

Using Data & Outcomes to Drive Workforce Development Decisions

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About Me

Who am I?

- Eric Nordstrom
- Project Analyst, Lake County Workforce Development

What do I do?

- I conduct data analysis on state and federal grants to ensure our organization is making successful, data-informed decisions.



Why Are We Here?

- Effective decision making is hard in any business setting
 - Especially so in the workforce development arena.
- Data drives effective and efficient decision making
 - But it can be hard to know what is most relevant or where to start looking for it.
- My main goal today: To leave you with examples and suggestions to aid you in your own decision-making process



Agenda: Two 'What's & A 'Where'

- **What** data do you need?
 - Identify Key Metrics & Outcomes
- **Where** can you find it?
 - Collect Comprehensive Data
 - Analyze Labor Market Trends
- **What** can you do with it?
 - Leverage Technology for Data-Driven Insights
 - Implement Program Analysis & Evaluation

Identify Key Metrics & Outcomes

What data is important to you?

- Employment and retention rates
- Wage/earnings outcomes
- Program completion rates
- Labor market (local or otherwise)
- Demographic and equity metrics:
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Age
 - Barriers to employment



For inspiration and guidance, start by looking at what measurables are used to evaluate your performance.

Identify Key Metrics & Outcomes: Example

IL DCEO Performance Metrics for LWIA 1, PY 24 & 25

1A

Performance Measure	Simulated	State Goal PY24	90% Threshold
Employment Rate Q2	65%	76.5%	68.85%
Employment Rate Q4	65%	77.5%	69.75%
Med. Earnings Rate Q2	\$9,303	\$9,000	\$8,100
Credential Attainment Rate	70%	74%	66.6%
Measurable Skills Gain	86.4%	62%	55.8%

1D

Performance Measure	Simulated	State Goal PY24	90% Threshold
Employment Rate Q2	73%	79.5%	71.55%
Employment Rate Q4	70%	80%	72%
Med. Earnings Rate Q2	\$12,313	\$11,800	\$10,620
Credential Attainment Rate	71.4%	73%	65.7%
Measurable Skills Gain	81.8%	62%	55.8%

1Y

Performance Measure	Simulated	State Goal PY24	90% Threshold
Employment Rate Q2	71.8%	76%	68.4%
Employment Rate Q4	70%	76%	68.4%
Med. Earnings Rate Q2	\$4,153	\$5,000	\$4,500
Credential Attainment Rate	67.4%	70%	63%
Measurable Skills Gain	70.1%	59%	53.1%

Identify Key Metrics & Outcomes: Example

LWIA 1 WIOA Completion Rates for PY23/24

Training Industry	Successful %	Unsuccessful %	Registrant %	Total
Transportation	72.36%	25.20%	2.44%	100%
Healthcare	66.27%	16.87%	16.87%	100%
Professional Services	45.45%	27.27%	27.27%	100%
IT	75.51%	8.16%	16.33%	100%
Manufacturing	72.22%	16.67%	11.11%	100%

Collect Comprehensive Data

Where can you get your data from?

- Internal records and intake processes:
 - Data you are already gathering from participants
 - Will largely help with demographic and employment outcome data
- State or local data management systems:
 - State Workforce System (IWDS 2.0)
 - State Employment Resource (Illinois workNet)
 - These will be helpful when it comes to program-related data
- State or federal labor market databases and tools:
 - O*net Online
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics/Department of Labor
- Vendor services, such as Lightcast

Note: It's always better to have too much data rather than not having enough

Collect Comprehensive Data: Example

Category	PY21/22	PY22/23	PY23/24	YOY Gain/Loss	Net Gain/Loss
Training Industry					
Transportation	31.80%	41.56%	58.85%	17.29%	27.05%
Healthcare	26.73%	22.14%	19.86%	-2.28%	-6.87%
Professional Services	19.66%	19.78%	5.26%	-14.52%	-14.40%
IT	15.21%	11.43%	11.72%	0.29%	-3.49%
Manufacturing	5.53%	5.08%	4.31%	-0.77%	-1.22%
Race					
Black	35.99%	37.74%	41.39%	3.65%	15.40%
Hispanic/Latino	28.64%	31.35%	34.69%	3.34%	6.05%
White	20.53%	18%	12.20%	-5.80%	-8.33%
Asian	5.58%	4.50%	4.78%	0.28%	-0.80%
Successful Completions	76.40%	75.78%	70.10%	-5.68%	-6.30%
Average Wage	\$26.72	\$24.52	\$26.48	\$1.96	-\$0.24

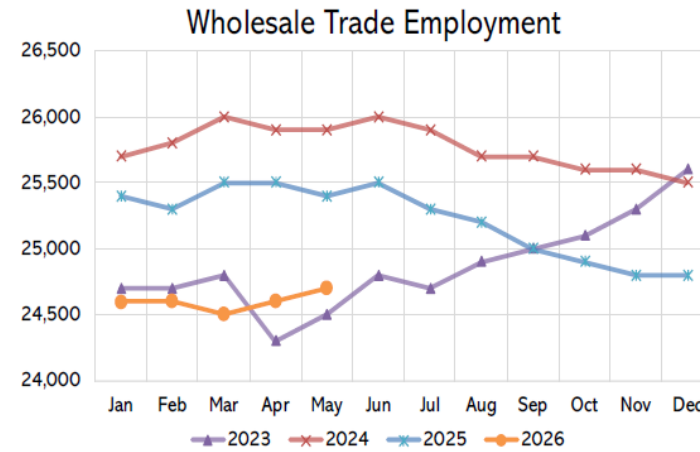
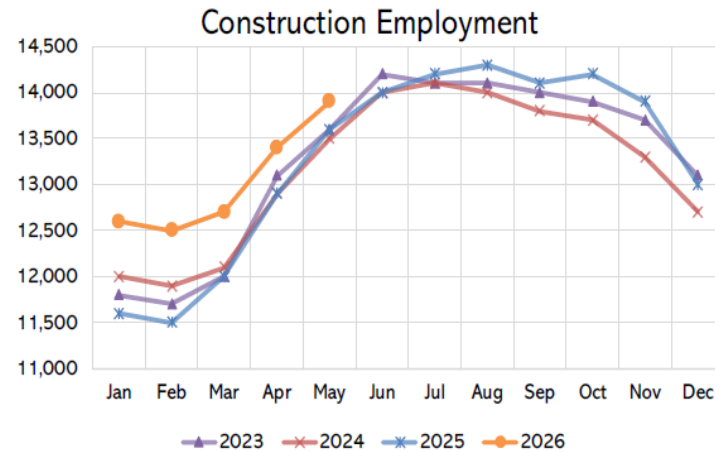
Analyze Labor Market Trends

- Knowing your local job economy is crucial to designing impactful programming and services
 - Conducting regular analysis helps keep your programming relevant to the market and maintains a high level of benefit for your stakeholders
- Keep tabs on the employment outcomes of your customers to see where interests align with local market trends
- Combined with training/services data, inferences can be made as to where industry/market gaps might exist (Manufacturing industry for Lake County)
 - This can really help focus your efforts where they are most needed

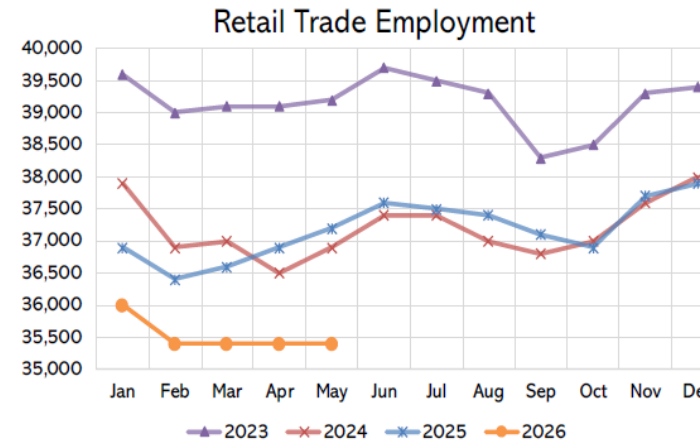
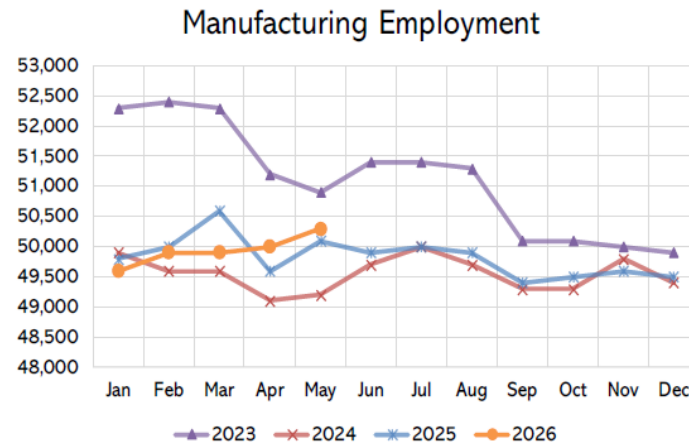
Lake County, IL Metro Division	
	May-26
<i>Labor Force Information</i>	
<i>Civilian Labor Force</i>	356,416
<i>Employment</i>	341,275
<i>Unemployment</i>	15,141
<i>Unemployment Rate (%)</i>	4.2
<i>Employment by Industry Information</i>	
Total Nonfarm	345,100
Construction	13,900
Manufacturing	50,300
Wholesale Trade	24,700
Retail Trade	35,400
Transportation-Warehousing-Utilities	10,900
Information	2,600
Financial Activities	18,200
Professional-Business Services	56,400
Private Education-Health Services	41,800
Leisure-Hospitality	36,600
Other Services	11,500
Government	42,700

Analyze Labor Market Trends: Example

Lake County, IL Metro Div
Employment by Industry- Not Seasonally Adjusted
May 2026

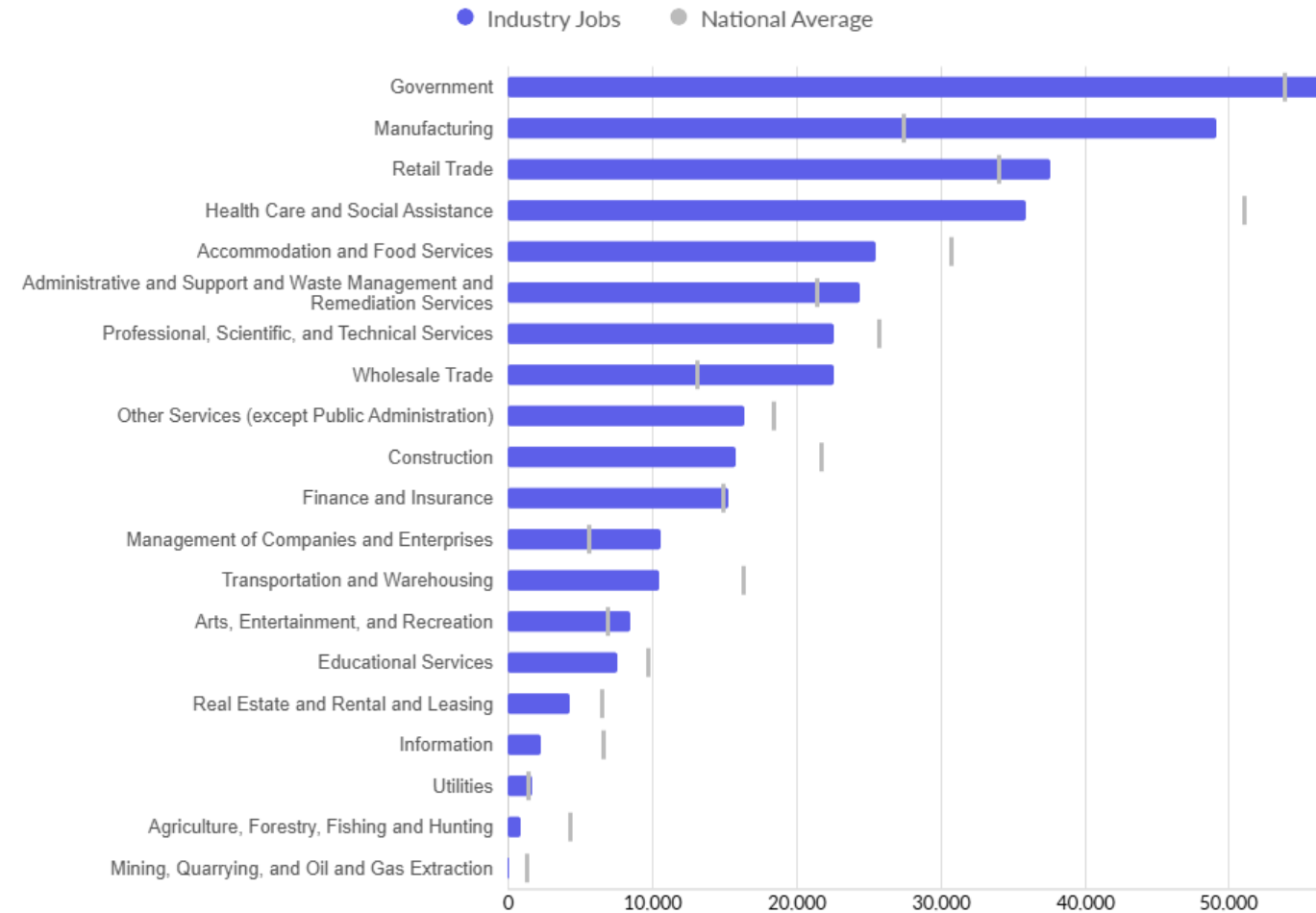


Note: Current month is preliminary



Analyze Labor Market Trends: Example

Largest Industries



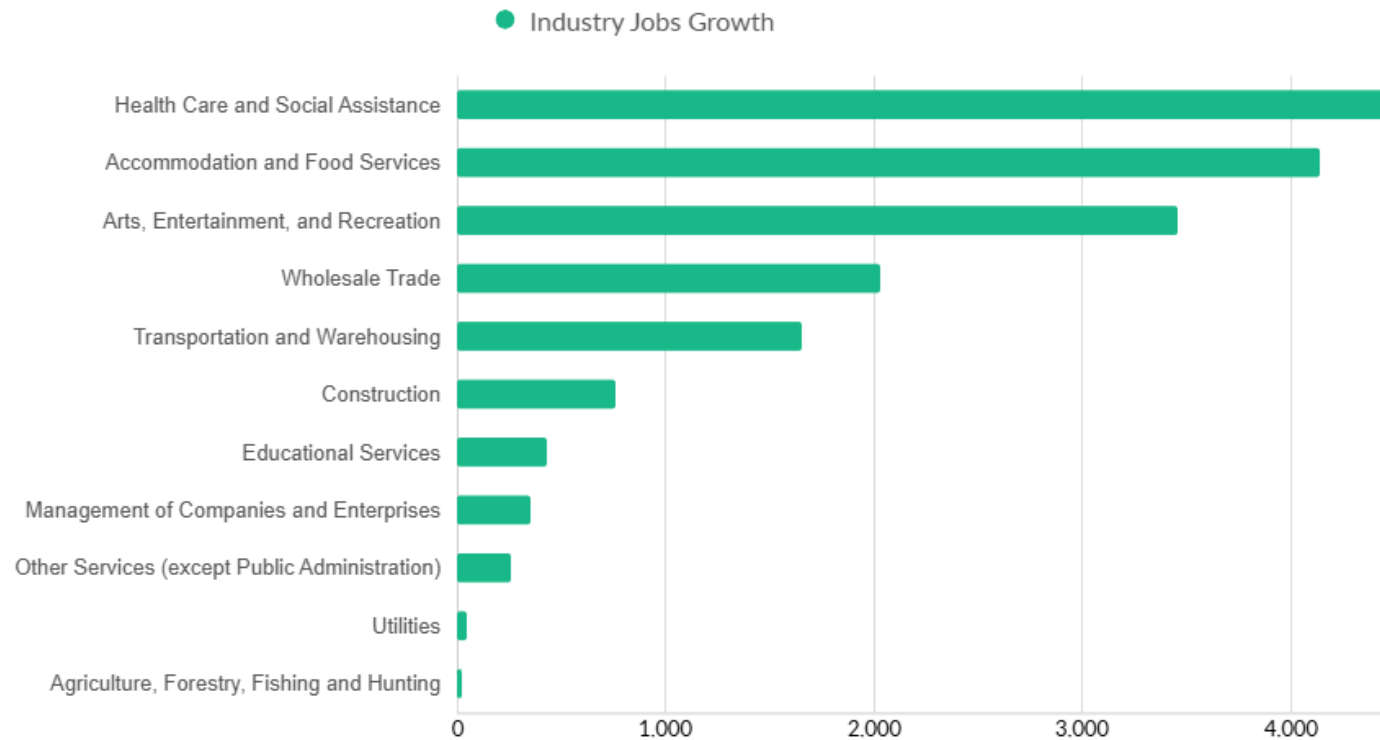
Analyze Labor Market Trends: Example

Top Occupation Earnings



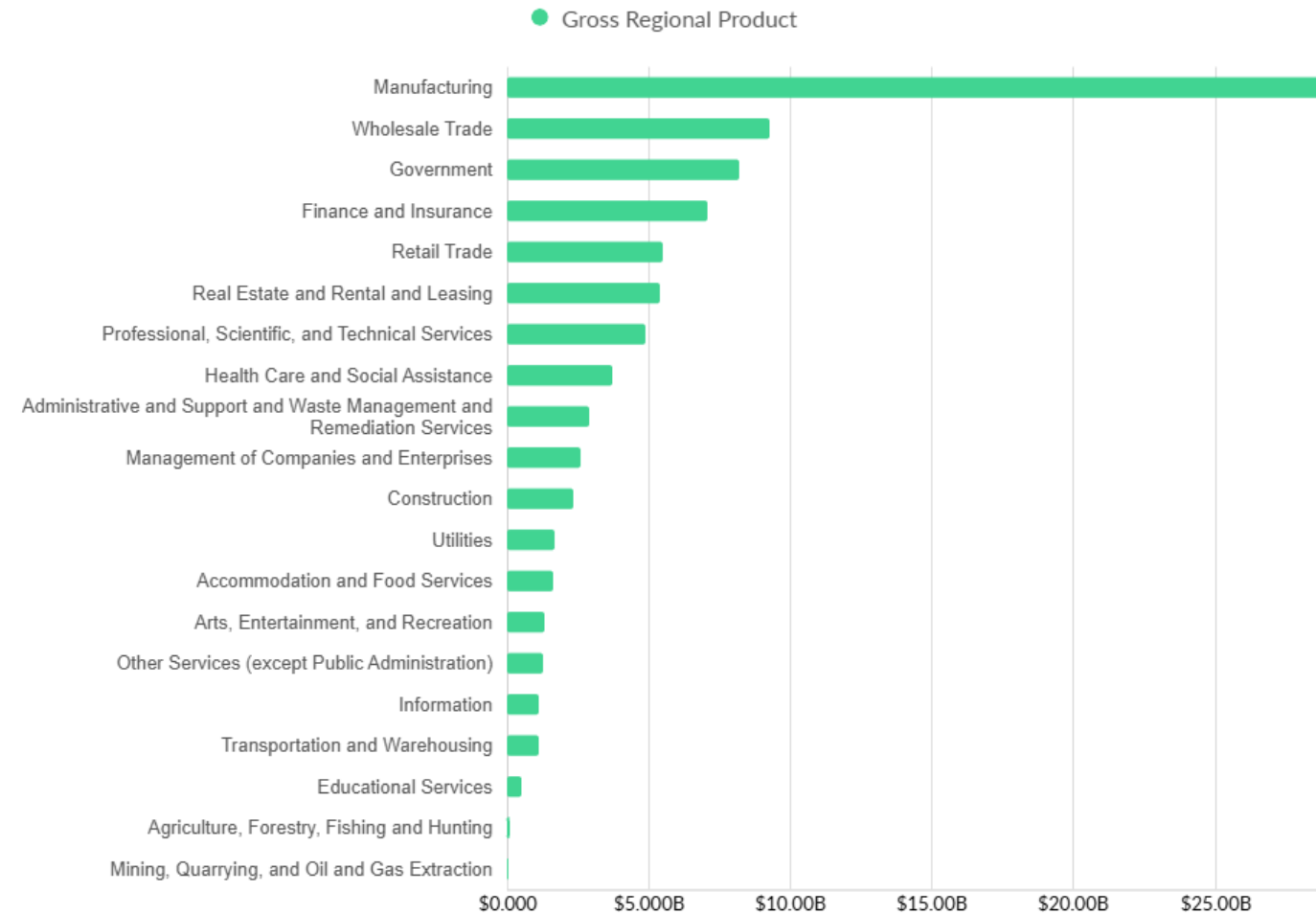
Analyze Labor Market Trends: Example

Top Growing Industries



Analyze Labor Market Trends: Example

Top Industry GRP



*Leverage Technology for Data-Driven Insights

What tools can help supplement your data and analysis?

- Tableau (has a free edition), Power BI, Excel
- Vendors and services such as Lightcast
- Generative AI (i.e. ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini, Claude, etc.)
 - Be cautious/conscious of what data you possibly feed into these tools



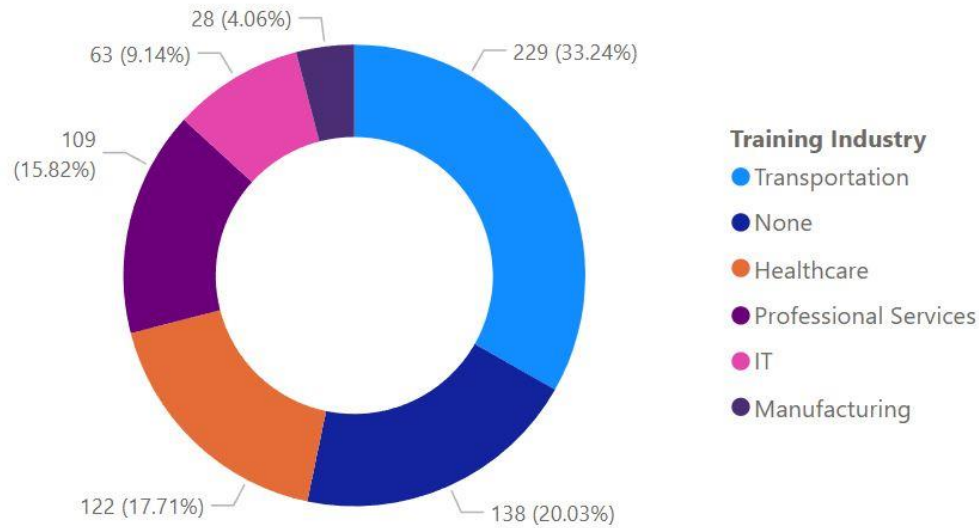
Power BI



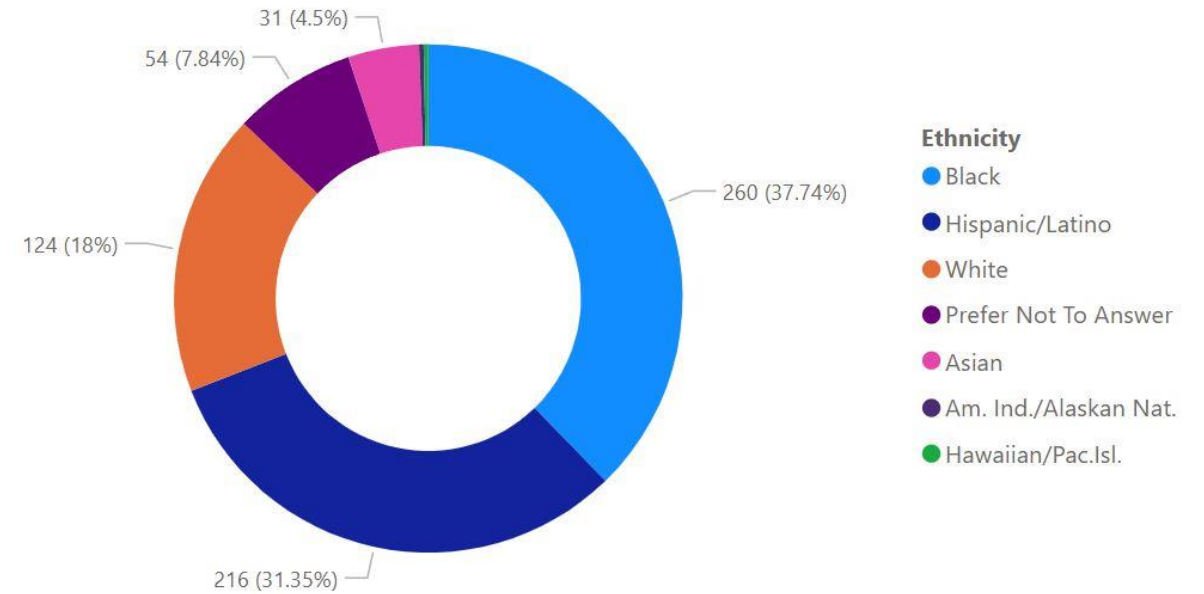
Lightcast

*Leverage Technology for Data-Driven Insights: Ex.

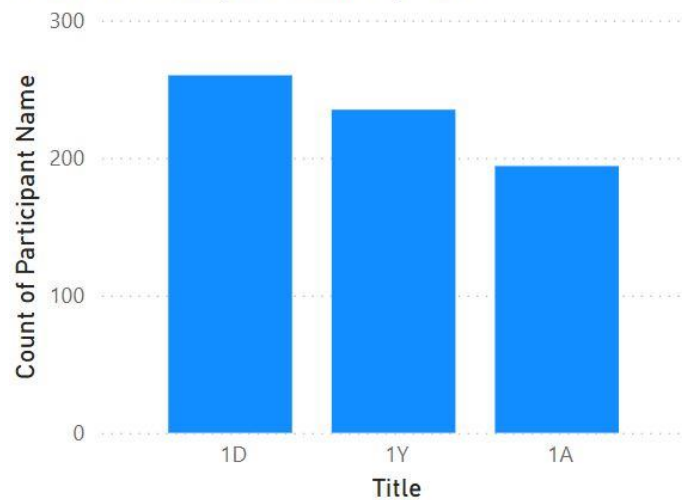
Count of Training Industry by Training Industry



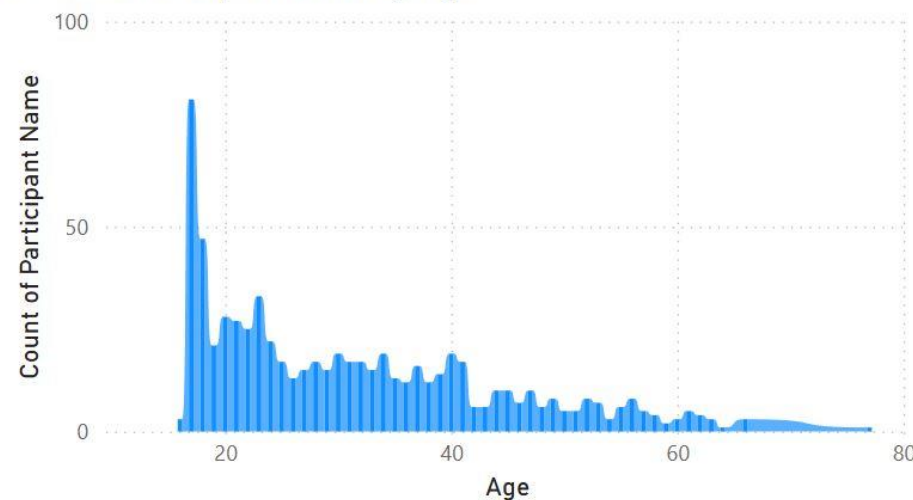
Count of Ethnicity by Ethnicity



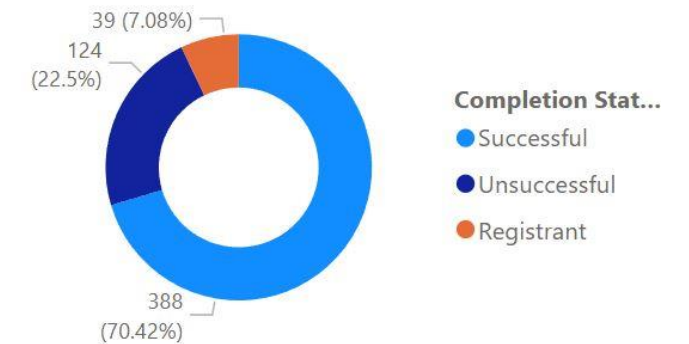
Count of Participant Name by Title



Count of Participant Name by Age



Count of Completion Status by Completion Status



Poll Question

What tools are you currently using for data analysis?

- Data visualization tools (Tableau, PowerBI, etc.)
- Data entry/spreadsheet tools (Excel, Google Sheets, etc.)
- AI tools (ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot, etc.)
- Database creation tools (MS Access, Salesforce, etc.)
- Others?

Implement Evaluation & Analysis

How can you use your data?

- Let your data inform your decision-making
- Analyzing program and performance data can expose inefficiencies and areas of possible improvement
- Make regular and ongoing analysis part of your organization's best practices
- The first attempt makes subsequent ones shorter and smoother or, at least, more informed

How can different types of evaluation and analysis help?

- More awareness of performance and ROI
- Clearer picture of what to communicate to stakeholders
 - Objective vs. subjective, Numbers vs. platitudes

Implement Evaluation & Analysis: Example

Industry	Sum of ITA Amt	% of Total ITA Amt	# of ITAs	# of Customers	% of Total Customers
Business Finance	\$13,034.96	2.08%	7	7	4.96%
Healthcare	\$87,185.87	13.90%	30	27	19.15%
Information Technology	\$88,000.83	14.03%	18	18	12.77%
Manufacturing	\$156,615.68	24.96%	26	25	17.73%
Other	\$31,459.75	5.01%	16	15	10.64%
Transportation	\$251,046.98	40.02%	50	49	34.75%
Grand Total	\$627,344.07	100%	147	141	100%

Disclaimer: This is for example purposes only. Not real or relevant data.

Helpful Types of Analysis

Macro Analysis (bigger picture, more broad, larger sample):

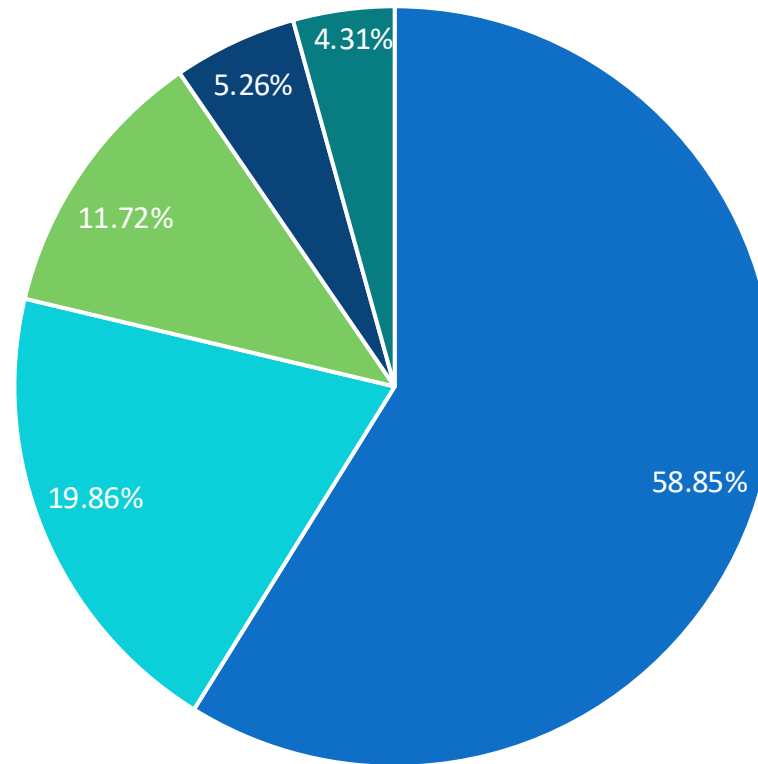
- Overall program year analysis (training and employment outcomes)
- Annual performance tracking (DCEO performance negotiations)

Micro Analysis (more niche or specific, smaller sample):

- Individual industry analysis
- Specific program analysis (support services, etc.)
- Specific grant analysis
- Strategic plan metrics

Helpful Types of Analyses: Macro Example

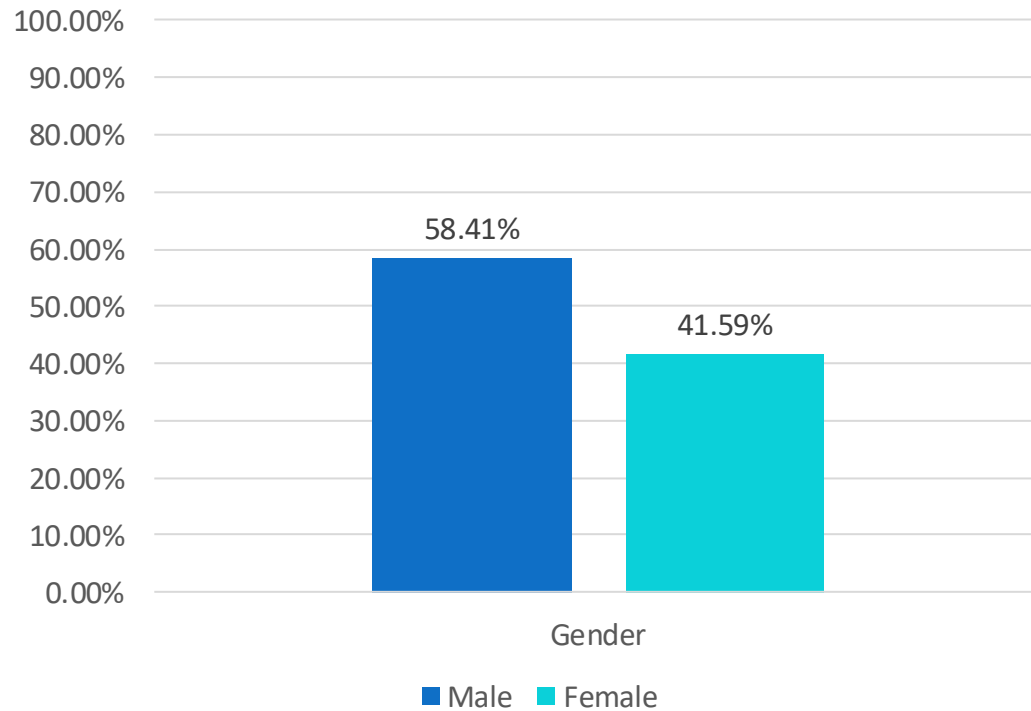
Industries % of Total Training Enrollments



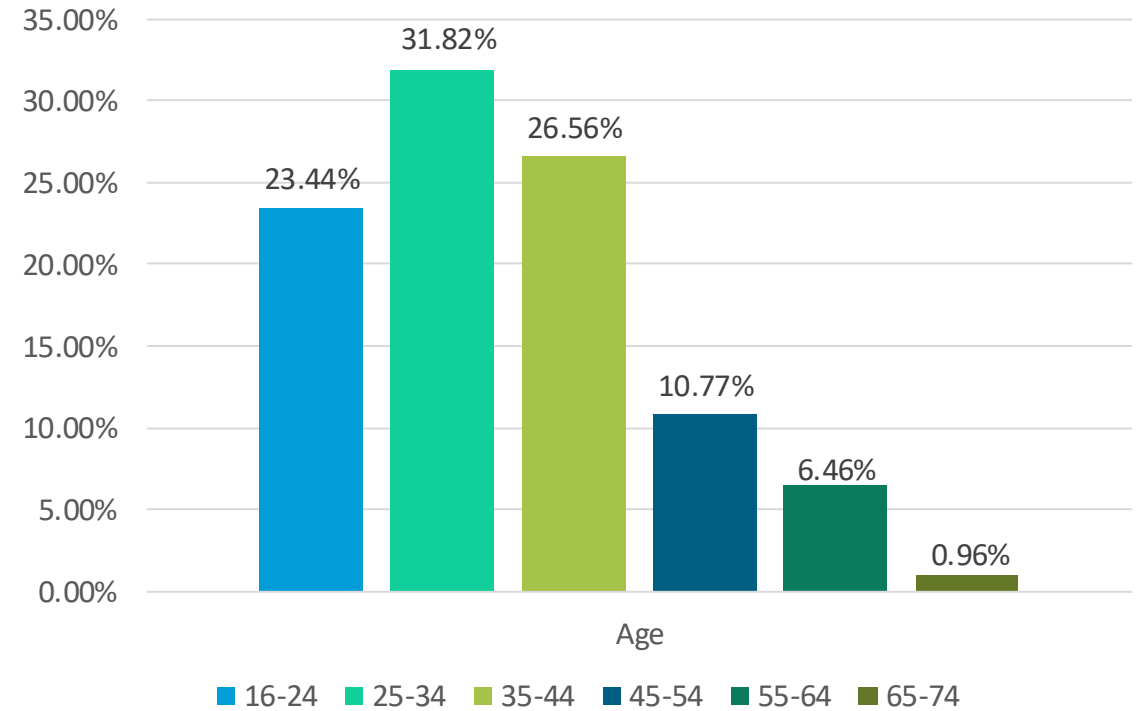
■ Transportation ■ Healthcare ■ IT ■ Professional Services ■ Manufacturing

Helpful Types of Analysis: Macro Example

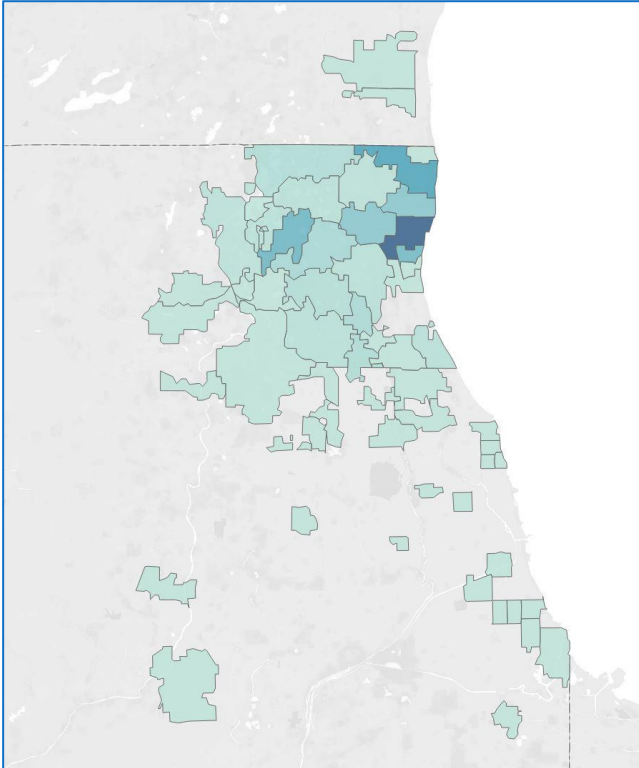
Gender % Breakdown



Age % Breakdown



Helpful Types of Analysis: Macro Example



PY21/22 List of top cities served in Lake County:

1. Waukegan – 24.71%
2. Zion – 10.01%
3. N. Chicago – 9.25%
4. Round Lake Bch. – 5.83%
5. Round Lake – 4.69%
6. Gurnee – 4.31%
7. Grayslake – 3.80%
8. Beach Park – 2.66%
9. Mundelein – 2.66%
10. Lake Villa – 2.28%

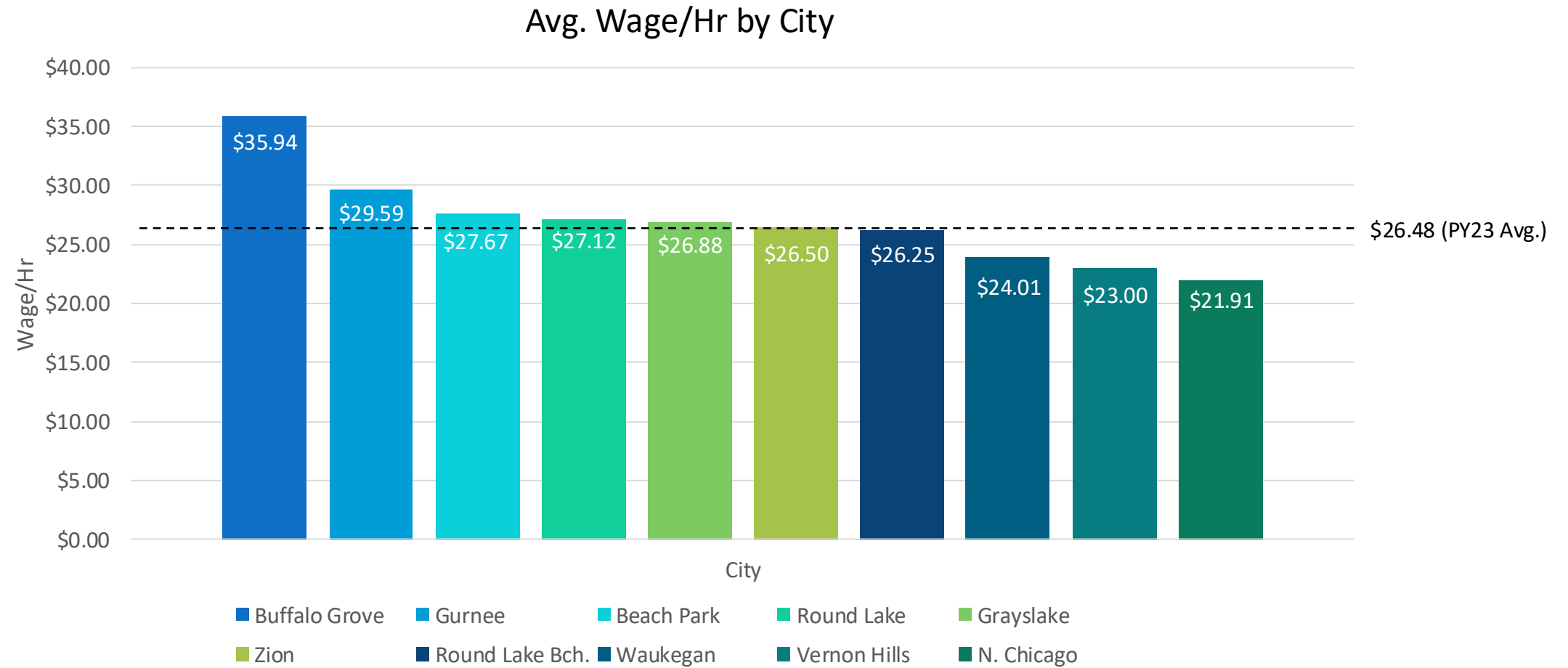
PY22/23 List of top cities served in Lake County:

1. Waukegan – 21.77%
2. N. Chicago – 12.92%
3. Zion – 12.05%
4. Round Lake Bch. – 5.81%
5. Gurnee – 4.50%
6. Round Lake – 4.35%
7. Grayslake – 3.92%
8. Beach Park – 2.90%
9. Park City – 2.18%
10. Mundelein – 1.89%

PY23/24 List of top cities served in Lake County:

1. Waukegan – 26.79%
2. Zion – 11.96%
3. N. Chicago – 8.85%
4. Gurnee – 6.46%
5. Round Lake Bch. – 5.02%
6. Round Lake – 4.31%
7. Grayslake – 2.87%
8. Beach Park – 2.63%
9. Vernon Hills – 2.39%
10. Buffalo Grove – 2.15%

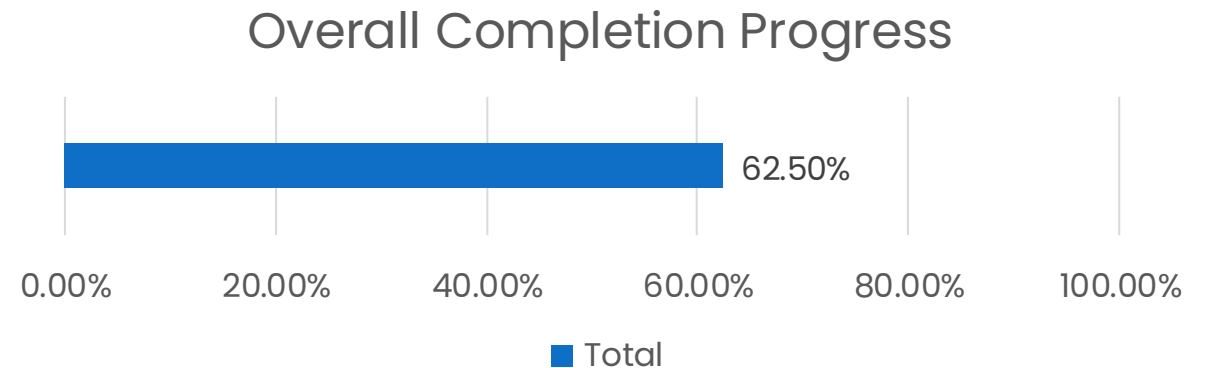
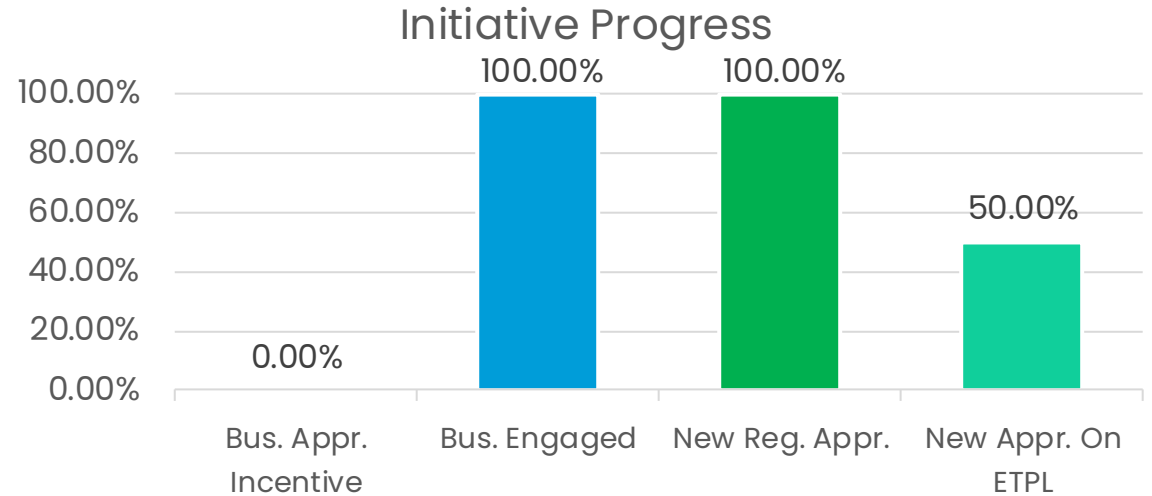
Helpful Types of Analysis: Micro Example



Helpful Types of Analysis: Micro Example

Workforce Development developing a successful apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship strategy is essential for building a skilled workforce and creating pathways to sustainable employment. A well-designed program connects job seekers, particularly young people and underserved communities, with industry-specific training and hands-on experience. Our comprehensive strategy supports training curricula and competencies co-developed with our employer partners and agencies.

KPI	Goal	Current	Stretch Goal	Weight Quotient	Weight Contribution
5 businesses rec'd appr. incentive	5	0	7	25%	0%
50 businesses engaged	50	60	70	25%	25%
2 new reg. app. programs	2	5	4	25%	25%
2 new app. on ETPL	2	1	3	25%	12.50%
Total					62.50%



Helpful Types of Analysis: Micro Example

Participation rates of Lake County Workforce Development customers with barriers.

Barrier	PY21/22	PY22/23	PY23/24
SNAP (Food Stamps)	30.29%	30.19%	31.66%
UI Recipients	33.85%	23.40%	25.61%
Basic Skills Deficient	48.66%	81.76%	80.97%
Disability	5.35%	6.16%	4.67%
Justice Impacted	9.91%	13.21%	17.65%

Final Thoughts

Identify Key Metrics & Outcomes

- Determine the data points that drive your performance and use them to establish measurable goals

Collect Comprehensive Data

- Take advantage of multiple sources of data to ensure you have everything you need

Analyze Labor Market Trends

- Being aware of the external labor market helps guide your internal efforts

Leverage Technology for Data-Driven Insights

- Tech tools can drastically help with interpreting and manipulating data and can make it much easier to communicate your findings

Implement Evaluation & Analysis

- Regular and ongoing data analysis and program evaluation helps you make better and more informed decisions

Thank you!

Let's discuss any questions you have!

Also, please feel free to reach out in the future:

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