

# AHLAF

## Hotel Industry Entry-Points and Pathways



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232 N Almon St. Moscow, ID 83843  
(208) 883-3500 | FAX: (208) 882-3317  
[www.lightcast.io](http://www.lightcast.io)

 **Lightcast**

# About

Lightcast is the world's leading authority on job skills, workforce talent, and labor market dynamics, providing expertise that empowers businesses, education providers, and governments to find the skills and talent they need and enabling workers to unlock new career opportunities. Headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, and Moscow, Idaho, Lightcast is active in more than 30 countries and has offices in the United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, and India. The company is backed by global private equity leader KKR.

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**Moscow, ID 83843**

[lightcast.io](https://lightcast.io)

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# Executive Summary

The Hotel Industry can be an engine for mobility. The sector is experiencing robust demand, much of it at the entry level and without a requirement for a college diploma.

AHLAF commissioned Lightcast, a leading labor market analytic firm, to better understand entry-level opportunities within the sector and to map career pathways up from entry-level roles and down from more senior roles. The result of the work is an interactive dashboard presentation which can be found [here](#). This executive summary highlights some of the key takeaways related to entry to the variety of hotel industry occupations, entry into the sector, upward mobility, and challenges that prospective workers may face.

## Hotel Industry At-a-Glance

The Hotel Industry currently employs 1.8 million workers in the United States. Employment change through the next five years is projected at 12.1% growth (compared to 8.0% for the nation overall). In August 2023, Lightcast aggregated more than 142,000 active online job postings for the Hotel Industry. In 2022, there will be more than 301,000 net new positions (annual openings, a combination of growth and backfill) in the Hotel Industry.

Jobs in the Hotel Industry  
(2022)

1,797,816

Projected Future Growth  
(2022-2027)

216,942

% Projected Future  
Growth (2022-27)

12.1%

Active Job Postings  
(Aug. 2023)

142,835

Annual Openings  
(2022)

301,844

Annual Turnover Rate  
(2022)

97.6%

Active Job Postings at the Entry-Level  
(<2yrs of Experience)

115,633

Percent Entry-Level Job  
Postings

81%

Percent Entry-Level and  
No College Required

76%

The Hotel Industry has a 97.6% turnover rate, which dramatically drives up the hiring need. (Turnover from churn -- workers staying in the same occupation but changing employers -- is not included in the openings estimate above.)

The Hotel Industry has an abundance of opportunities for entry-level workers. Lightcast calculates entry-level demand by calculating the share of job postings that are asking for fewer than 2 years of experience. There were more than 115,000 entry-level job postings in the Hotel Industry, or 81% of all demand. The sector also has many opportunities for individuals without a college degree. In August 2023, 76% of demand was at the entry-level and did not require college experience.



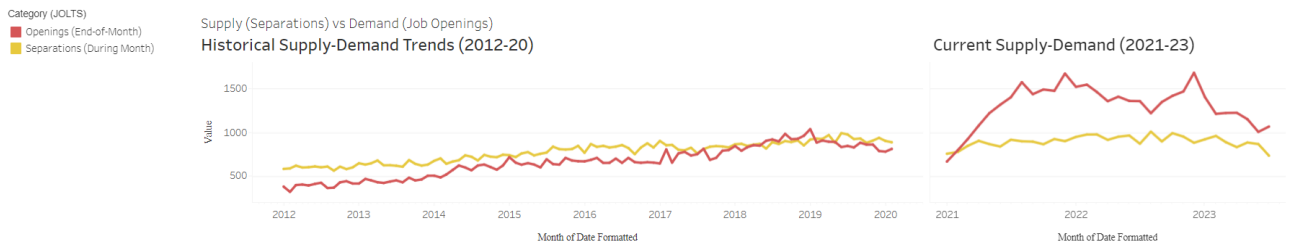
The Hotel Industry advertises a median wage of \$17.55/hr among postings that do not require college experience and \$33.17/hr among postings that do require a college education.

## Earnings, Job Growth, and Supply-Demand Trends

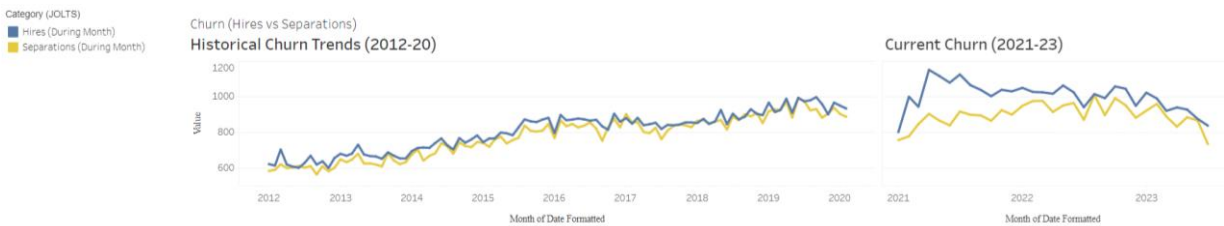
Entry into the Hotel Industry is particularly attractive at the present moment. Historically, growth in jobs and wages in the Hotel Industry have tracked one-to-one. Between 2012 and 2019, both jobs and wages increased by close to 17%. The one-to-one relationship between growth and jobs and wages has continued between 2020 and 2022, but the rate of increase is dramatically higher. Further, wages did not decline when the job count declined in 2020 -- rather, wages stayed stagnant, locking in the previous gains. In the Hotel Industry, wages have increased 20% in two years, which is near the rate of job growth. But job count in the sector has not even recovered to 2019 levels. New entrants in the hotel industry are entering at a high-water mark for wages, and wages are projected to continue increasing as the hotel industry continues to add back jobs to reach pre-2020 levels. In the hotel industry -- as in other sectors with lower overall wages (see the chart on the right) -- earnings are concentrated among jobs with historically lower wages.



The Hotel Industry is facing a moment of significant undersupply. Undersupply can be measured using time series maintained by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The BLS surveys employers at the end of each month to ask how many people left their payroll over the month (separations) and how many positions they are actively hiring for (openings). People leaving employment at a hotel employer can be considered supply for the hotel sector overall, while open aggregate open positions represent demand. Historically, the supply of available workers in the sector has outnumbered openings in the sector. Since 2021, this trend is dramatically reversed. Between 2021 and the present, the number of open positions has dramatically outnumbered available workers leaving other hotel employers. Since the end of 2022, the gap has begun to shrink, but the gap remains larger now than at any point between 2012 and 2020.



In the Hotel Industry, hires typically track with separations. This trend illustrates churn: a worker moves between firms but stays within the sector. Currently, employers are hiring aggressively, significantly more often than workers are leaving their hotel employers. This trend indicates that hotels are tapping into an expanded talent pool rather than merely "poaching" employment from competitors. These conditions again underscore the fact that it is an attractive time to enter the hotel industry from the perspective of job security, career mobility, and earnings growth.



## Staffing Patterns in the Hotel Industry

Staffing patterns refer to the occupation-level employment within a given industry. Lightcast and AHLAF determined that a taxonomy more granular than the publicly available Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) taxonomy would be required to understand the employment patterns in the Hotel Industry.

The occupation categories below correspond to the career areas on thehotelindustry.com. The largest occupation category is Rooms, with occupations such as Room Attendants and Housekeeping Supervisor. Lobby & Guest Services and Food & Beverage are also large sectors, together with Rooms accounting for 53% of jobs within the Hotel Industry.

Career Area / Occupation Category and Occupation Name	Employment (2022)
<b>Rooms</b>	465,822
Room Attendant	379,154
Laundry Attendant	44,022
Housekeeping Supervisor	28,239
Executive Housekeeper	8,749
Director of Rooms	2,546
Rooms Operations Manager	2,292
Laundry Supervisor	820
<b>Lobby &amp; Guest Services</b>	265,143
Front Desk Agent	150,246
Night Auditor	63,206

Front Desk Supervisor	13,405
Bell Person	10,817
Concierge	7,207
Guest Services Manager	5,935
Van / Taxi / Shuttle Driver	5,803
Front Desk Manager	4,103
Valet / Parking Lot Attendant	3,399
Head Night Auditor	669
Director of Guest Services	355
<b>Food &amp; Beverage</b>	<b>219,519</b>
Restaurant Server	80,012
Cook	54,705
Bartender	30,738
Restaurant / Food Operations Manager	14,918
Kitchen Steward	13,730
Restaurant / Food & Beverage Supervisor	12,041
Host	5,681
Sous Chef	5,507
Executive Chef	2,187
<b>Hotel Management</b>	<b>67,850</b>
General Manager	34,913
Assistant General Manager	21,338
Hotel Operations Manager	9,019
Director of Hotel Operations	2,580
<b>Engineering &amp; Maintenance</b>	<b>67,023</b>
Maintenance Attendant	50,984
Maintenance / Engineering Supervisor	6,524
Engineer Associate	5,488
Maintenance Manager	3,141
Specialty Engineer	668
Director of Engineering	137
Chief Engineer	81
<b>Entertainment &amp; Recreation</b>	<b>30,683</b>
Entertainment / Recreation Attendant	12,138
Spa Technician	10,079
Lifeguard	2,954
Director of Recreation	1,941
Entertainment / Recreation Supervisor	1,824
Spa Director	1,262
Personal Trainer / Fitness Instructor	484
<b>Events</b>	<b>22,405</b>
Banquet Server	13,710
Event Manager	3,484

Banquet Captain	2,364
Events Coordinator	1,225
Banquet Set-Up Associate	1,115
Director of Events & Conferences	507

Lightcast also developed occupation profiles for each of the above occupations, which can be found in the presentation dashboard [here](#) under the Occupation Profile tab. The occupation profile below lists the Top Baseline and Specialized Skills and the percentage of job postings requesting the skill, as well as an Certifications or Degrees commonly requested in job postings for the occupation.

Occupations in the hotel industry have wide salary ranges, depending on the location of the establishment, the type of hotel, and the tenure of experience that employers are requesting. For this reason, Lightcast displays the *range* of salaries listed on job postings for a given occupation.

hotel industry at a glance
Benchmarking industry trends
Earnings trends
Supply and demand
Demographics
Staffing patterns
Occupation profiles
Entry Points

The occupation profile below lists the **Top Baseline and Specialized Skills** and the **percentage of job postings requesting the skill**, as well as an **Certifications or Degrees** commonly requested in job postings for the occupation. The **Salary Distribution** is derived from the salaries listed on job postings.

Occupation Name (and Occupation Category / Career Area)  
Hotel Management, General Manager

**Baseline Skills**

Baseline Skill Name	Percentage
Sales	79%
Operations	68%
Management	64%
Communications	61%
Customer Service	59%
Leadership	53%
Cleanliness	41%
Budgeting	36%
Forecasting	30%
English Language	24%
Coordinating	21%
Training And Development	18%
Goal Setting	18%
Spreadsheets	18%

**Certifications**

Certification Name

Valid Driver's License

**Specialized Skills**

Specialized Skill Name	Percentage
Hotel Operations	41%
Marketing	37%
Housekeeping	28%
Accounting	23%
Revenue Management	23%
Accounts Receivable	21%
Auditing	19%
Financial Statements	15%
Hospitality Management	15%
Performance Appraisal	14%
Customer Complaint Reso..	14%
Profit And Loss (P&L) Man..	14%
Cost Control	13%
Accounts Payable	13%

**Degrees**

Degree Name

Business Administration, Management and Opera..

Business/Commerce, General

Hospitality Administration/Management

The following findings and observations are relevant for the salary distribution:

- Some occupations, such as General Manager, have a "long-tail" of observations across the high end of the salary range. These occupations have different earnings according to the hotel type: there are *lower* salaries but *higher* demand at limited-service hotels, and *higher* salaries but *lower* demand at full-service and other upscale establishments. This trend is represented in the salary distribution.
- The high end of the earning spectrum for business operations roles, such as Director of Marketing, are characterized by positions that oversee more than one hotel location. Transition into these corporate positions could be a compelling career pathway for strong performers at a single location.
- Firms have different levels of "coverage" across the full suite of occupations in the taxonomy and hierarchy. Particularly for certain middle-range occupations, such as Supervisors, the higher end of their earning distribution is characterized by firms that have a high level of coverage across occupations. These firms are hiring for many positions and often have multiple levels of mid-level supervision/management.

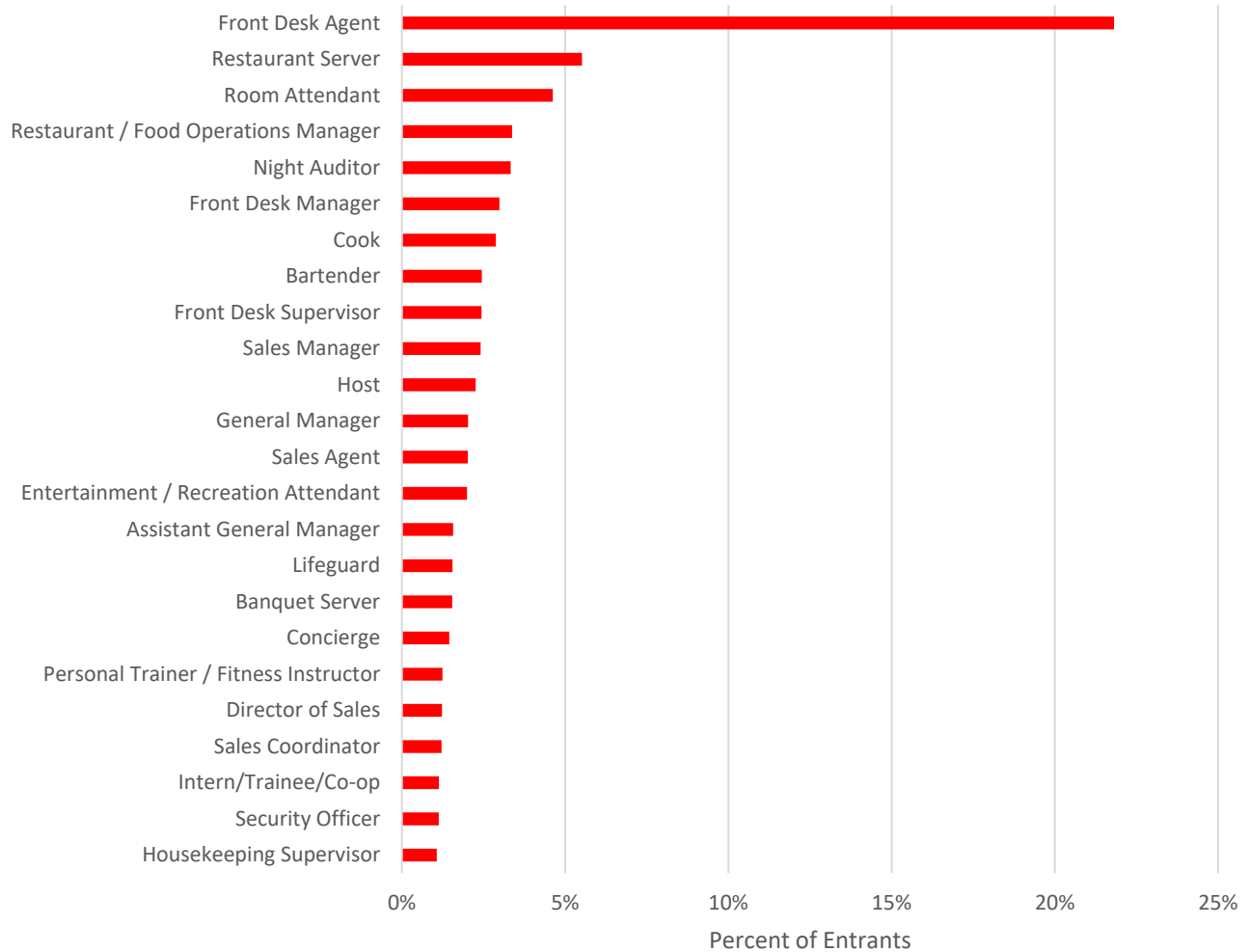
**Advertised Salary Distribution**

Salary Range	Count (min 10)
<= 20,000	~10
20,001-30,000	~10
30,001-40,000	~50
40,001-50,000	~180
50,001-60,000	~260
60,001-70,000	~200
70,001-80,000	~80
80,001-90,000	~60
90,001-100,000	~30
100,001-110,000	~20
110,001-120,000	~15
120,001-130,000	~10
130,001-140,000	~10
140,001-150,000	~10
150,001	~10

## Entry-Points and Advancement Opportunities

Lightcast used data related to the career histories of hotel industry workers to identify the most common entry-points into the hotel sector. The graph below shows the most common entry-point occupations. These are Front Desk Agents, Restaurant Servers, and Room Attendants, as well as other occupations from the career areas / occupation categories Rooms, Lobby & Guest Services, and Food & Beverage.

## Most Common Occupations to Enter the Hotel Industry



Another important consideration for hotel industry workers – and which affects the sector at large – is whether to stay in the industry for their next job or not. Many occupations that are strong entry-points are not good springboards within the sector. Personal Trainers, Lifeguards, and Bartenders, for example, show up both in the figure to the left and among the occupations with the lowest retention within the Hotel Industry. The table below includes the retention rates for each occupation. The dashboard presentation [here](#) provides additional information.

Occupation Name	Percent of Job Changers who Stay in the Hotel Industry
Intern/Trainee/Co-op	81%
Director of Revenue	75%
Rooms Operations Manager	71%
Revenue Manager	70%
Director of Rooms	67%



Director of Events & Conferences	62%
Director of Hotel Operations	60%
Executive Housekeeper	58%
Director of Guest Services	58%
Sales Coordinator	58%
Director of Sales	57%
General Manager	54%
Director of Finance	54%
Front Desk Supervisor	53%
Guest Services Manager	53%
Event Manager	52%
Front Desk Manager	52%
Sales Manager	52%
Housekeeping Supervisor	50%
Hotel Operations Manager	49%
Banquet Captain	49%
Laundry Supervisor	48%
Director of Engineering	48%
Catering Sales Manager	48%
Assistant General Manager	48%
Events Coordinator	47%
Chief Engineer	46%
Restaurant / Food & Beverage Supervisor	46%
Accounting Manager	45%
Entertainment / Recreation Supervisor	45%
Head Night Auditor	45%
Accounting Supervisor	43%
Human Resources Specialist	42%
Human Resources Generalist	42%
Maintenance / Engineering Supervisor	41%
Director of Security	40%
Human Resources Manager	40%
Restaurant / Food Operations Manager	39%
Training and Development Specialist	38%
Spa Director	38%
Marketing Coordinator	38%
Accountant	37%
Director of Human Resources	37%
Executive Chef	37%
Concierge	36%
Sous Chef	36%
Front Desk Agent	36%
Security Supervisor	36%

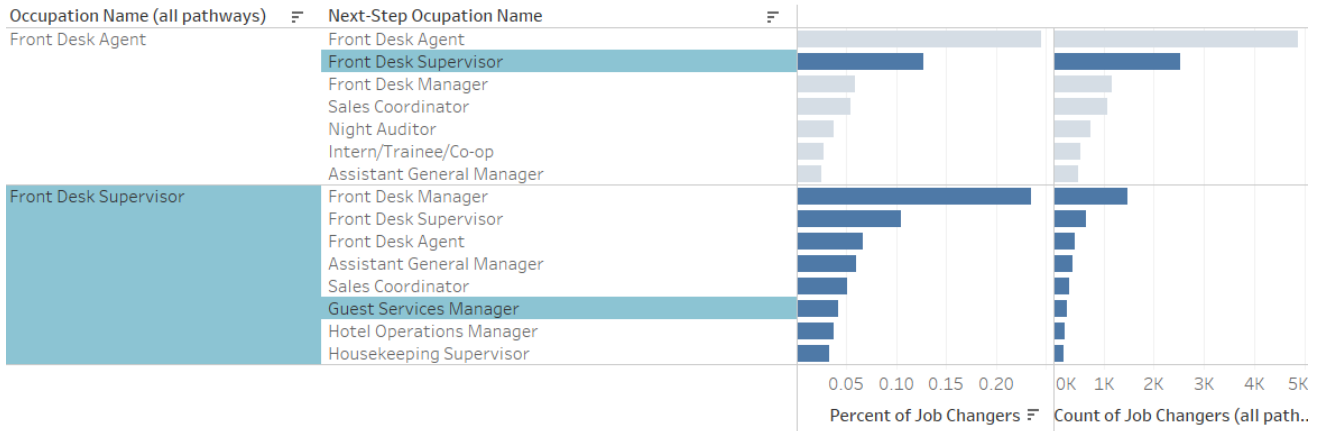
Financial Controller	35%
Marketing Manager	35%
Training and Development Manager	34%
Accounting Clerk	34%
Director of Marketing	34%
Security Manager	33%
Night Auditor	33%
Sales Agent	32%
Bell Person	30%
Specialty Engineer	29%
Banquet Set-Up Associate	29%
Host	29%
Cook	28%
Director of Recreation	28%
Laundry Attendant	28%
Engineer Associate	27%
Entertainment / Recreation Attendant	26%
Room Attendant	25%
Kitchen Steward	25%
Security Officer	25%
Maintenance Manager	25%
Banquet Server	23%
Van / Taxi / Shuttle Driver	21%
Landscaping Supervisor	21%
Restaurant Server	21%
Floral Designer	20%
Valet / Parking Lot Attendant	20%
Spa Technician	20%
Bartender	19%
Maintenance Attendant	19%
Lifeguard	17%
Landscaping / Groundskeeping Worker	15%
Personal Trainer / Fitness Instructor	11%

The presentation dashboard [here](#) enables viewers to explore career pathways. Career diversity -- keeping many doors open -- can be an important facet of career planning for many jobseekers. Some occupations have very distributed career pathways -- the following occupations have 10 or more occupations that account for at least 3% of career transitions: Front Desk Manager, Maintenance Manager, Rooms Operations Manager, Guest Services Manager, Director of Recreation, Director of Guest Services, Sales Coordinator, and Van / Taxi / Shuttle Driver. With the exception of two occupations, all of the roles with the broadest career pathways are managerial roles with a relatively large purview. Achieving seniority in an occupation with broad responsibility opens doors within the Hotel Industry. That level of seniority also enables a transition across

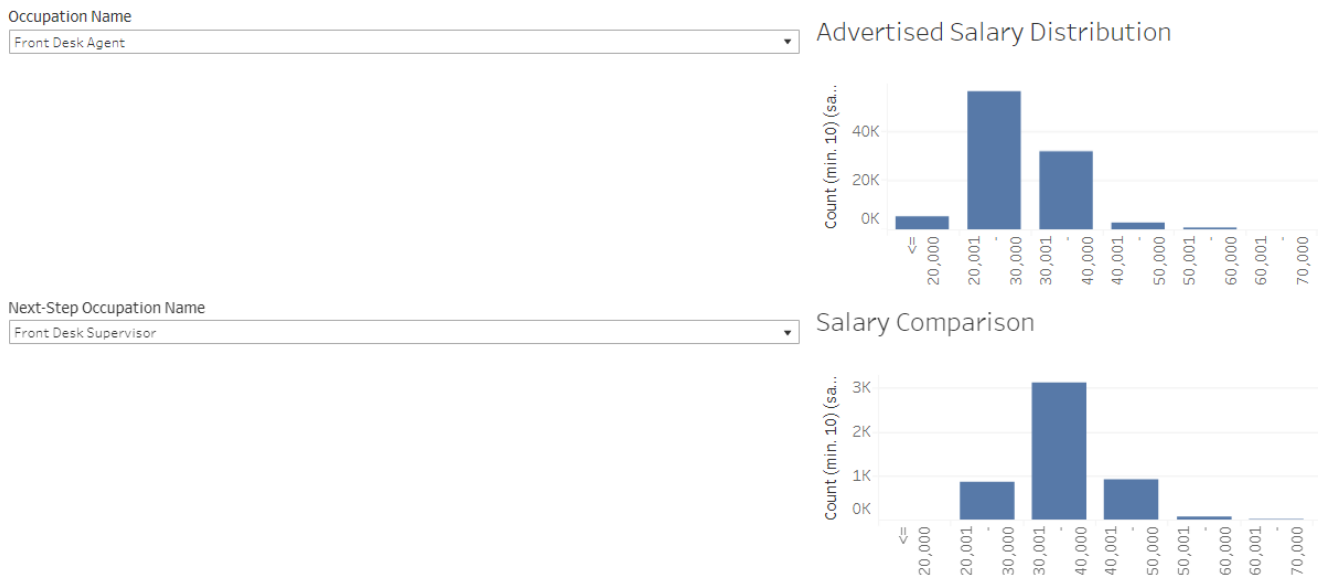
hotel types, for example moving from the Guest Services Manager at a full-service hotel to a Hotel Operations Manager at a limited-service hotel, or vice versa.

Other occupations do not open as many doors. The occupations with the most limited set of most common next-step occupations are speciality roles such as Floral Designer, Personal Trainer, and Spa Technician and leadership roles in well-circumscribed fields, such as Director of Security, Director of Finance, and Spa Director.

The snapshot below shows how a viewer can map out a pathway from Front Desk Agent to Front Desk Supervisor to Guest Services Manager.



An important part of career mapping is reviewing the opportunity to earn more in a target job. The example below shows how the median workers who transitions from a Front Desk Agent to a Front Desk Supervisor could increase their salary by roughly \$10,000. In the presentation dashboard [here](#), these transitions can be explored.



It is also critical to uncover the skill differences between two occupations in a career pathway. The presentation dashboard [here](#) allows that sort of exploration, too. For example, in the case of the Front Desk Agent whose long-term career trajectory aims to Guest Services Manager, reviewing the underlying skills shows that there are many skill overlaps between the positions: customer complaint resolution, housekeeping knowledge, front office experience, and other skills rated to auditing and accounting. And there are also some skill gaps that the Front Desk Agent would need to bridge in order to realize the career path to Guest Services Manager, such as working with accounts receivable, ensuring employee satisfaction as well as other management principles, familiarity with property management systems, and knowledge of restaurant operations.

Origin Occupation Specialized Skills

Specialized Skill Name	%
Customer Complaint Resolution	30%
Housekeeping	26%
Front Office	23%
Cash Handling	22%
Customer Inquiries	12%
Selling Techniques	12%
Auditing	11%
Accounting	10%
Hotel Operations	10%
Upselling	10%
Property Management Systems	9%
Two-Way Radios	8%
Marketing	6%
Guest Relations	6%

Origin Occupation Baseline Skills

Baseline Skill Name	%
Customer Service	79%
Reservations	52%
Communications	49%
Management	33%
English Language	19%
Cleanliness	17%
Professionalism	17%
Operations	16%
Multitasking	16%
Emergency Procedures	16%
Detail Oriented	15%
Sales	15%
Greeting Customers	13%
Arithmetic	13%

Next-Step Occupation Specialized Skills

Specialized Skill Name (specialized skills1)	%
Front Office	49%
Customer Complaint Resolution	33%
Auditing	30%
Guest Relations	21%
Housekeeping	18%
Accounting	15%
Performance Appraisal	14%
Cash Handling	13%
Hotel Operations	10%
Property Management Systems	10%
Accounts Receivable	8%
Customer Inquiries	7%
Purchasing	7%

Next-Step Occupation Baseline Skills

Baseline Skill Name (common skills1)	%
Customer Service	98%
Communications	62%
Management	60%
Operations	58%
Reservations	31%
Leadership	29%
Scheduling	28%
Sales	23%
Coaching	22%
Forecasting	20%
English Language	19%
Planning	19%
Writing	16%

Finally, it is helpful to understand the education-based pathways available to certain occupations. The dashboard [here](#) enables this exploration, as well. For example, the most common degrees requested in job postings for Guest Services Managers are Business Administration and Hospitality Administration, and only 31 percent of job postings for this role request a bachelor's degree.

## Hotel Industry Benefits

One of the greatest benefits to entering into the Hotel Industry is the diversity of career pathways and opportunities. The occupation taxonomy used in this research includes more than 80 distinct occupations. Another benefit is the relatively wide distribution of pay ranges, meaning that there is often the opportunity for pay increases within the same occupation by moving between hotel types.

In addition to compensation, the hotel industry offers benefits packages to full-time workers. Lightcast reviewed job postings to see how often certain benefits were advertised on the listing. These numbers do not reflect how often the benefit is available to workers, just how often the benefit is advertised. Hotel industry employers can review these numbers and consider better advertising benefits on their postings.

The most common benefits advertised on job postings in the Hotel Industry are 401k programs, paid time-off, and vision insurance. Advertising benefits on job postings can be an enticing way to attract entrants into the sector. Yet, very few benefits are advertised in more than half of job postings for a given occupation. Hotel Industry employers are hurt by the information asymmetry that prevents jobseekers from knowing the type and extent of benefits offered in the job for which they could be applying.

The occupations that advertise benefits most often are: General Manager, Assistant General Manager, Front Desk Supervisor, Housekeeping Supervisor, Maintenance Manager, Maintenance Attendant, Head Night Auditor, Laundry Attendant, and Sales Coordinator.

In the presentation dashboard [here](#), viewers can select an occupation category, occupation, benefit category, or benefit to see how often benefits are advertised in job postings across these categories.

## Barriers to Advancing in the Hotel Industry Benefits

There are also some barriers related to advancing within the hotel industry.

One significant barrier is English-language ability. Some occupations in the Hotel Industry employ many workers who profess to not be able to speak English or to not speak it well. In total, 90 percent of workers in the Hotel Industry do speak English well. The occupations below are those with the greatest prevalence of workers who do not speak English well. They include: Dishwashers, Maids And Housekeeping Cleaners, Food Preparation Workers, Laundry And Dry-Cleaning Workers, Maintenance And Repair Workers, Landscaping And Groundskeeping Workers, Dining Room And Cafeteria Attendants And Bartender Helpers, Janitors And Building Cleaners, and Cooks.

Occupation Name	Does not speak English	Does not speak English well	Speaks English well
<b>Dishwashers</b>	18%	12%	70%
Maids And Housekeeping Cleaners	7%	19%	74%
Food Preparation Workers	6%	17%	77%
Laundry And Dry-Cleaning Workers	5%	13%	82%
Maintenance And Repair Workers, General	0%	16%	83%
Landscaping And Groundskeeping Workers	3%	13%	84%
Dining Room And Cafeteria Attendants And Bartender Helpers	1%	13%	86%
Janitors And Building Cleaners	3%	11%	86%
Cooks	1%	12%	87%

Overall, the hotel industry requires workers to have a college degree less often than many other sectors in the economy. Overall, 13 percent of workers did not finish high school, 41 percent have a high school diploma or equivalent, 24 percent have some college experience, and only 21 percent have a bachelor's degree or more. A college degree is not a barrier to entering the hotel industry.

At the same time, there are some occupations where most workers do have a college education. These occupations are listed below. They include Financial Managers, Sales Managers, Accountants And Auditors, and non-categorized Managers. A number of other occupations have above-average prevalence of workers with a bachelor's degree or more. These include Reservation And Transportation Ticket Agents And Travel Clerks, General And Operations Managers, Lodging Managers, Food Service Managers, First-Line Supervisors Of Food Preparation And Serving Workers, First-Line Supervisors Of Office And Administrative Support Workers, Chefs And Head Cooks, First-Line Supervisors Of Non-Retail Sales, Food Servers, and Bookkeeping, Accounting, And Auditing Clerks.

Occupation Name	Percent of Workers with a Bachelor's Degree or More
<b>Financial Managers</b>	65%



Sales Managers	62%
Accountants And Auditors	62%
Other Managers	47%
Reservation And Transportation Ticket Agents And Travel Clerks	44%
General And Operations Managers	41%
Lodging Managers	41%
Food Service Managers	38%
First-Line Supervisors Of Food Preparation And Serving Workers	34%
First-Line Supervisors Of Office And Administrative Support Workers	29%
Chefs And Head Cooks	25%
First-Line Supervisors Of Non-Retail Sales	22%
Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	22%
Bookkeeping, Accounting, And Auditing Clerks	21%

Hotel industry stakeholders can focus on non-degree pathways into these occupations. Creating training programs for the underlying skills required in these jobs is an important step, as is uncovering where some of those skills exist within the sector already. The career pathway explorer in the dashboard presentation [here](#) enables those comparisons.

There are also important barriers related to occupational segregation. Occupational segregation is the observation that certain demographic groups are concentrated in lower-paying occupations. The Hotel Industry exhibits occupational segregation along race/ethnicity lines. The hotel industry employs many non-white workers – 53 percent of the workforce is non-white. However, there is stark occupational segregation between entry-level jobs in Rooms, Food & Beverage, and Maintenance relative to jobs in management. The table below shows where non-white workers are concentrated:

Occupation Name	Non-White Overall	Latino Men	Latina Women	Black Men	Black Women	Asian Men	Asian Women	Other Men	Other Women	White Men	White Women
Parking Lot Attendants	83%	40%	0%	33%	0%	5%	0%	4%	2%	14%	3%
Dishwashers	83%	43%	18%	12%	1%	7%	2%	0%	0%	11%	6%
Driver/Sales Workers And Truck Drivers	82%	58%	0%	17%	0%	3%	0%	5%	0%	4%	14%
Food Preparation Workers	79%	22%	20%	10%	5%	3%	11%	2%	5%	4%	17%
Cooks	76%	26%	20%	7%	7%	8%	5%	3%	1%	17%	7%
Maids And Housekeeping Cleaners	73%	5%	34%	3%	17%	2%	8%	1%	4%	4%	23%
Laundry And Dry-Cleaning Workers	73%	10%	26%	3%	13%	7%	6%	4%	4%	9%	18%
Janitors And Building Cleaners	68%	26%	6%	14%	3%	11%	1%	6%	1%	26%	6%
Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	68%	14%	16%	11%	5%	13%	4%	4%	1%	16%	17%
Fast Food And Counter Workers	66%	7%	21%	5%	26%	0%	4%	0%	4%	17%	17%
Cashiers	66%	3%	20%	5%	18%	10%	9%	0%	1%	16%	18%
Security Guards And Gaming Surveillance Officers	65%	19%	8%	11%	9%	8%	1%	9%	1%	29%	5%
Waiters And Waitresses	65%	17%	18%	7%	6%	4%	4%	2%	6%	8%	27%
Gambling Services Workers	65%	15%	2%	0%	10%	11%	23%	3%	1%	13%	21%
Other Office And Administrative Support Workers	65%	2%	29%	0%	8%	0%	18%	0%	8%	11%	24%
Dining Room And Cafeteria Attendants And Bartender Helpers	65%	13%	12%	5%	4%	12%	9%	5%	6%	15%	20%

First-Line Supervisors Of House-keeping And Janitorial Workers	65%	5%	32%	3%	15%	3%	1%	1%	3%	8%	28%
Receptionists And Information Clerks	64%	11%	20%	2%	18%	5%	4%	1%	3%	3%	33%
Maintenance And Repair Workers, General	63%	38%	0%	10%	3%	7%	0%	4%	0%	37%	0%
Personal Care And Service Workers, All Other	61%	31%	14%	0%	0%	5%	3%	8%	0%	34%	5%
Human Resources Managers	61%	5%	21%	0%	11%	0%	20%	0%	4%	13%	27%

## Methodology

Lightcast utilized its real-time, proprietary databases of job postings and social profiles, as well as Lightcast's proprietary industry parsing, to produce a comprehensive, data-driven foundation for understanding career pathways in the hotel industry.

### Defining the Universe of Job Postings and Social Profiles

Lightcast identified job postings within the hotel industry using NAICS codes 721110 and 721120. However, recognizing the limitations of relying solely on NAICS classifications, a keyword-based approach was also adopted. Lightcast used keyword filters to exclude non-hotel job postings and to identify those that were missed in the initial NAICS-based search. This layer of keyword filtering was particularly essential for capturing hotel-based job postings from hospitality groups, which often oversee multiple hotel brands and may not align neatly with a single NAICS code. Lightcast repeated this process to identify relevant social profiles for individuals with a job history indicating employment within the hotel industry at any point between 2010 and the present.

### Custom Occupation Taxonomy Creation and Validation

Lightcast created custom queries to categorize the job posting and social profile data using a combination of job title text and Lightcast's proprietary occupation classification system. The initial framework for these occupation classification queries was inspired by the occupation taxonomy featured on [thehotelindustry.com](http://thehotelindustry.com).

Lightcast then conducted a series of Quality Assurance (QA) and data validation checks to verify the accuracy of job postings and profiles in relation to the defined occupations. As part of this process, Lightcast reviewed summary statistics for the identified occupations, such as top job titles, job posting volume, average advertised salary, and education, experience, and skill profiles. These statistics informed several refinements of the initial categorization scheme, such as combining occupations with small sample sizes and significant overlap in job responsibilities and requirements. The preliminary taxonomy was presented during an interim project update and subsequently shared with members of the American Hotel & Lodging Association Foundation (AHLAF). Lightcast further refined the taxonomy based on the valuable feedback received. Occupations that did not find a specific categorization within the developed taxonomy were designated as 'Other'. Notably, the majority of these 'Other' categories were concentrated in IT and administrative assistant roles.

### Hotel Industry Entry-Points

Lightcast conducted a multi-faceted analysis of job postings and social profile data to identify entry-points into the hotel industry. Lightcast used job postings to examine the educational qualification, skills, and experience that employers typically request for each occupation delineated in our custom taxonomy. This provides

useful insights into key skills and qualifications that act as gateways into various hotel roles. This also sheds light on occupations that serve as optimal entry-points for workers with differing backgrounds and levels of educational attainment.

Lightcast analyzed social profile data to identify different entry-points into the hotel industry. For those employed in the sector between 2010 and 2023, the first job they held within the hotel industry was flagged. Lightcast used these entry-points as an anchor for identifying the most common preceding roles and industries of new hotel industry entrants by occupation.

#### Pathways Within the Hotel Industry and Between Hotel Firms and Other Industries

Lightcast utilized social profiles to map the career journeys of individuals who enter the hotel industry. This analysis uses the first hotel industry job flagged in an individual's social profile to characterize all subsequent transitions within, out of, and into the sector. For the purpose of this study, an "in-hotel transition" is defined as one where an individual holds two consecutive jobs within the hotel industry. This includes a range of transitions—both lateral and vertical. Lightcast analyzed these transitions collectively, and based on whether the individual's prior role was their first in the hotel industry. Recognizing that not everyone stays in the industry, Lightcast also tracked where these individuals go next. The focus was on understanding the type of roles and industries people transition to after leaving their last hotel job. A subset of this group are individuals who re-enter the industry after periods of absence—be it due to experiences in other industries or educational pursuits. A particular point of interest was identifying the roles and industries these individuals were engaged in before their return. Lastly, Lightcast analyzed the most advanced or recent role individuals held in the hotel industry. This included not just those who climbed the ladder within the hotel industry, but also those who transitioned into top roles from other industries.



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