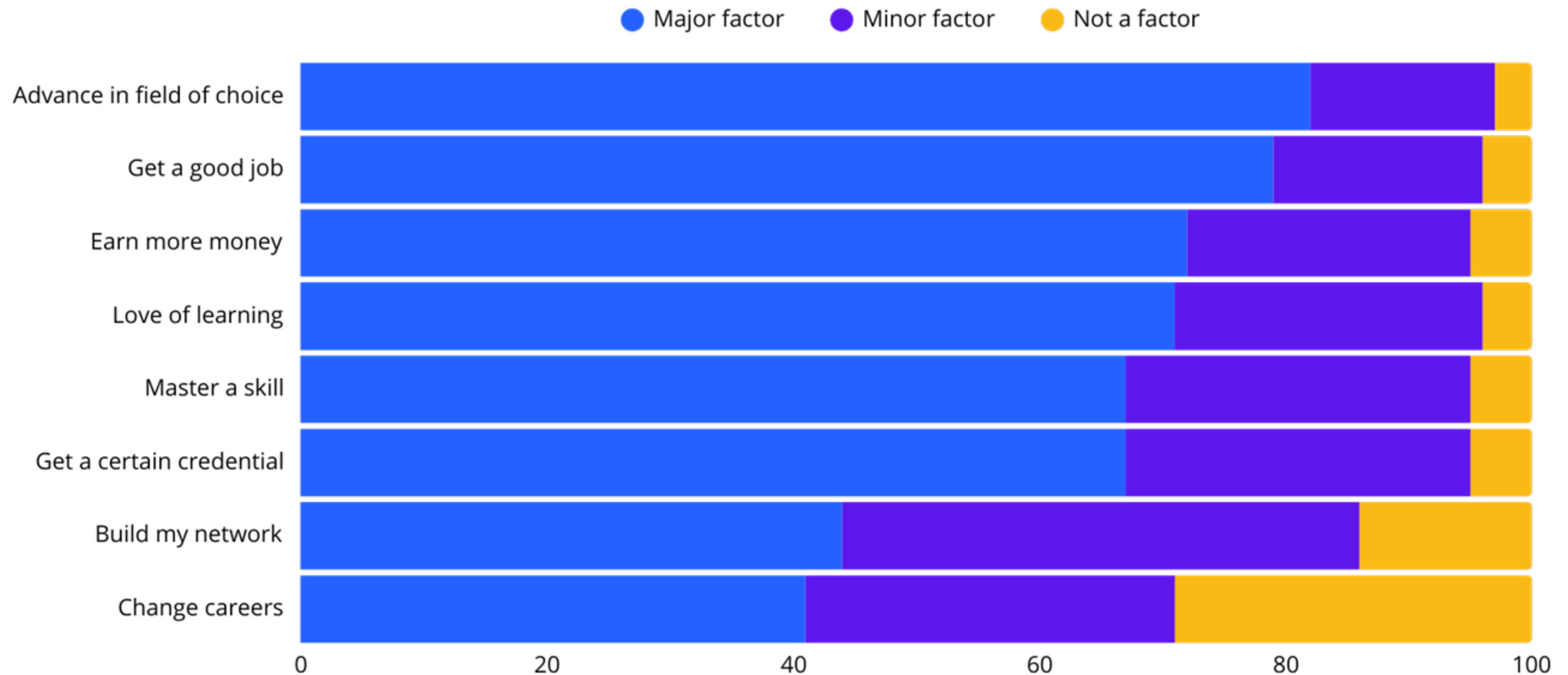


Why students pursue graduate education

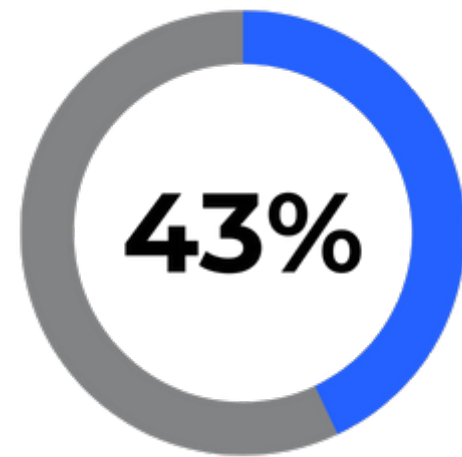
Learners want to build a life and career they could not otherwise achieve



Source: Third Way

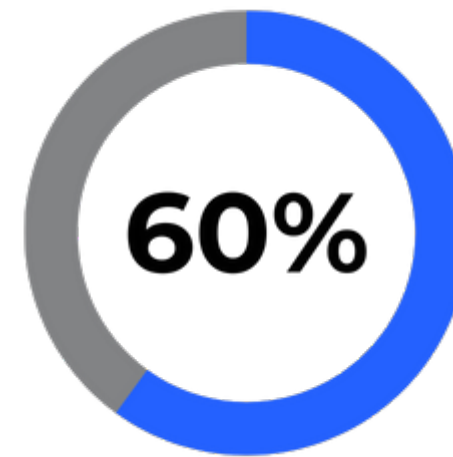
What the data shows

Alumni are not seeing the ROI on their graduate degrees.



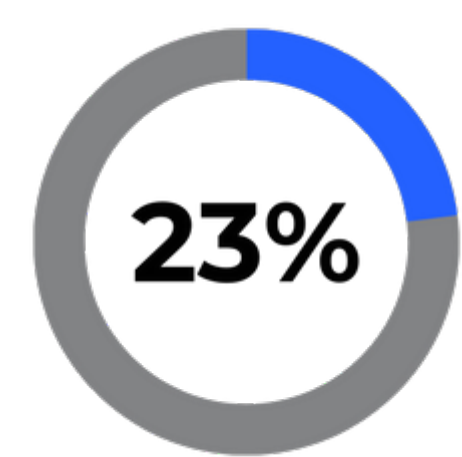
of master's programs do not leave alumni able to out-earn someone with a bachelor's degree.

Source: Third Way



of MBAs and 40% of master's degrees have a negative return on investment.

Source: FREOPP



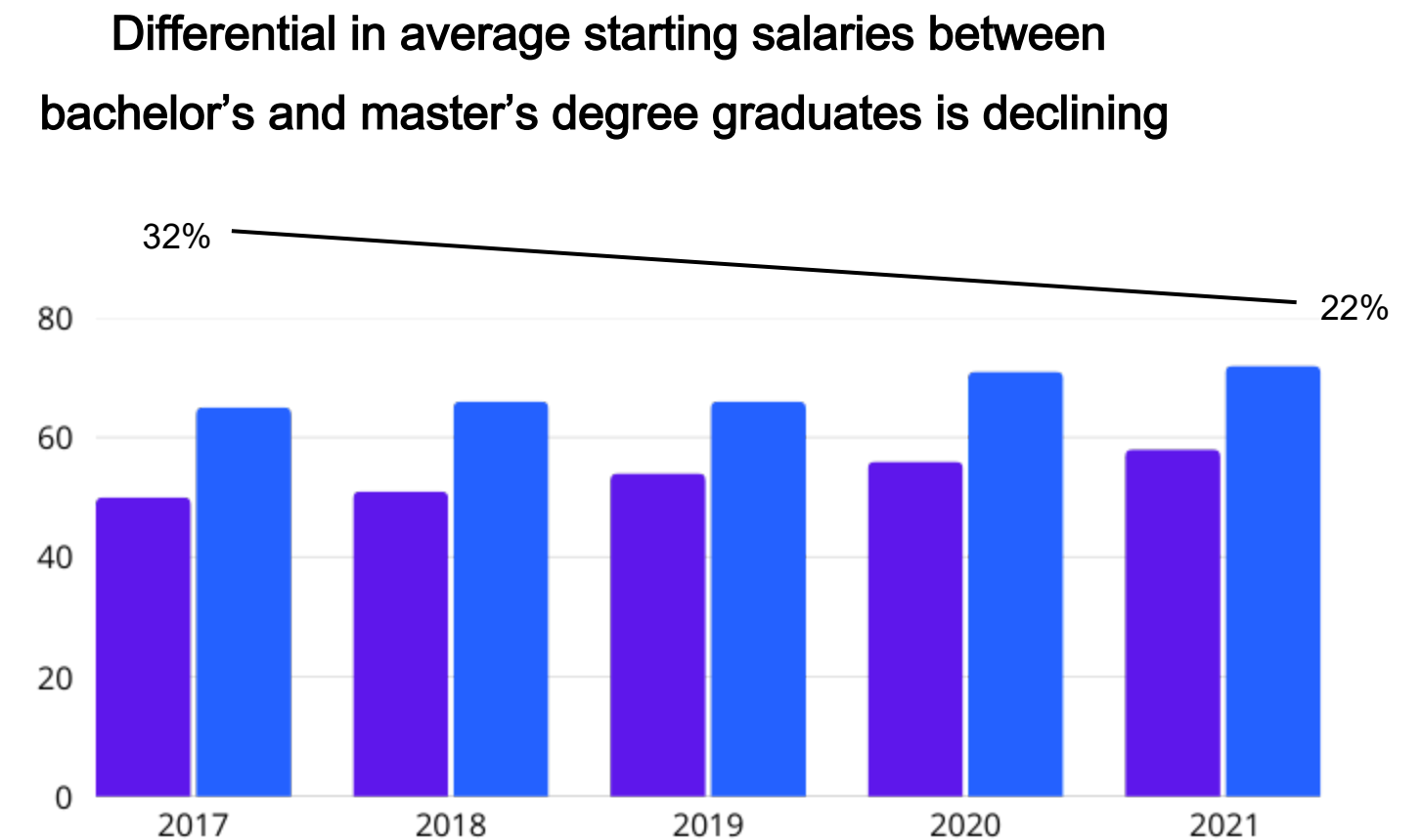
of international students secure OPT, but 70% of international students hope to work in the United States.

Source: ICE and Congressional Research Services

Increasing cost of graduate education

Graduate degrees cost more, but the wage premium has actually declined.

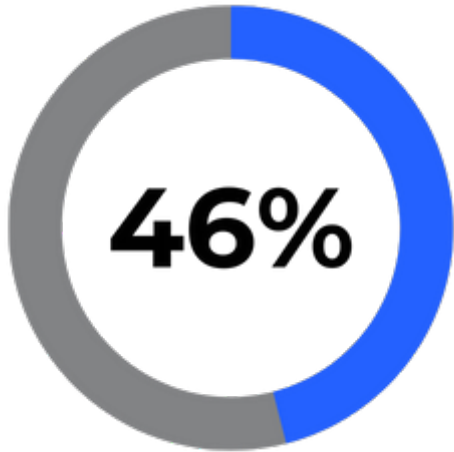
- ➔ \$84,203 is the average student loan debt balance among master's degree holders; \$65,667 is from graduate school only.
- ➔ Over half of master's students take out loans to pay for their education, largely first generation and minority students.
- ➔ About half of research doctoral students take out student loans. The average is 90K for graduate education alone.



Average starting salaries from NACE first -destination survey for employed master's students.
Note: First -destination survey collected data for only 47% of master's students. Career outcomes were unavailable for 53% of students.

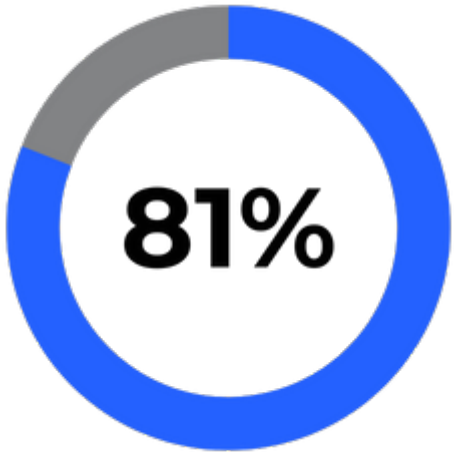
Skills -based hiring

Employers value application of skills and knowledge in a real world setting



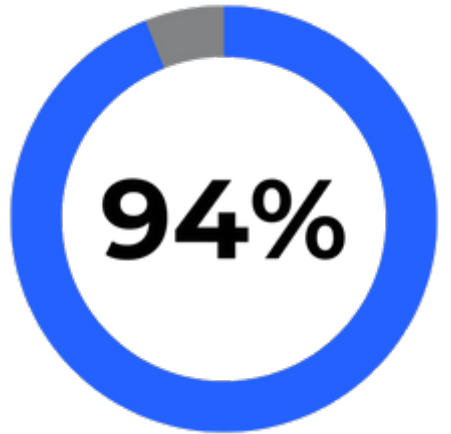
of companies in 2024
used GPA to screen
recent graduates down
from 75% in 2019.

Source: NACE



of employers said skills
matter more than
credentials as of 2023.

Source: Deloitte



of managers said that skills-
based hires outperform those
selected based on degrees or
years of experience.

Source: ADP

Worst job market in a generation

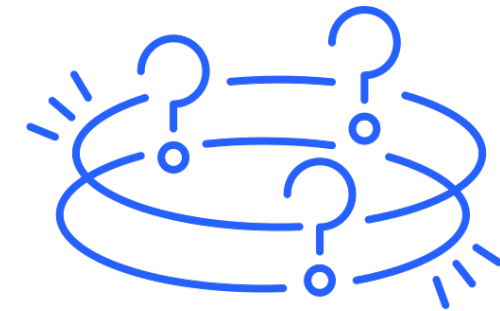
More competitive with fewer options for students and postdocs entering the market



Faculty jobs will be next to non-existent due to enrollment cliff, hiring freezes, budget cuts.



Decimation of the federal workforce. Talent is now moving to state and local government.



Hiring has slowed to the same level as 2009. That's before the tariff chaos.

Failed Strategies:

Without proper strategies, students fail in their job search.

56% are not networking .

48% falsely believe submitting resumes to job boards is the best way to job search.

46% have never heard of an informational interview.

47% agree they need help communicating skills to employers.

43% say they don't know how to start a job search.

Recommendations for Graduate Programs

- ➔ Graduate programs need to evaluate the resources they have available to students and devise strategies to scale career support.
- ➔ Review communication strategies. Do your students know about the resources you do have? Most students are unaware of what is available to them.
- ➔ Job searching is not intuitive. Students need access to comprehensive career resources that provide a step -by -step process to help them explore options and job search.
- ➔ Master's and doctoral students are very different audiences. A one -size-fits -all model doesn't work. They need specialized career support.
- ➔ Provide just -in -time career support for students through asynchronous / on -demand resources. This will allow students to access resources during uncertainty.