

# WHAT DO EMPLOYERS EXPECT OF RECENT GRADUATES IN ENTRY LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL BIOLOGY CAREERS?

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## Next Generation Careers – Innovation in Environmental Biology Education

### Introduction

Trends in the career pathways of biology graduates and the rapid changes in the biological sciences highlight the need to reconsider academic preparation and skills development necessary for new career tracks in the 21st Century. This is particularly challenging for environmental biology where there are not clearly defined vocational tracks. Instead, career development is more focused on individual initiative. The incubator will generate recommendations that facilitate the awareness of university, community college and adjunct faculty as well as career development officers, administrators and professional society leaders to the full range of productive career options in environmental biology. In this poster, we will focus on employer expectations of recent graduates.

### Methods

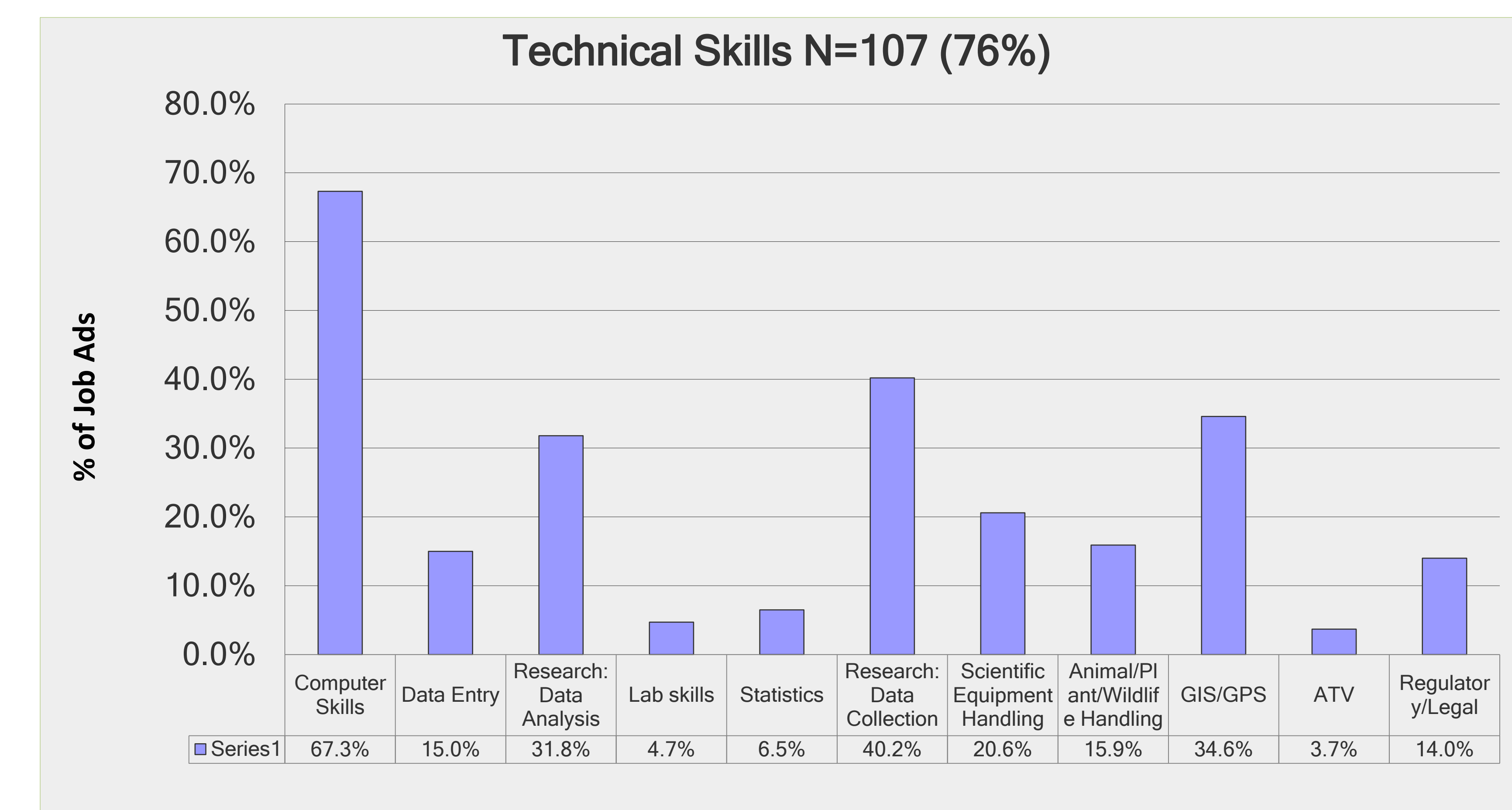
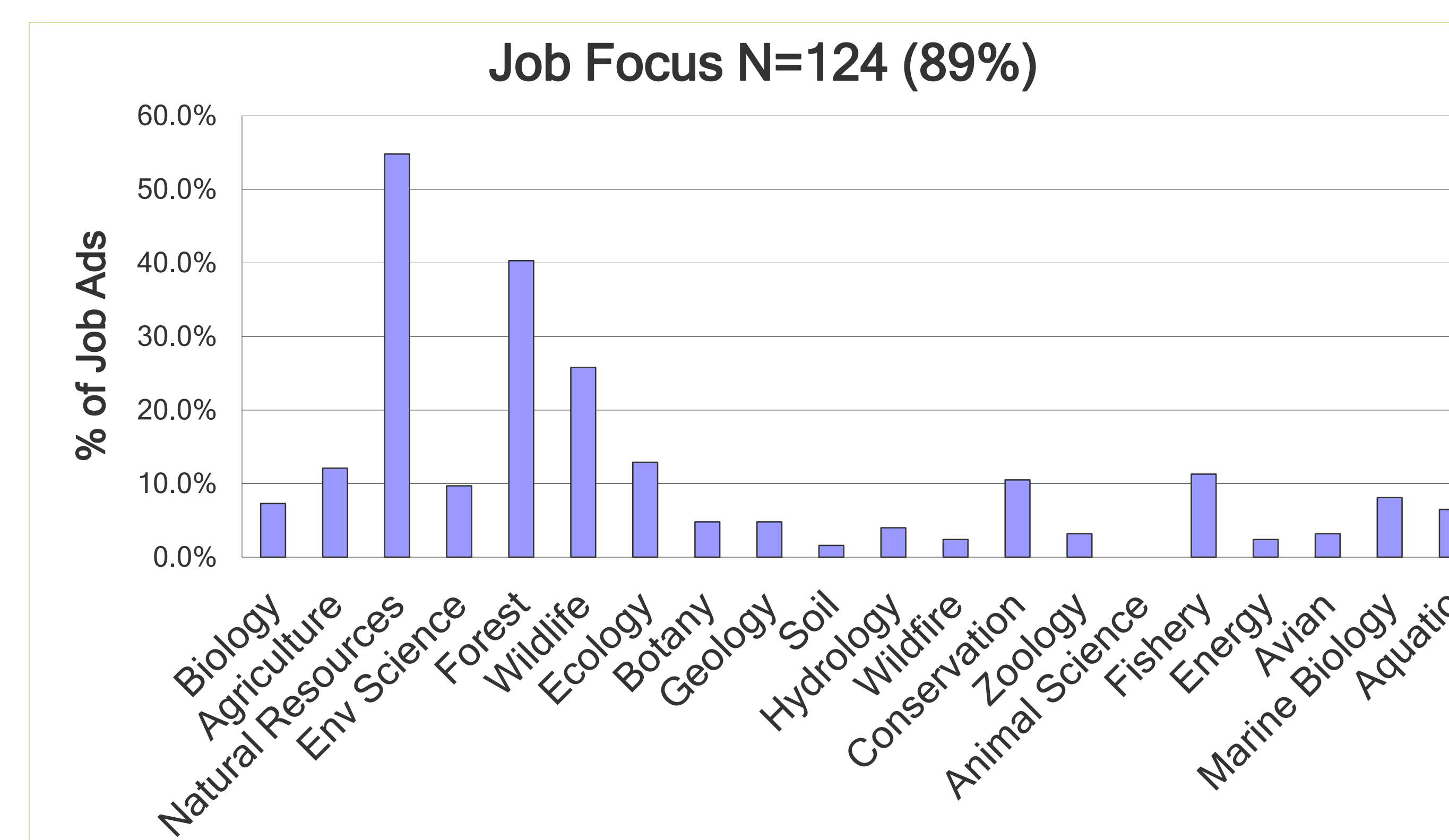
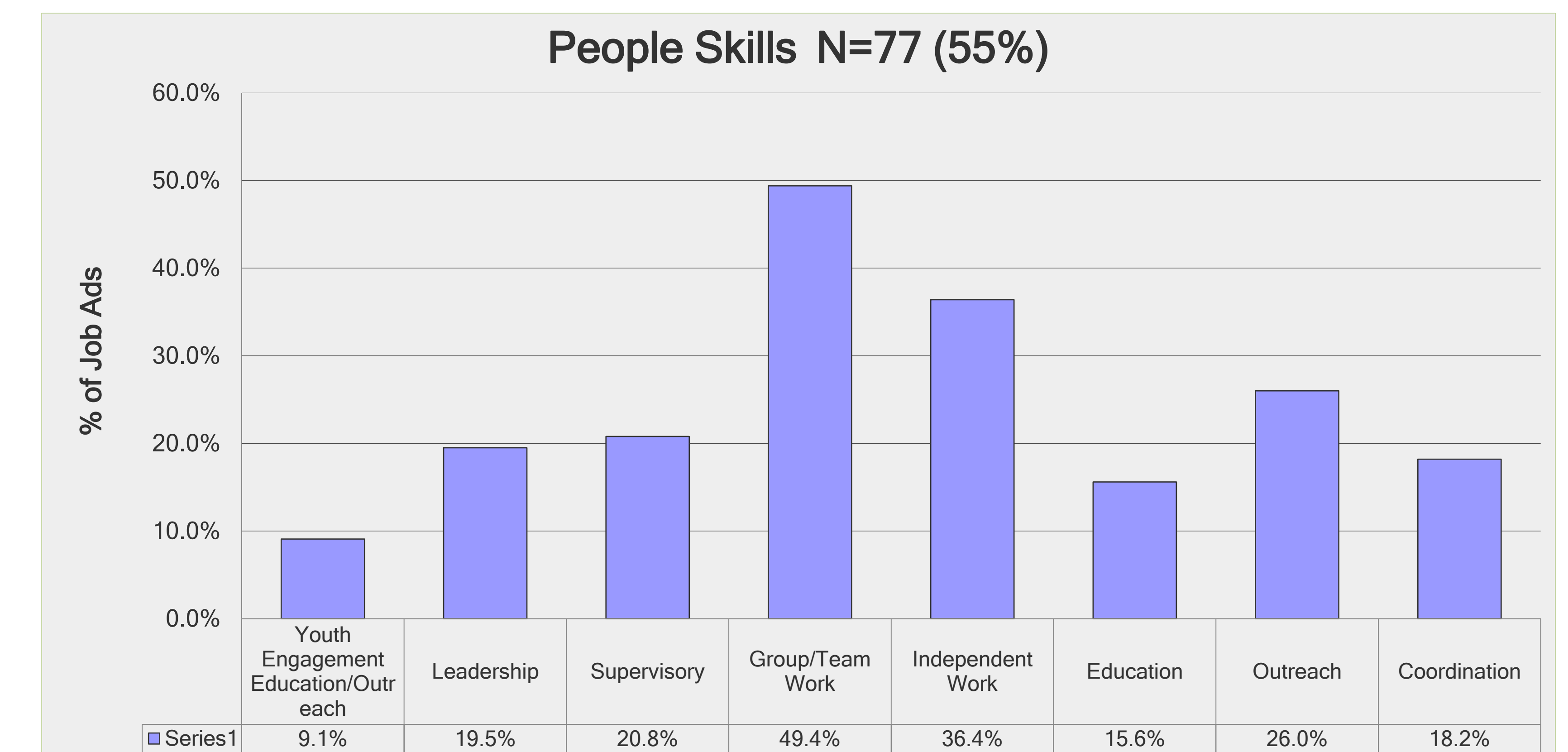
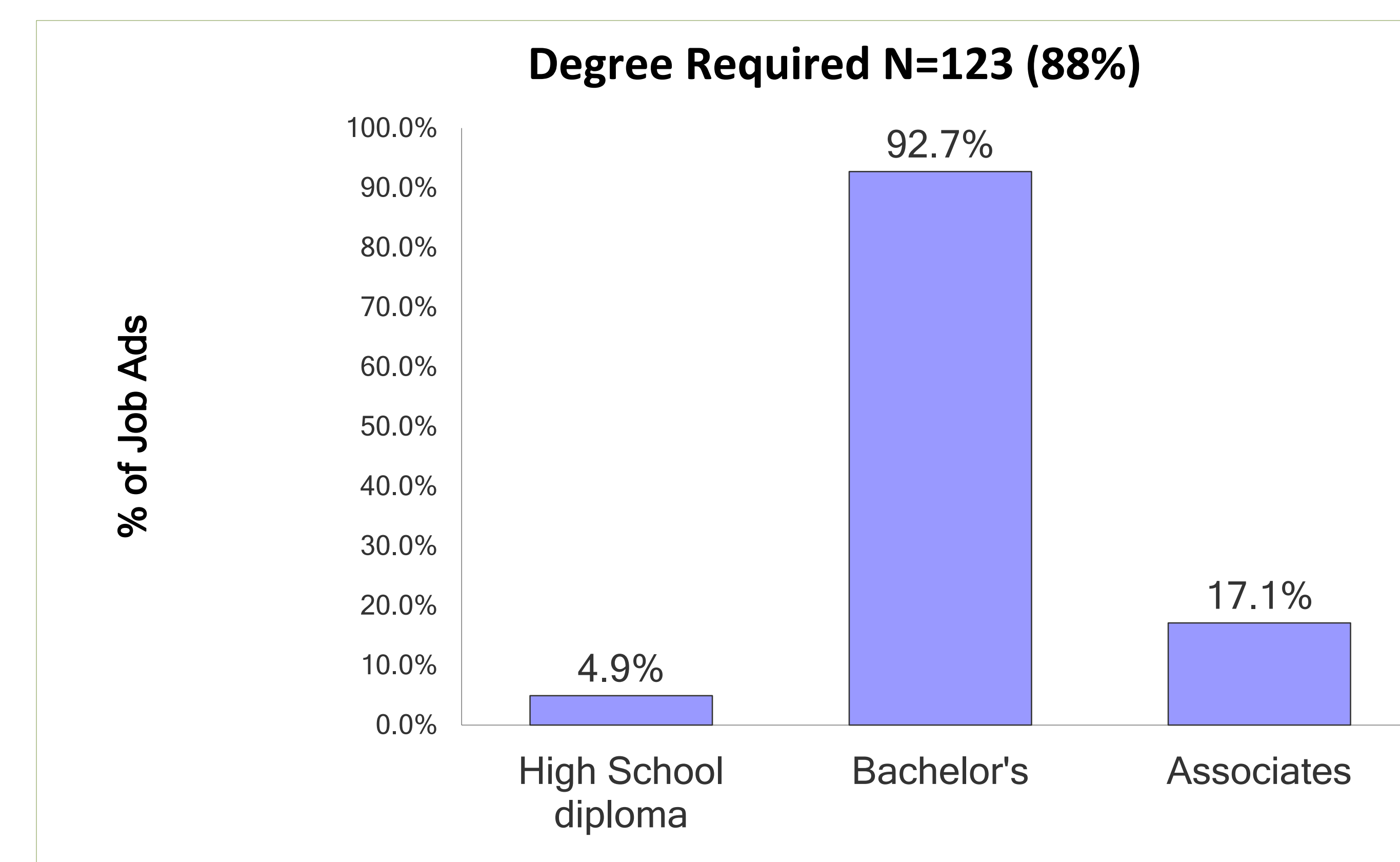
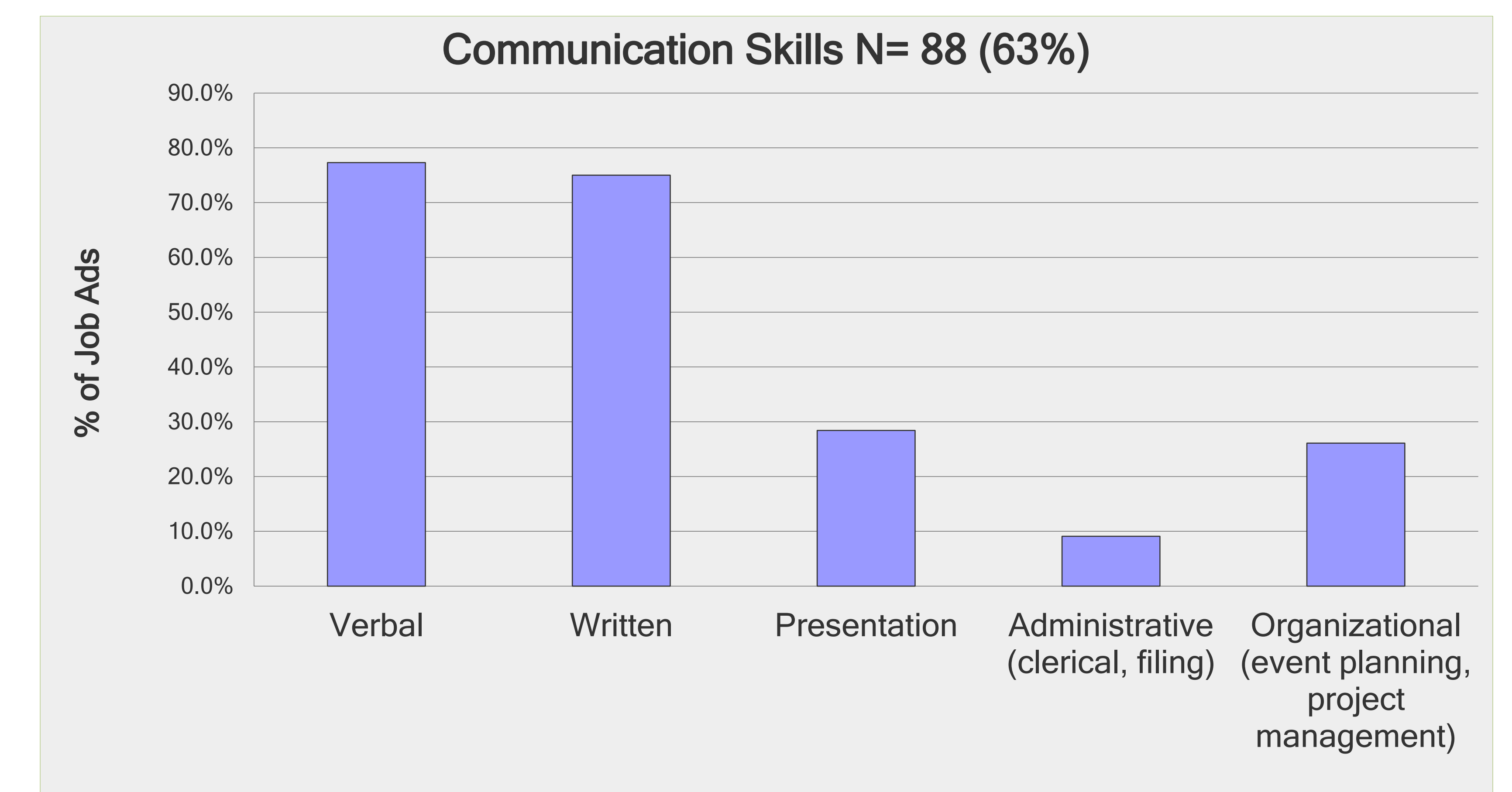
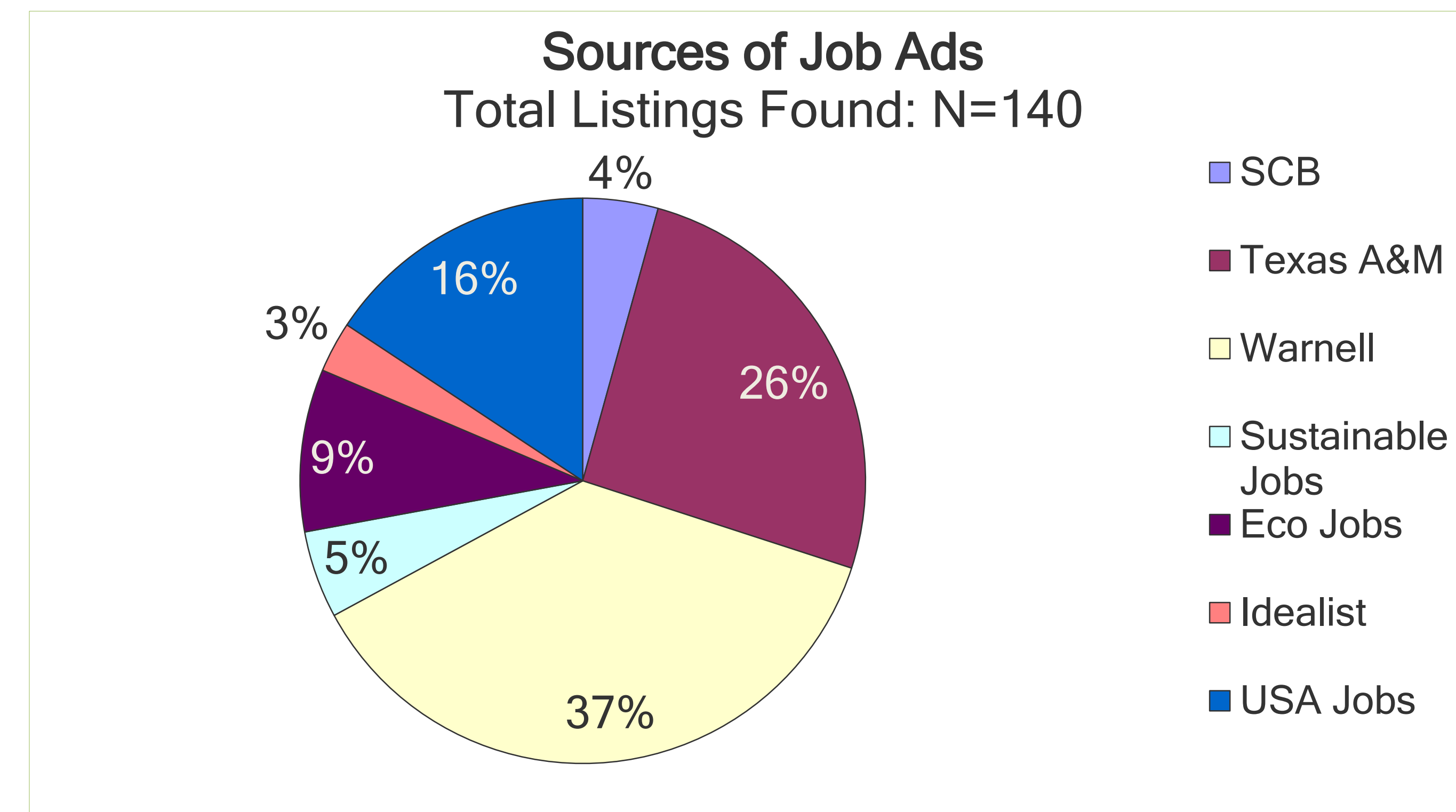
We ran preliminary searches using relevant keywords (e.g. “ecological,” “wildlife,” “conservation,” etc.) to determine what common required skills were found in the job listings. From these, we generated a list of keywords based on the most commonly occurring skills employers cited as being required of a successful applicant.

We included jobs from all sectors, including government, non-profit, industry and universities, we used several job search engines to query job postings during the official job scans. We retrieved and recorded all full time, permanent entry-level job postings on selected sites that matched our search criteria from November 1 - December 1, 2015 using SurveyMonkey. Job skills were coded to the keywords generated. Using this process, we found 140 listings that met our criteria.

### Discussion

The job scans revealed that a significant number of full-time, permanent entry-level jobs in environmental biology were in the forestry and natural resources fields. Many jobs were found in the government sector, although the non-profit and industry sectors also solicited for a number of positions. The term “Entry-level” varied across positions, with some jobs requiring solely a high school diploma or Associates degree to other jobs requiring a Bachelor’s degree with one or more years of relevant experience.

A significant number of ads did not include skills requirements. Verbal and written skills were the most sought after Communication Skills (63% response). Group/Team work and ability to work independently as well Outreach skills were the top three People skills (55% responses). Among Technical skills, the most frequently sought were Computer skills, data collection, GIS/GPS and data analysis skills (76% responses).



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