



# **SURVEY FINDINGS**

## **State and Local Government Workforce: 2016 Trends**

**May 2016**

# State and Local Government Workforce: 2016 Trends

Recruiting and retaining qualified personnel (92 percent), succession planning (80 percent), and staff development (79 percent) are ranked as the most important issues for the second year in a row by state and local government human resources managers. Governments continue to have difficulty recruiting for a range of positions, including finance, IT, skilled trades, and public safety. The skill sets they most need in new hires are interpersonal, technology, and written communication skills.

Hiring is a growing trend. The percentage of governments hiring has increased to 77 percent in 2016, an increase from 27 percent in 2013, 66 percent in 2014, and 73 percent in 2015. For this year’s survey, 41 percent report hiring contract and temporary workers.

Governments are experiencing an uptick in retirements. Fifty-four percent (54 percent) of respondents report that retirements were higher in 2015 than in 2014. Twenty-one (21 percent) of retirement-eligible employees are delaying their retirements, a notable decline from a rate of 46 percent in 2009.

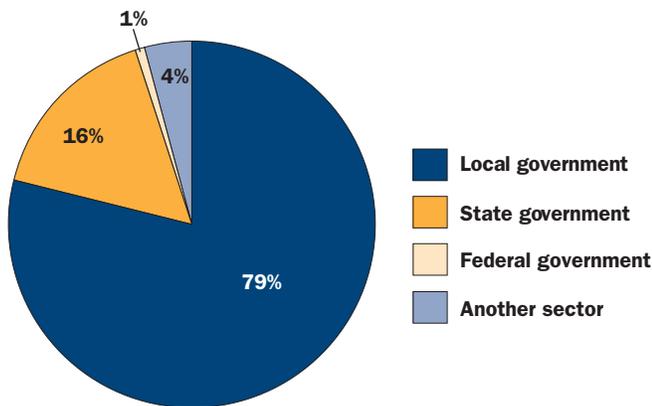
Twenty-one (21 percent) of respondents’ governments made changes to their retirement benefits over the past year and 52 percent made changes to health benefits. Offering a competitive compensation package was rated as important by 69 percent of respondents and 85 percent report that their benefits are competitive with the labor market.

A majority of respondents report that their governments offer flexible schedules (59 percent) or flexible hours (51 percent) and 22 percent offer regular telecommuting for eligible employees.

This report reflects the survey responses of members<sup>1</sup> of the International Public Management Association for Human Resources (ipma-hr.org) and National Association of State Personnel Executives (naspe.net). The online survey was conducted from March 15 to April 7, 2016 by the Center for State and Local Government Excellence (slge.org) with 331 members submitting responses.

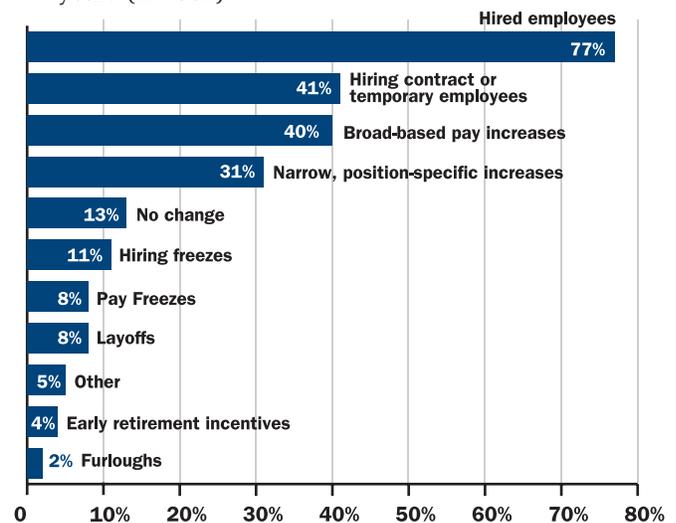
## Participants

1) You work for...(n = 330)<sup>2</sup>:



## Workforce Changes

2) Which of the following workforce changes has your government implemented over the past year? (n = 331)

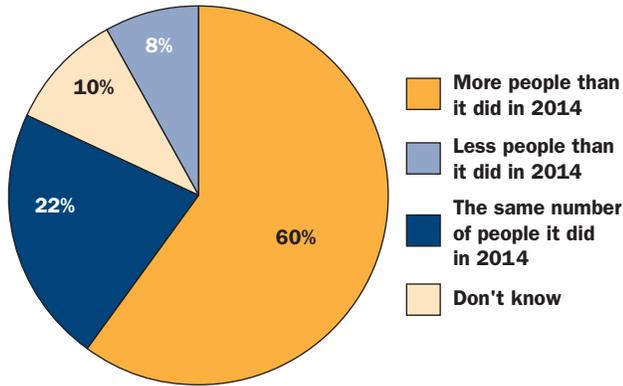


Note: “Other” changes offered were: longevity increases for unrepresented, non-exempt staff; 1% cost of living adjustment for all employees; pay for performance reinstated; position eliminations; increased tuition reimbursement and paid parental leave; delayed hiring; implemented career ladders and created new pay scales.

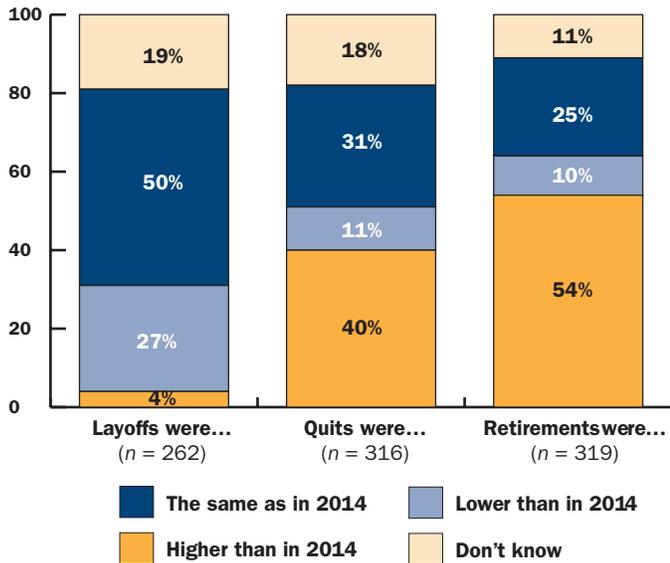
<sup>1</sup> Sent to 3958 IPMA-HR and 120 NASPE members

<sup>2</sup> (n = number of respondents to each question)

3) In 2015 your government hired... (n = 330)

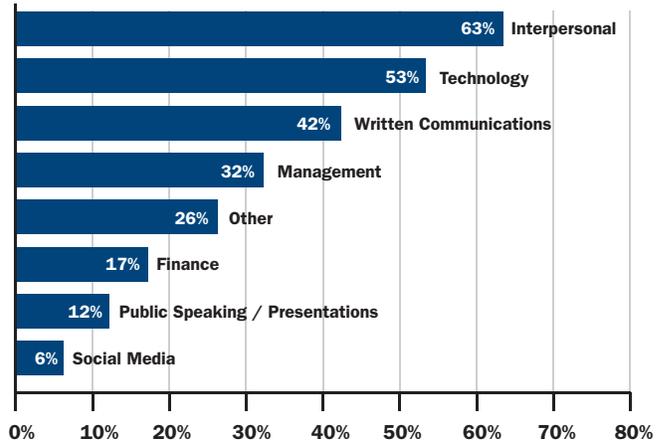


4) Regarding your government's workforce separations...



## Skill Sets

5) What skill sets are most needed in new hires? (n = 323)



Note: "Other" skill sets offered were: verbal communication; analytical; administrative; emotional intelligence; innovative/adaptable/resourceful/resilient; leadership; politically savvy; customer service; collaborative; social/diversity awareness; business results; business acumen; critical thinking; good work ethic; coping skills.

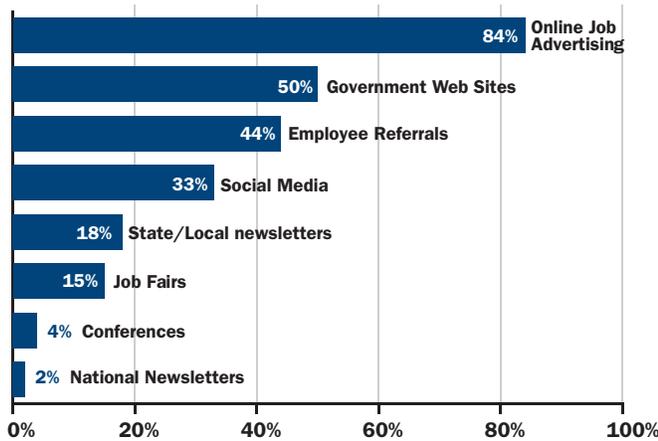
## Unfilled Positions

6) What positions, if any, do you continue to have a hard time filling in the current economic climate? (n = 273)

- Accountants
- Building Inspectors
- Corrections Officers
- Dispatchers
- Engineers (all types)
- Finance (all types)
- Firefighters
- Information Technology Professionals
- Management (all levels)
- Mechanics
- Mental Health Professionals
- Nurses
- Physicians
- Police Officers
- Public Works
- Seasonal Employees
- Skilled Trades (all types)
- Social Workers
- Water Treatment Plant Occupations (all types)

## Recruitment Practices

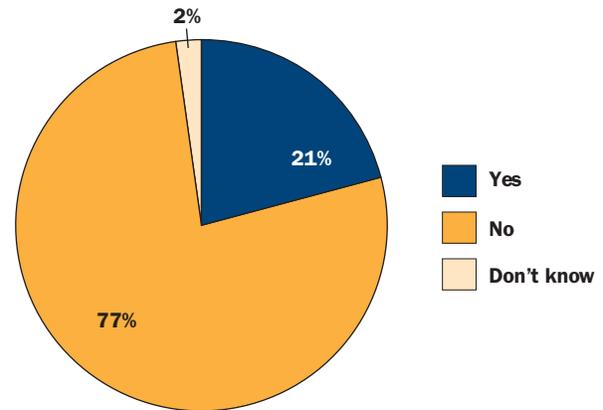
7) What recruitment practices are most successful in reaching qualified candidates? (n = 327)



Note: "Other" practices offered were: professional organizations/associations; presentations at schools; league of cities web site; newspapers; Federal Job Service Center; radio advertisements; university web sites and events; recruiters.

## Retirement Plan Changes

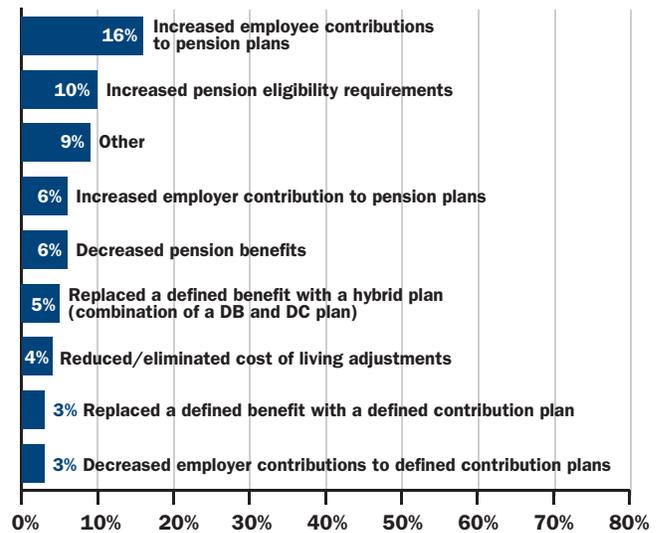
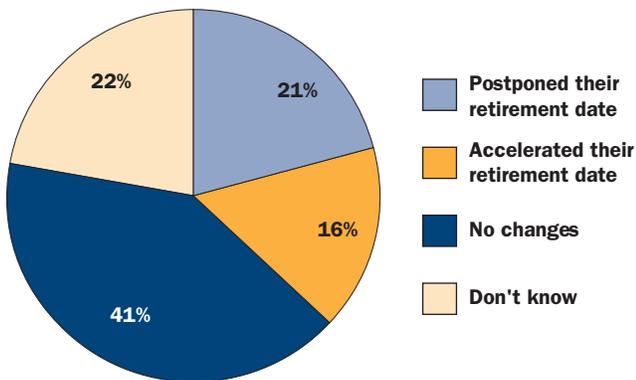
9) Over the past year, has your government made any changes to the retirement benefits you offer to your employees? (n = 329)



10) If your government has made changes to the retirement benefits, has it made any of the following changes to retirement benefits for new hires? (n = 264)

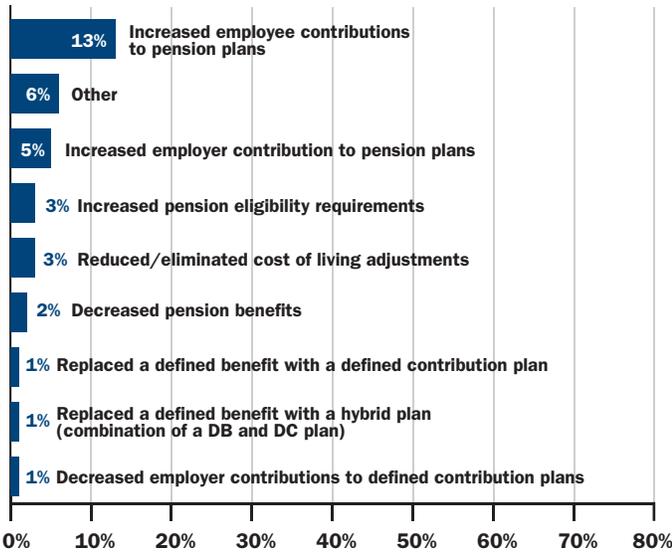
## Postponed Retirements

8) What changes, if any, have your retirement-eligible employees made regarding their plans for retirement? (n = 329)



Note: "Other" changes offered were: instituted voluntary ROTH post-tax contributions; created new employee type (limited term with DC); reduced vesting period; increased vesting period; changed providers.

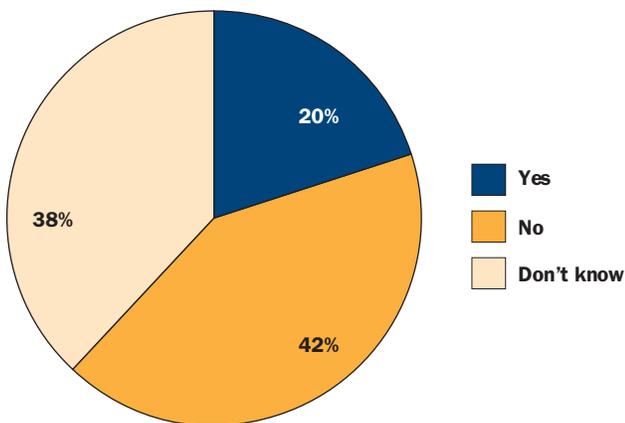
11) If your government has made changes to the retirement benefits, has it made any of the following changes to retirement benefits for current workers? (n = 264)



Note: "Other" changes offered were: early retirement for public safety; changed providers; instituted voluntary ROTH post-tax contributions; lowered vesting requirements; implemented multi-tier system; added employer contribution outside of regular DB plan.

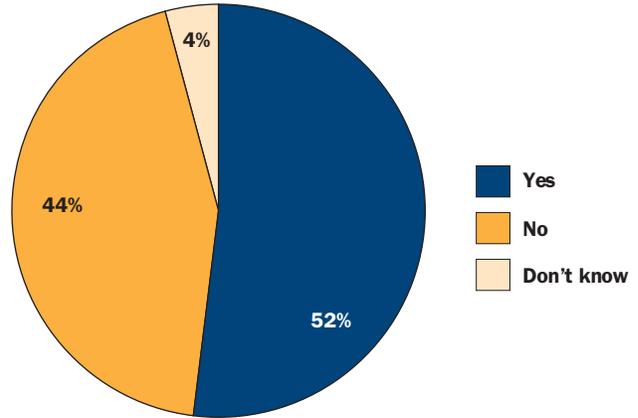
## Retirement Preparedness

12) Do you feel your employees are prepared financially for their retirement? (n = 329)

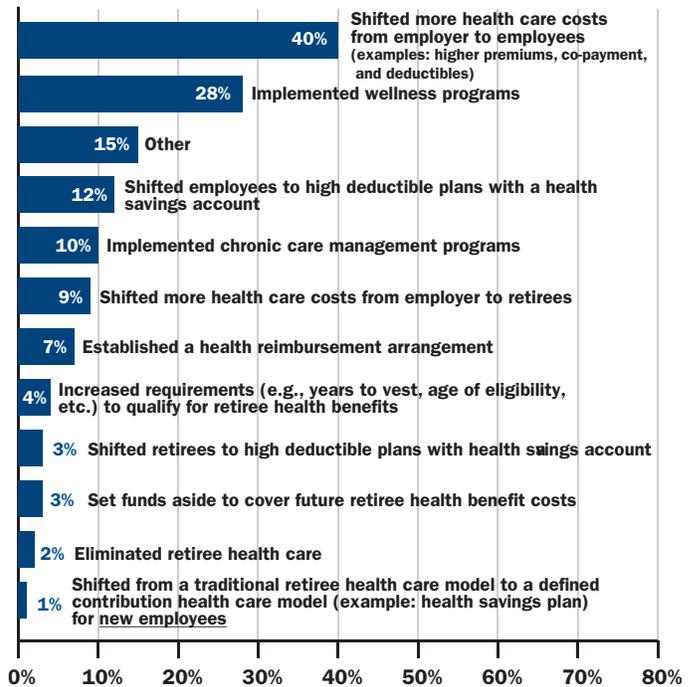


## Health Care Plan Changes

13) Over the past year, has your government made any changes to the health benefits you offer to your employees and retirees? (n = 329)

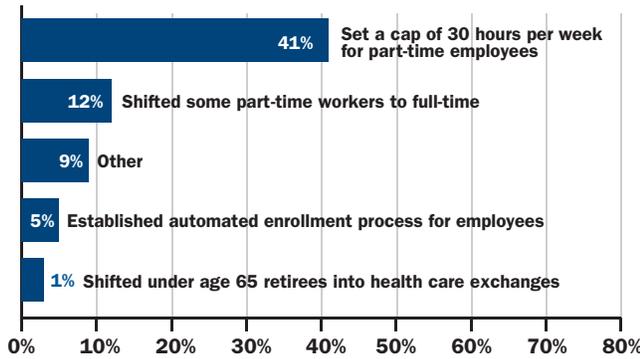


14) If your government has made changes to the health benefits, what changes? (n = 268)



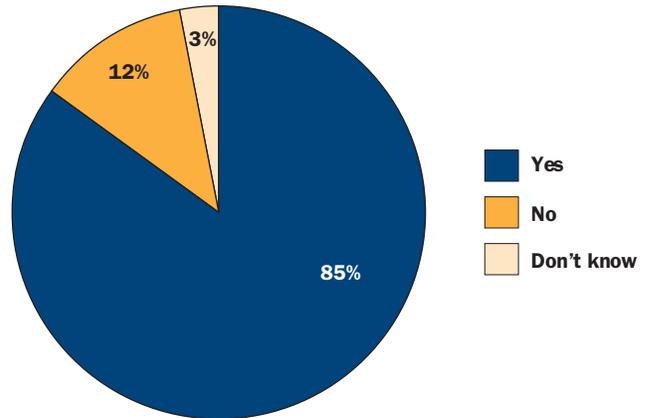
Note: "Other" changes offered were: went partially self-funded; conducted a physician performance/cost analysis – employees pay lower co-payments at higher performing doctors; limited eligibility; implemented on-site medical clinic; added additional retiree health plan; implemented tobacco surcharge; changed carriers; changed network plan; increased contribution to FSA if employee signed up for family coverage; added tiered hospitalization plan; implemented spousal exclusion clause; increased employee OPEB contribution for new hires; moved to a municipality-owned, pooled, self-insured company; reduced number of plan options; increased number of plan options; increased contributions to HSA.

15) Has your government made changes to health benefits related to the Affordable Care Act? (n = 303)

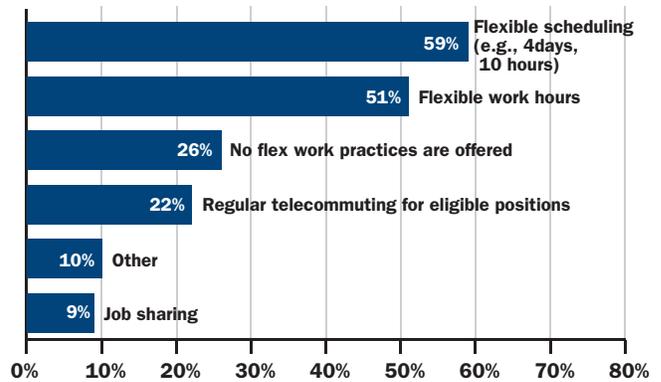


Note: "Other" changes offered were: temporary staff no longer than 6 months; better defined part-time groups; aligned medical plans under one deductible; RX out of pocket maximum; lowered incentive to employees waiving medical coverage; provide coverage to greater portion of employee population; increased notification of health care benefit options to employees without automatic health care options; offer health benefits to qualified temp employees.

17) Do you feel the benefits compensation you offer your employees is competitive with the labor market? (n = 330)



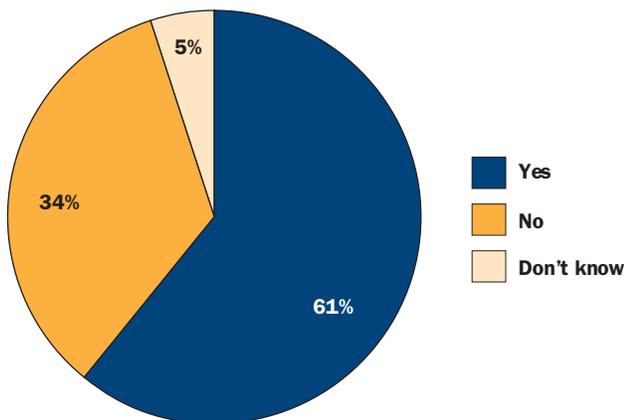
18) What flexible work practices does your organization offer? (n = 328)



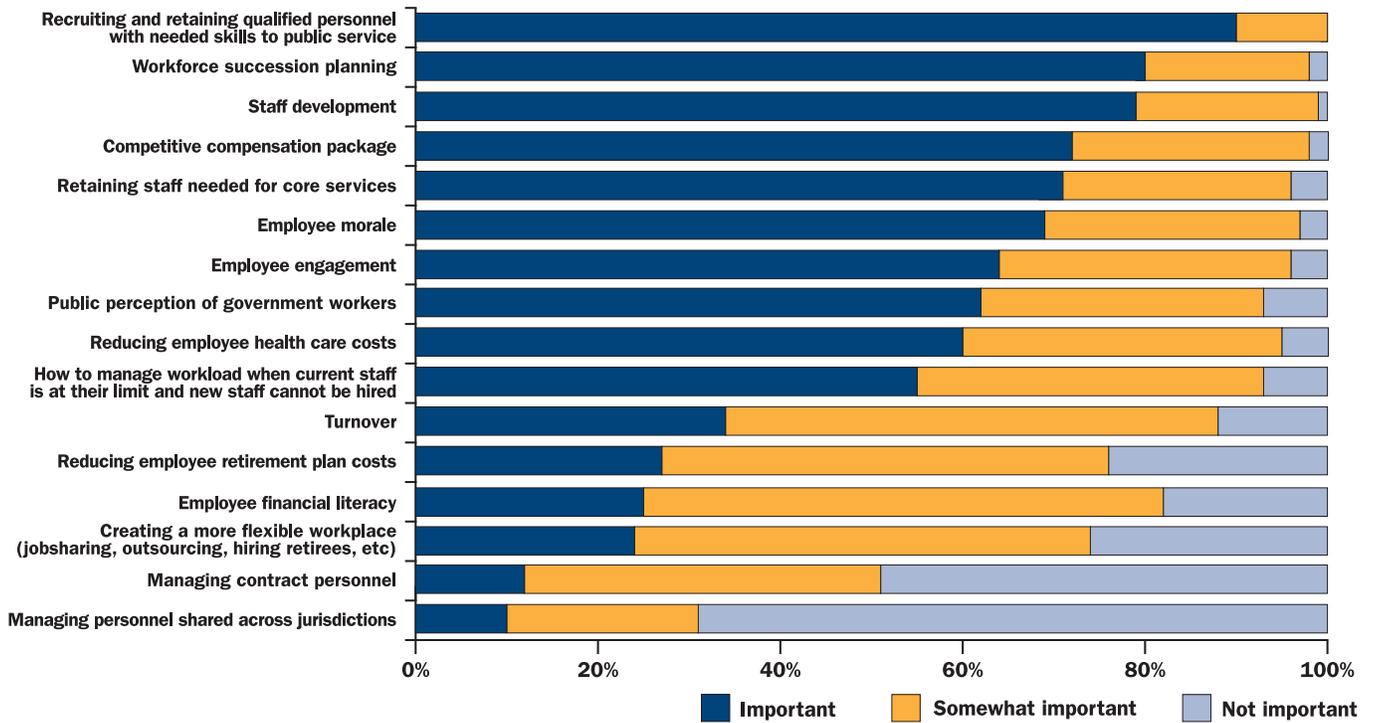
Note: "Other" flexible work practices offered were: work from alternative work locations; the ability to work different shifts.

## Workforce Issues

16) Do you feel the total wage compensation you offer your employees is competitive with the labor market? (n = 330)



19) Looking ahead, which workforce issues are important to your organization? (n = 330)







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## Helping state and local governments become knowledgeable and competitive employers

### About the Center for State and Local Government Excellence

The Center for State and Local Government Excellence helps state and local governments become knowledgeable and competitive employers so they can attract and retain a talented and committed workforce. The Center identifies best practices and conducts research on competitive employment practices, workforce development, pensions, retiree health security, and financial planning. The Center also brings state and local leaders together with respected researchers and features the latest demographic data on the aging work force, research studies, and news on health care, recruitment, and succession planning on its web site, [www.slge.org](http://www.slge.org).

The Center's five research priorities are:

- Retirement plans and savings
- Retiree health care
- Financial education for employees
- Talent strategies and innovative employment practices
- Workforce development