

Georgia's Skills Gap and Soft Skills

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Unique Perspectives

- Automotive Business for 20 Years
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- State Economic Development Liaison for the Georgia Department of Education
- State CTAE Advisory Council Member
- North Georgia WIOA Board Member
- CTAE Director for Pickens County Schools

The Two Biggest Concerns I Hear

- Businesses I visited had two major concerns they wanted help with:
- Skilled workers (The Skills Gap)
- Lack of Soft-Skills or Employability Skills.



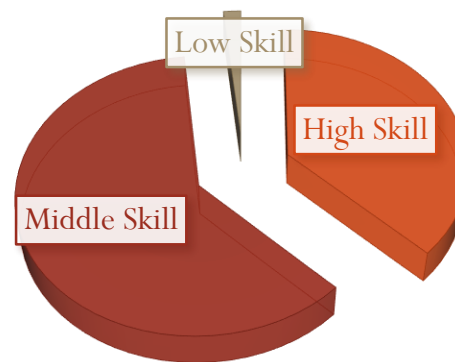
Georgia's Skills Gaps

- The majority of all jobs in the U.S. labor market require some postsecondary education or training. To effectively compete in today's marketplace, states must have skilled workforces. (Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, 2015)
- Most of these jobs are middle-skill jobs.

Georgia's Forgotten Middle

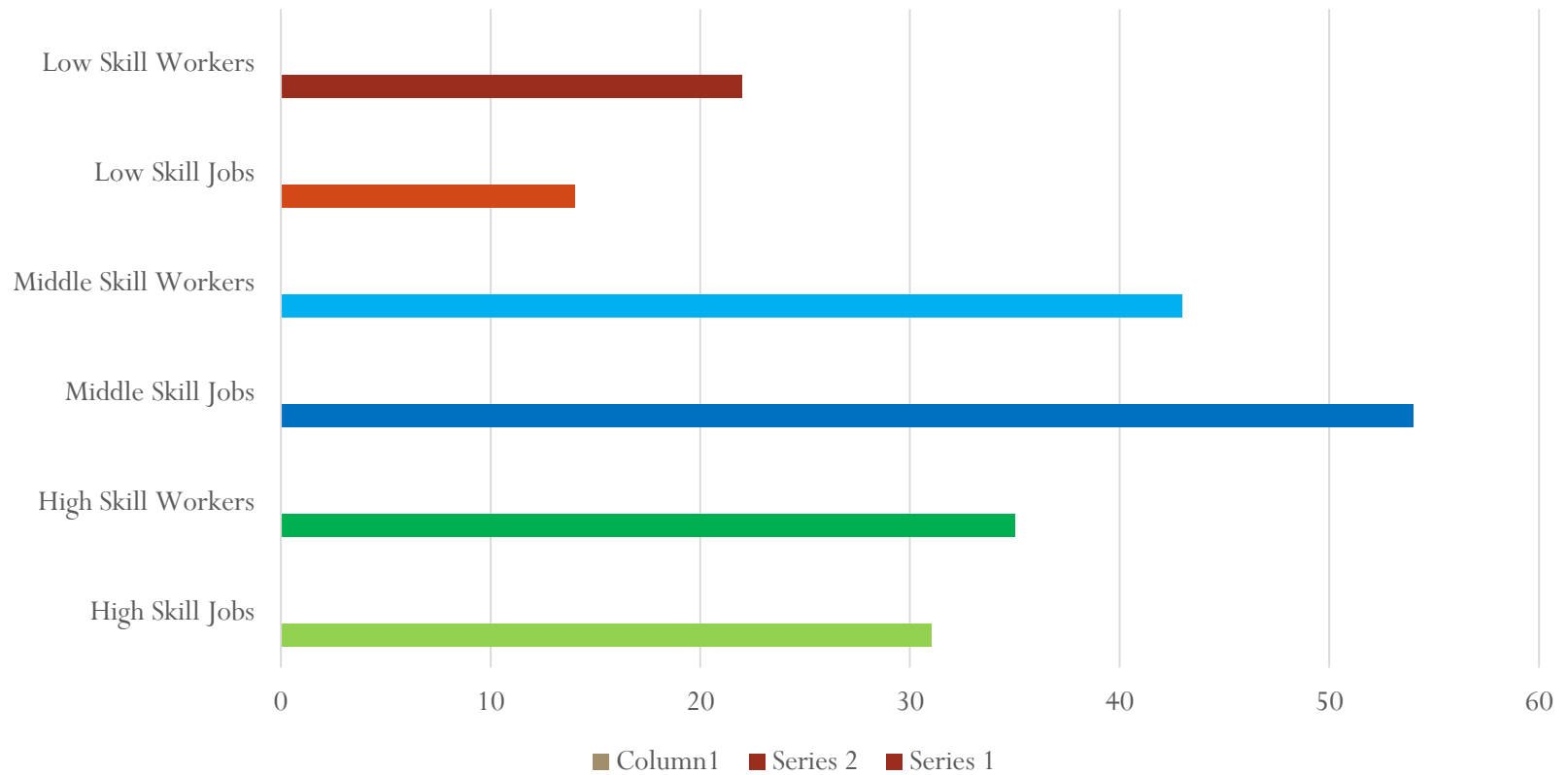
- Middle-skill jobs, which require education beyond high school but not a four-year degree, make up the largest part of Georgia's labor market. (nationalskillscoalition.org)

DEMAND FOR MIDDLE-SKILL JOBS 2014-2024



Jobs and Workers by Skill Level, Georgia 2015

A Middle-Skill Gap



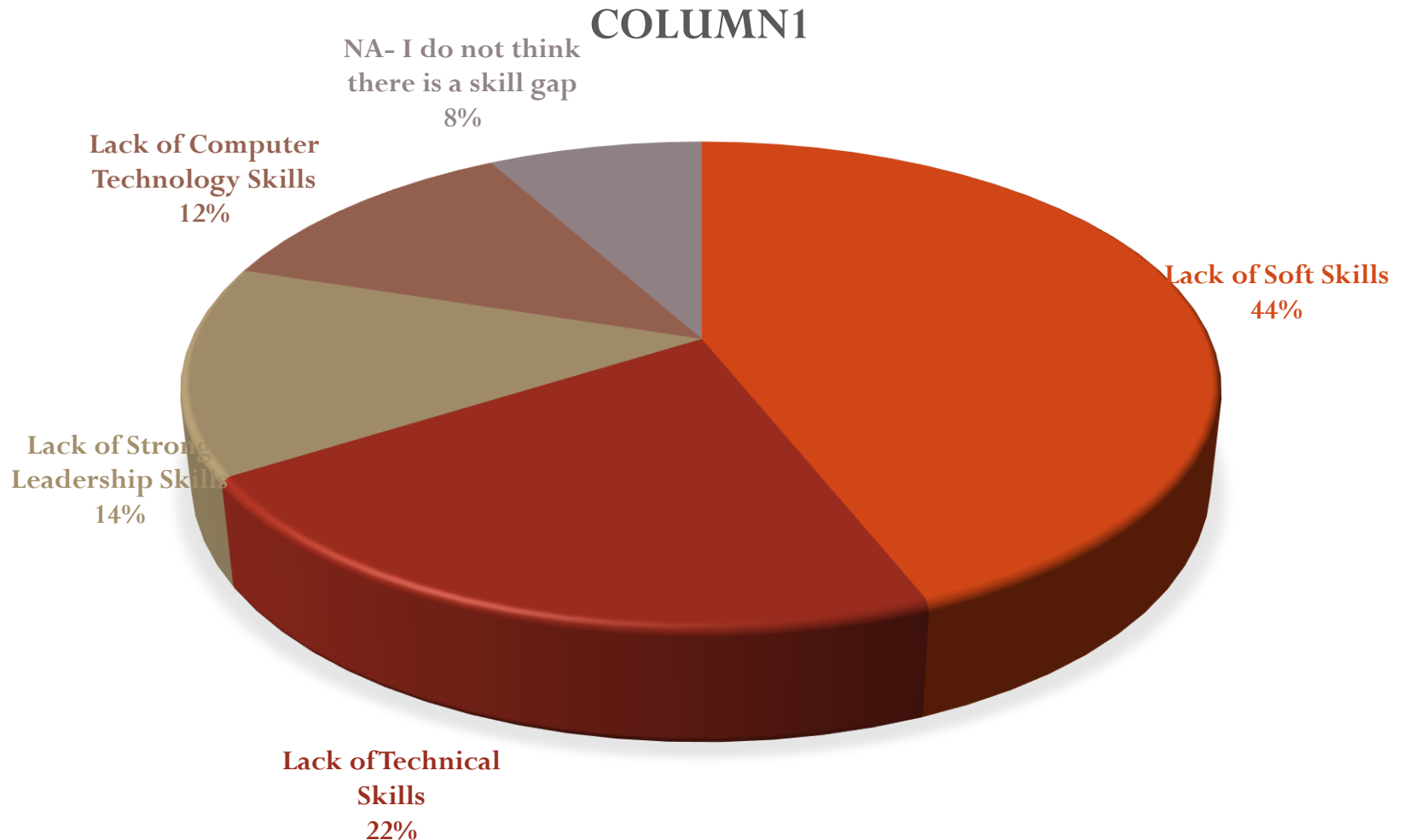
Changing Market Demands

- One obstacle to closing the skills gap is that both the needs of employers and the skills possessed by workers are continually in flux due to changing market demands and technology advances.



- 80 Percent of the jobs in 2030 haven't been invented yet.
 - *Institute for the Future, 2017*

Which of the following do you feel BEST defines the “gap” in the U.S. workforce skills gap?



Soft Skills - Employability Skills

- In general, “soft skills” refer to:
 - Work ethic & persistence
 - Teamwork & collaboration
 - Leadership
 - Problem solving & critical thinking
 - Organizational skills
 - Creativity
 - Interpersonal Communication
 - Relationship skills (e.g. conflict resolution)



“Any other people skills, besides 400 Facebook friends?”

TCSG & CTAE

- TCSG and CTAE are both doing a good job training secondary and post-secondary students for the workforce.
- The problem (in my opinion) is not enough students are taking the “Technical” route to the workforce, which stems from a culture of that tells every student they should attend a 4 year college.
- We have to change perceptions about these jobs. Manufacturing for instant is no longer a hot dirty dangerous job it was decades ago.
- For example; there is a shortage of welders but not a lack of ability to train those interested. We simply need more students that are interested in the field.
- We must continue to create awareness of opportunities for success in our regions.

Is a 4 year degree for everyone?

- About 25 percent of individuals with one-year occupational certificates earn more than most bachelor's holders, and one-quarter of bachelor's holders earn less than most individuals with occupational certificates. Students with low test scores often succeed with credentials other than a bachelor's degree, and some of them have higher earnings than graduates holding a bachelor's. (Bridging the Gaps, Ahearn & Rosenbaum, 2017)

Create Awareness through Workforce Development Partnerships

- Better align and connect the economic development, education, and business communities
- Increase applied learning opportunities for students (secondary and post-secondary)
- Increase community collaboration
- Recognize and emulate districts who excel in leveraging relationships