![ASA News — American Statistical Association: Promoting the Practice and Profession of Statistics]

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New National Survey by SHRM Shows Employers Struggling to Meet Growing Demand for Data Analysts

2016 Jobs of the Future: Data Analysis Skills, Sponsored by ASA, Reveals Need for More Expertise in Statistical Science

ALEXANDRIA, VA (November 14, 2016) – More and more public and private sector employers are adding statisticians and data analysts to their ranks but are having a difficult time finding qualified candidates, according to a new national survey released today by the [Society for Human Resource Management](#) (SHRM) and sponsored by the [American Statistical Association](#) (ASA).

The *Jobs of the Future: Data Analysis Skills* report shows that over the past five years, nearly two-thirds of organizations (65%) had increased the number of positions requiring data analysis skills, and more than half (59%) expect to increase the number of positions at their organizations over the next five years. Four out of five responding organizations (80%) currently have positions that require data analysis skills, and another 2% expect to create positions in 2016. Those employers who filled a data analysis position within the last 12 months faced a challenge, with 78% reporting they had difficulty recruiting qualified candidates.

"Although data show that the number of students pursuing degrees in statistics is growing, and has been for more than 15 consecutive years, there is real concern that this growth may not be enough to satisfy the high demand for statisticians and other data analysts across all sectors of the economy," says Ron Wasserstein, Executive Director of the American Statistical Association. "It is important that employers and the statistical community work together to encourage more students to study the statistical sciences so that supply begins to meet demand."

For the purposes of this research, data analysis skills are defined as the ability to gather, analyze and draw practical conclusions from data as well as communicate data findings to others. Examples of jobs that require data analysis skills include data analyst, data scientist, statistician, market research analyst, financial analyst and research manager.

Many organizations need professionals with these skills outside of the accounting and finance departments, where they are most commonly used. A significant number of responding employers hire individuals to analyze data in multiple areas, including information technology, marketing, advertising and sales, supply chain and operations, and customer service. The survey shows that one in two organizations use data analysis in the business and administration

function, while more than half (54%) of human resources departments have at least one data analysis position. The vast majority of these positions (98%) are full-time.

The survey also found that:
- Organizations with 10,000 or more employees were more likely than smaller organizations to have data analysis positions in the human resources and supply chain and operations functions.
- Publicly and privately owned for-profit organizations were more likely than government organizations to have data analysis positions in the marketing, advertising and sales function.
- Publicly owned for-profit organizations were more likely than nonprofit and government organizations to have positions requiring data analysis skills in the supply chain and operations function.

As data increasingly play a role in a growing number of professional positions, these types of occupations are projected to grow faster than average in the coming decade. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects that employment of statisticians alone will grow 34% from 2014 to 2024, compared to 28% for mathematical science occupations, and 7% for all occupations. In response to this demand, colleges and universities across the nation are expanding their statistics programs. The number of universities granting degrees in statistics increased 50% for bachelor's degrees and 21% for master's degrees from 2003 to 2015. From 2000 to 2015, bachelor's, master's, and doctorate degrees in statistics and biostatistics grew at 512%, 309% and 133% respectively.

Access the complete findings of the SHRM/ASA survey here.

About the American Statistical Association
The ASA is the world's largest community of statisticians and the oldest continuously operating professional science society in the United States. Its members serve in industry, government and academia in more than 90 countries, advancing research and promoting sound statistical practice to inform public policy and improve human welfare. For additional information, please visit the ASA website at www.amstat.org.

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