

2020 Industry Outlook

Understanding the journey to career success

Pathways to professional success are not always straightforward. Circumstances—including access to education, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and geography among other factors—can create twists and turns that shape each path. It can be long and winding, but with training, education, and commitment to themselves and from others, individuals can navigate to success.

National certification is a starting point, like the red star on a map that shows “you are here.” It designates readiness for the career journey ahead because it demonstrates a standardized measure of knowledge and skills. Once you’ve earned it, you’re ready to traverse a journey to career success. Again, the pathway is unique to the individual.

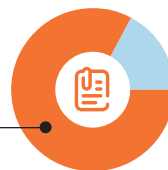
Educators see certification as a milestone for students. Passing a nationally accredited exam means a student is more likely to be work-ready. Employers value the standardization national certification provides and use it to screen job applicants. By using certification as a start, healthcare professionals can carve their paths by honing soft skills, seeking additional clinical training, taking on more responsibilities, and developing advanced skills to continue moving upward.

Because no pathway to professional success looks the same, NHA sought to uncover what factors impact the journey. The 2020 Industry Outlook collected insights and data from employers of allied health professionals, digging deeper to understand what they seek in candidates, what these professionals’ daily work looks like, and what traits and skills make them most successful in their roles.

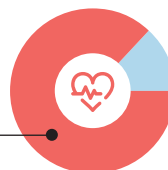
As an advocate for allied health professionals, we hope you can use this data to help your students and employees navigate their own path to achieve their career dreams.

Which of the following
best describes the current
professional certification
requirements at your institution?

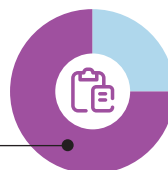
83% encourage or
require certification
for billing & coding
specialists (n=203)



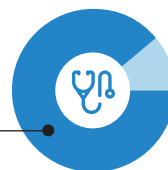
87% encourage or
require certification
for EKG technicians
(n=120)



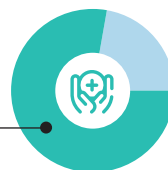
75% encourage or
require certification
for medical
administrative
assistants (n=171)



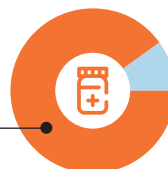
89% encourage or
require certification
for medical
assistants (n=197)



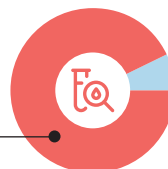
78% encourage or
require certification
for patient care
technicians (n=162)



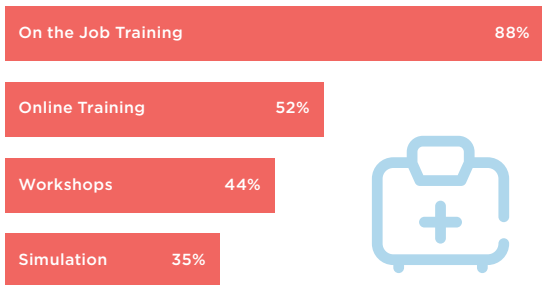
90% encourage or
require certification
for pharmacy
technicians (n=159)



93% encourage or
require certification
for phlebotomy
technicians (n=152)

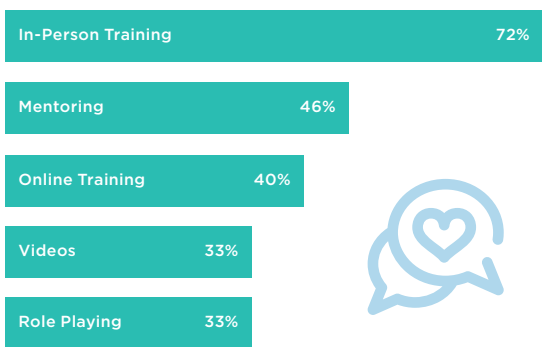


Training methods used to develop employees' clinical skills (n=277)



Employers were asked to select all methods that apply. These are the top four responses.

Training methods used to develop employees' soft skills (n=277)



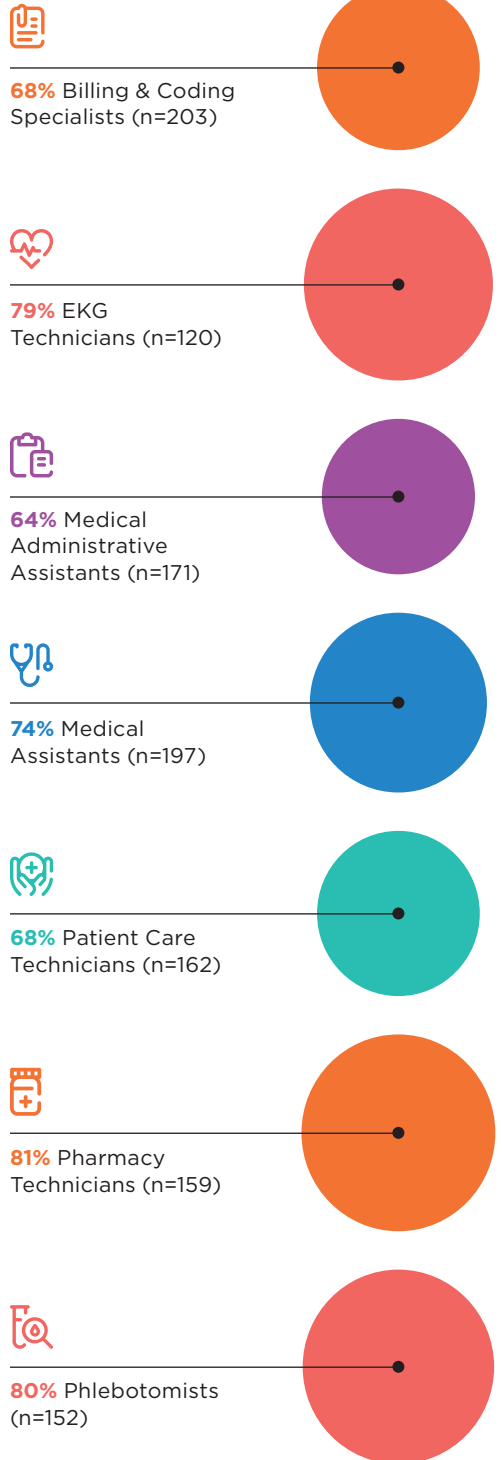
Employers were asked to select all methods that apply. These are the top five responses.

63%



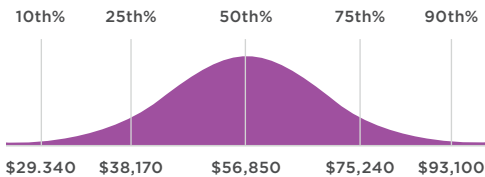
63% of institutions increase pay when an employee earns professional certification.
(n=277)

Approximately what percent of the following professions are certified within your organization?





EKG technician salary range



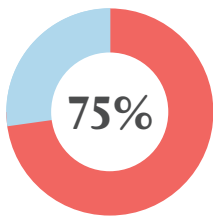
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Most important soft skills

- 1 Professionalism
- 2 Dependability
- 3 Verbal Communication

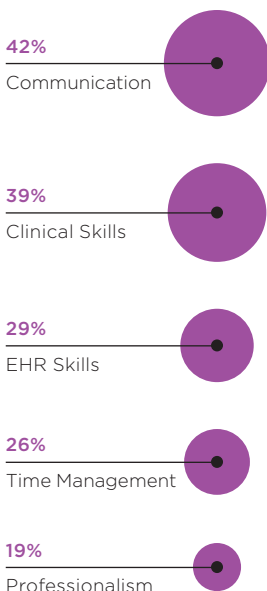
Most lacking soft skills

- 1 Critical Thinking
- 2 Professionalism
- 3 Verbal Communication

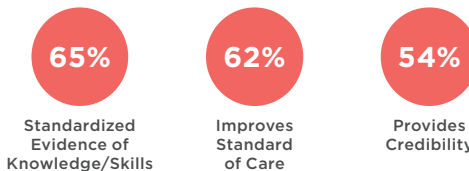


75% of employers report that newly certified EKG technicians are prepared to do their job duties.

Skills newly certified EKG techs lack (n=31)



Why is professional certification important for EKG technicians?



The average EKG technician runs 13 tests a day.



Top 3 tasks EKG technicians are responsible for:



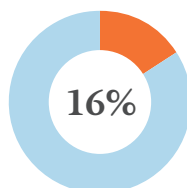
Set Up & Administer EKGs



Prepare Patients for Holter or Ambulatory Monitoring

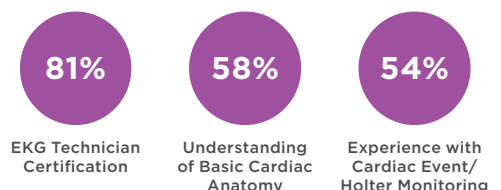


Set Up & Administer Stress Tests



16% of employers said it's difficult to find qualified EKG technicians.

Screening criteria for EKG technician applications



Research Methodology

A third-party research firm conducted the research within the 2020 Industry Outlook. The survey was structured to assess the opinions of employers concerning the professional outlook for billing and coding specialists, EKG technicians, medical administrative assistants, medical assistants, patient care technicians, pharmacy technicians and phlebotomists. This survey was in market December 31, 2019 through January 9, 2020, and evaluated the opinions of 277 employers, of which 12 (1.02%) were current NHA customers.

References

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019). Occupational Outlook Handbook. Retrieved on February 12, 2020 from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>.

National Healthcareer Association (2020). 2020 Industry Outlook.

About NHA

Since 1989, NHA has been partnering with allied health education programs, organizations, and employers across the nation to award more than 900,000 allied health certifications. The organization offers eight nationally accredited exams, certification preparation and study materials, two specialty certificate programs, industry-leading outcomes-based data analytics, as well as ongoing professional development and continuing education. For more information, visit www.nhanow.com.

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