postings this quarter, with

accounts payable/receivable clerks, general clerks, accounting managers, and compliance specialists increasing the most significantly.

Sources: Lightcast, Dexian analysis

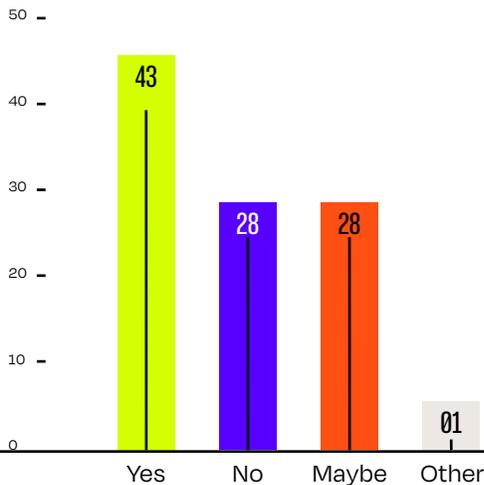
Overview of Current Hiring Trends

With the labor market likely to remain tight and competitive this year, one think employers can do to attract and retain talent is to focus on the mental well-being of employees. Studies show that workplace mental health and well-being continued to decline in 2023.

And according to a survey by Traliant, mental health is a major area employers need to focus on in 2024. A full 86% of the respondents either strongly or somewhat agreed that employers need to do more to address mental health needs in the workplace. Some of the top contributors were burnout and toxic management practices, in addition to wage stagnation which signals that macroeconomic factors are contributing to employees' mental health concerns.

However, as seen below in a recent LinkedIn survey conducted by Dexian, most workers would take a pay cut for a less stressful job.

IS IT ALL ABOUT THE MONEY?



According to the Wall Street Journal, around 40% of job-switchers who took lower-paying jobs from late 2020-2022 said their new roles were better, highlighting a shift toward employers that prioritize work-life balance and a strong values-driven culture. Our own LinkedIn poll finds 43% of respondents say they would take a pay cut for a less stressful job, and another 28% said maybe.

Sources: Dexian LinkedIn Poll, March 2024

WHAT JOB SEEKERS WANT FROM THEIR CAREER

Good Salary and Benefits

Are still the most important considerations for today's job seekers.



Doing work they
are proud of



Taking care of
finances



Providing for
family

While every job seeker is unique, according to a recent report, *Job Seekers: What They Want* by CareerBuilder, some career motivations hold true regardless of profession. It's no surprise that "good salary and benefits" are at the top of the list for today's job seekers, however doing work they are proud of, taking care of finances, and providing for their family are also high on their list.

Sources: CareerBuilder, 2024