

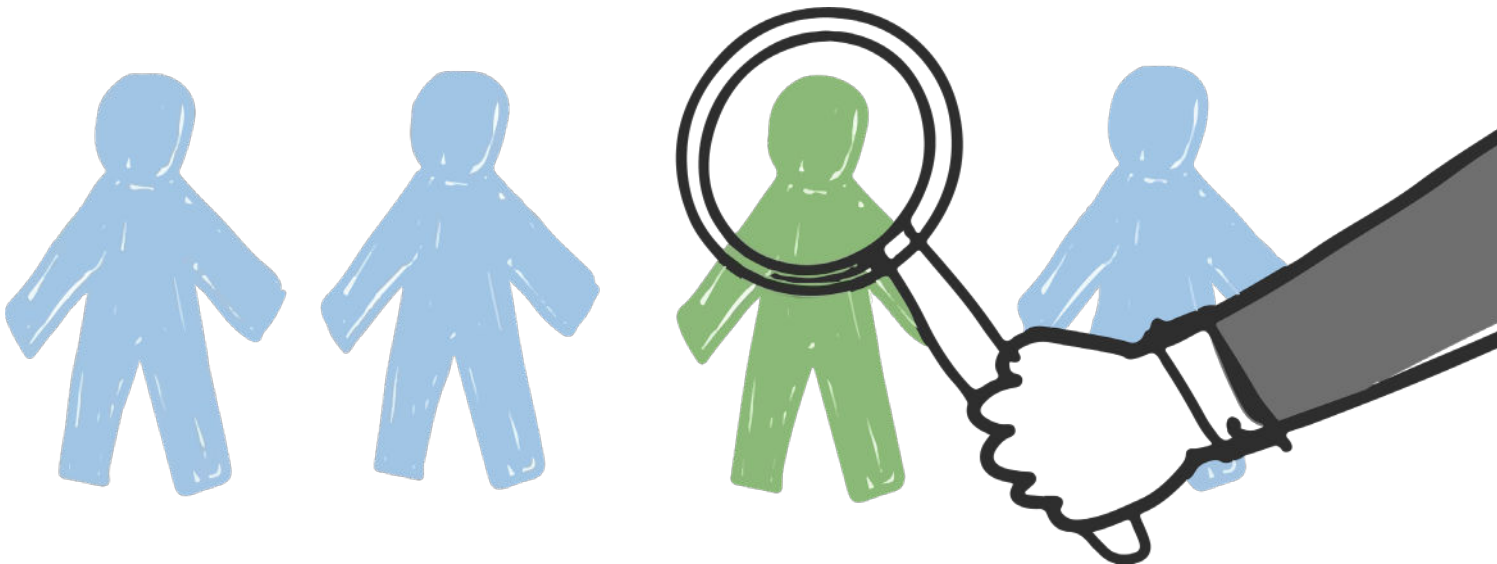


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AUTOTECH GROUP

# AUTOMOTIVE RECRUITMENT TRENDS SURVEY REPORT

APRIL 2023



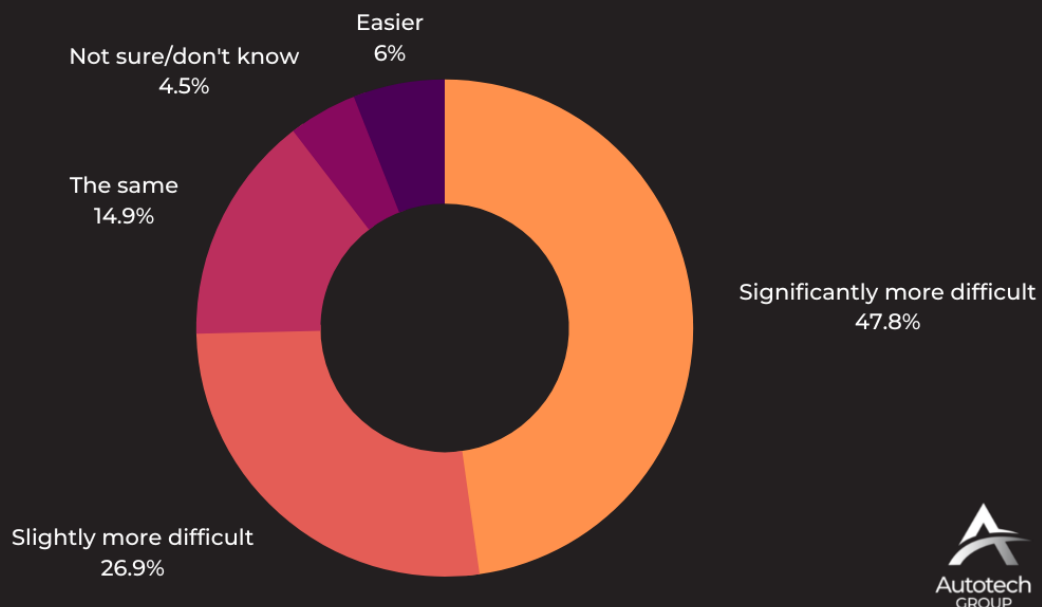
# INTRODUCTION

Our Automotive Recruitment Trends Survey 2023 is Autotech Group's second independent report of the skills challenges that motor industry employers are currently facing.

This survey was conducted between December 2022 and January 2023 amongst Autotech Recruit's clients and LinkedIn network representing dealer groups, independent garages, fast fit specialists and other types of automotive organisations. The respondents included business owners, directors, workshop managers, service managers, HR managers, etc. with a responsibility for recruitment within the automotive aftermarket.

Questions focused on current recruitment challenges in the automotive sector and looked at future predictions around the skill shortages.

Compared to this time last year, is it easier or more difficult to recruit skilled staff?

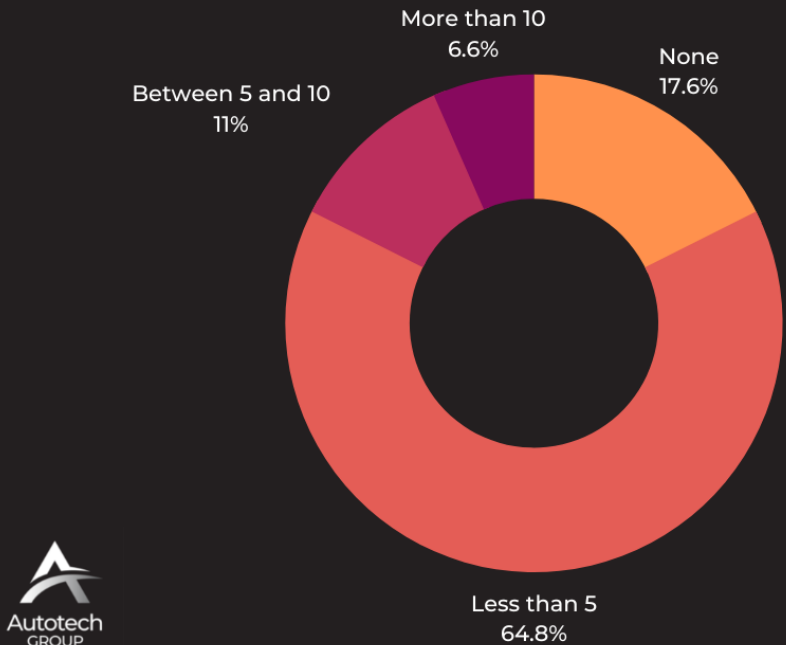


Our survey shows that almost 75% of automotive employers are finding it more difficult to attract new talent compared to last year.

Some roles can be harder to fill than others – and technical positions are notoriously difficult to recruit for.

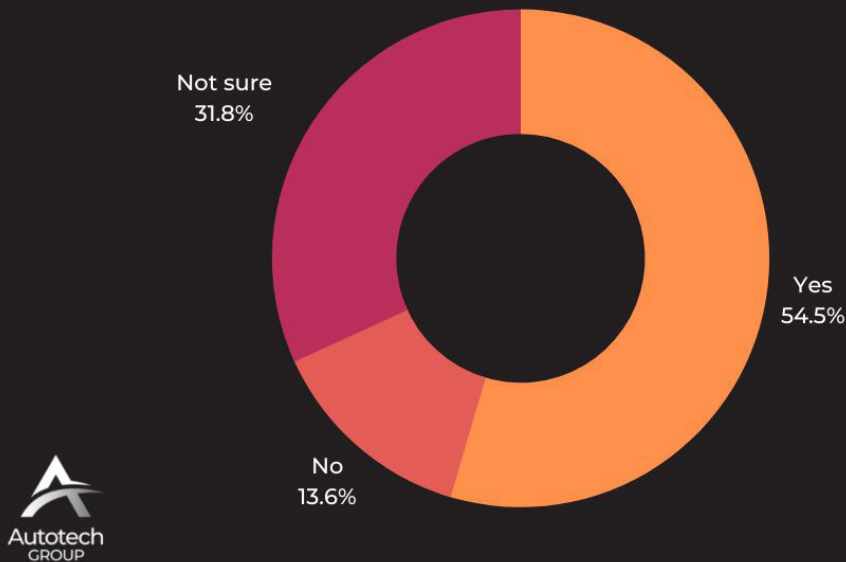
Only 18% of surveyed employers currently have no technical vacancies, while a staggering 8 in 10 have at least one open workshop position that needs filling.

## How many unfilled technical vacancies do you currently have?

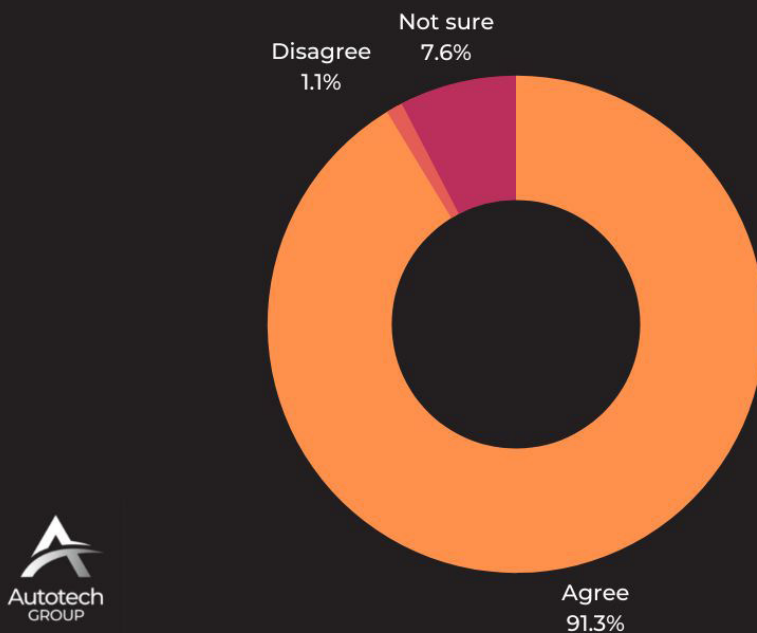


Against a backdrop of skill shortages and the rising cost of living, nearly 55% of automotive employers expected to increase the pay of their vehicle technicians in 2023.

## Are you expecting to offer your vehicle technicians a pay rise in 2023?



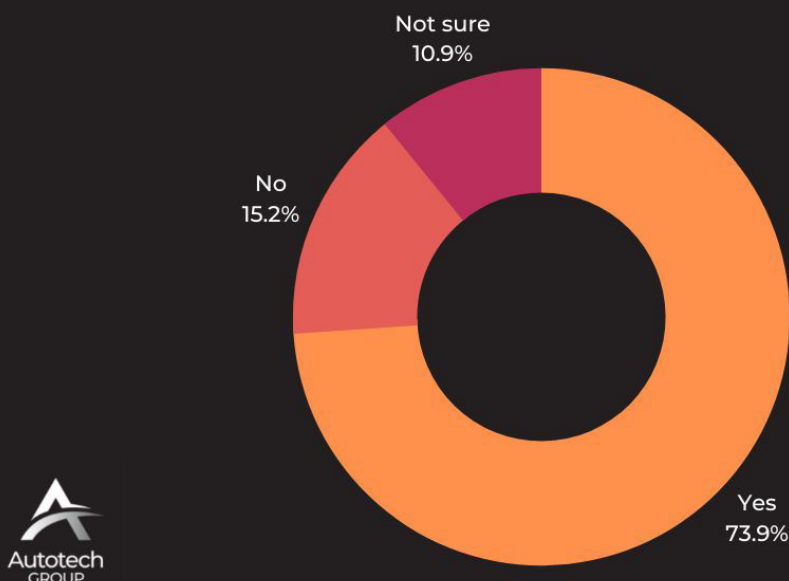
## Will recruiting skilled vehicle technicians become harder in the next few years?



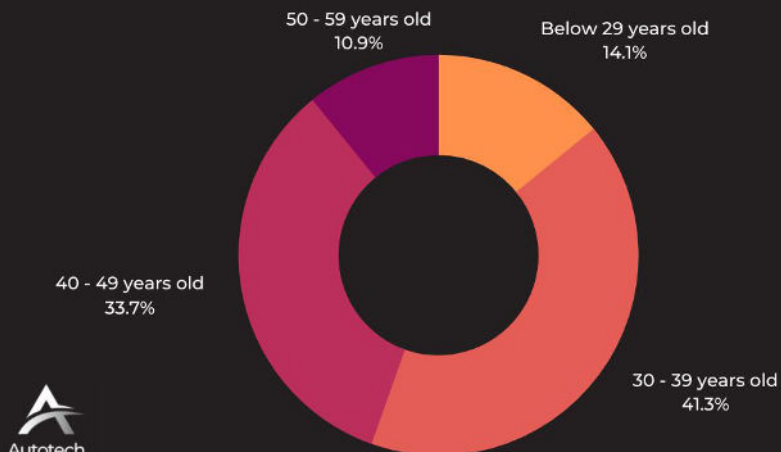
Finding skilled vehicle technicians is a persistent struggle, and unfortunately, 92% of respondents believe it will only get worse in the years to come.

Recruitment challenges affect automotive businesses greatly - nearly three quarters of respondents revealed that skill shortages directly impacted their organisation's profitability.

## Do you agree that the skills shortage is holding your business back from achieving higher profitability?

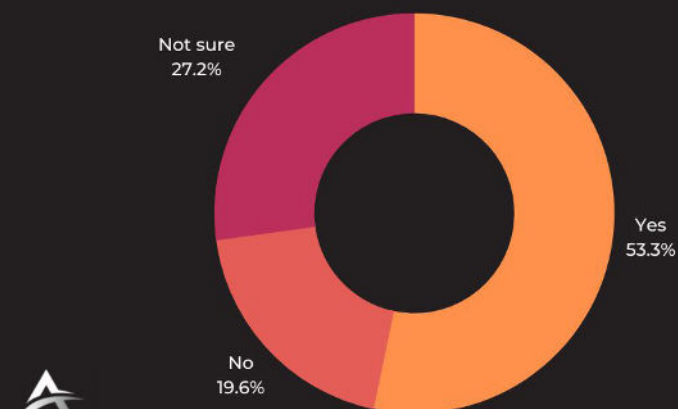


What is the most represented age group amongst the vehicle technicians in your workshop/garage?



Automotive employers need to focus on capitalising on the available young talent as well as experienced vehicle technicians who have already retired (or are considering to do so).

Are you planning to employ apprentice vehicle technicians in my workshop in 2023?

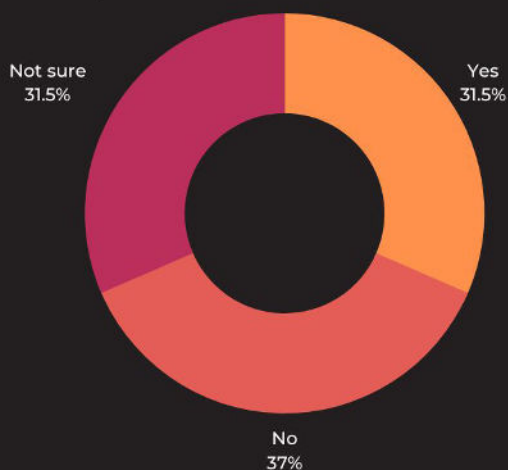


Currently, only 14% of our respondents have technicians under 30 as the most represented age group in their workshop, while just 10% reported that the majority of their workforce are over 50.

To safeguard the long-term success of the automotive industry, apprentice and college leaver recruitment must become a top priority.

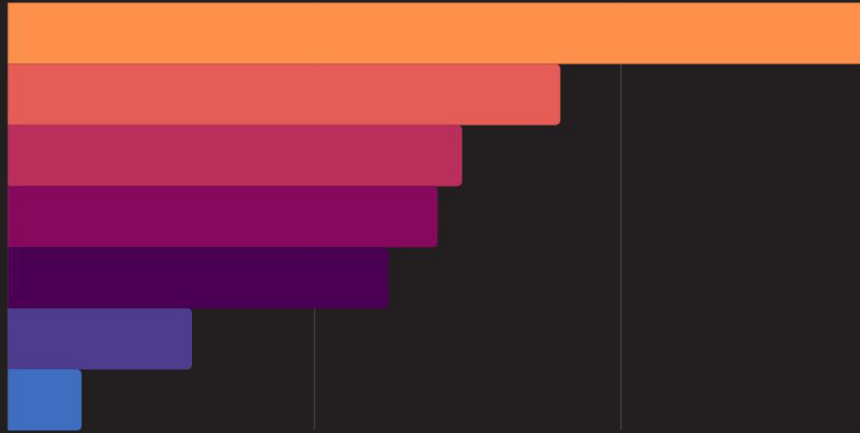
While it's positive that 6 in 10 employers plan to employ apprentices and 31% will take on interns in 2023, these numbers fall short in closing the skills gap. It's imperative for more organisations to bring apprentices and interns into their workshops to inject fresh perspectives and talent into their business.

Are you planning to employ newly qualified vehicle technicians on an internship basis in your workshop in 2023?



## Which resource solutions do you expect to use in 2023 to tackle skilled staff shortages?

- Permanent recruitment 76%
- Apprenticeships 49%
- Upskilling existing staff 40%
- Recruit staff at a lower skills level with a view to upskilling 38%
- Hiring temporary staff to inject ready-made skills 34%
- Internships 16%
- None 7%



To tackle the existing staff shortages, our respondents expect to use a combination of resource solutions but permanent recruitment is at the forefront of these efforts with 76% respondents planning to recruit for full-time employees. Training of new starters or existing staff to reach the required skillset are also seen as key strategies with 38% and 40% of respondents respectively indicating their intention to do so as a way of dealing with skilled talent shortages.

While these solutions are important, our survey shows a significant shift among automotive employers towards reliance on temporary technical staff. Compared to 20% last year, 34% of automotive employers now plan to use skilled freelance technicians and MOT testers to cover for various needs such as staff vacancies (60%), business peaks (54%), staff annual leave (50%), sickness (47%), and training (23%).

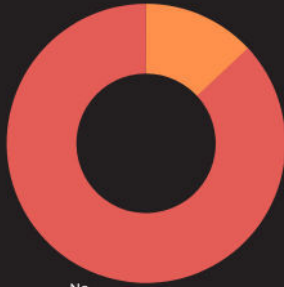
## What are your reasons for using contract technical staff?

- Staff vacancy 60%
- Customer demand / industry peaks 54%
- Staff annual leave 50%
- Staff sickness 47%
- Planned staff training 23%



Does your business currently offer...  
**wellness benefits, such as free gym membership**  
to attract/retain workshop staff?

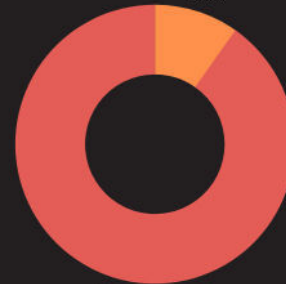
Wellness benefits, such as free gym membership  
13%



No  
87%

Does your business currently offer...  
**health insurance**  
to attract/retain workshop staff?

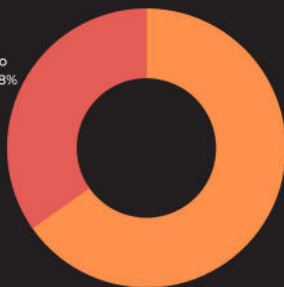
Health insurance  
9.8%



No  
90.2%

Does your business currently offer...  
**performance bonus**  
to attract/retain workshop staff?

No  
34.8%

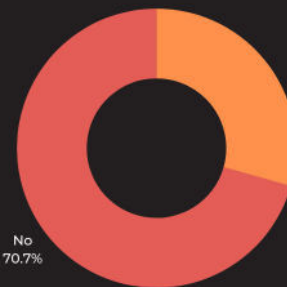


Performance bonus  
65.2%



Does your business currently offer...  
**flexible working hours**  
to attract/retain workshop staff?

Flexible working hours  
29.3%



No  
70.7%

Does your business currently offer...  
**company car**  
to attract/retain workshop staff?

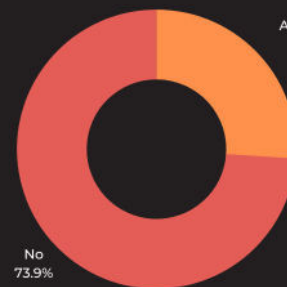
Company car  
5.4%



No  
94.6%

Does your business currently offer...  
**additional annual leave**  
to attract/retain workshop staff?

Additional annual leave  
26.1%



No  
73.9%

## Does your business currently offer... training/professional development to attract/retain workshop staff?



In today's hyper-competitive business landscape, companies must go above and beyond to stand out from the crowd. For many organisations, the frontline of this battle is the benefits they offer their employees. By putting together a comprehensive package of perks and incentives, companies can attract top talent and keep their current staff happy and engaged.

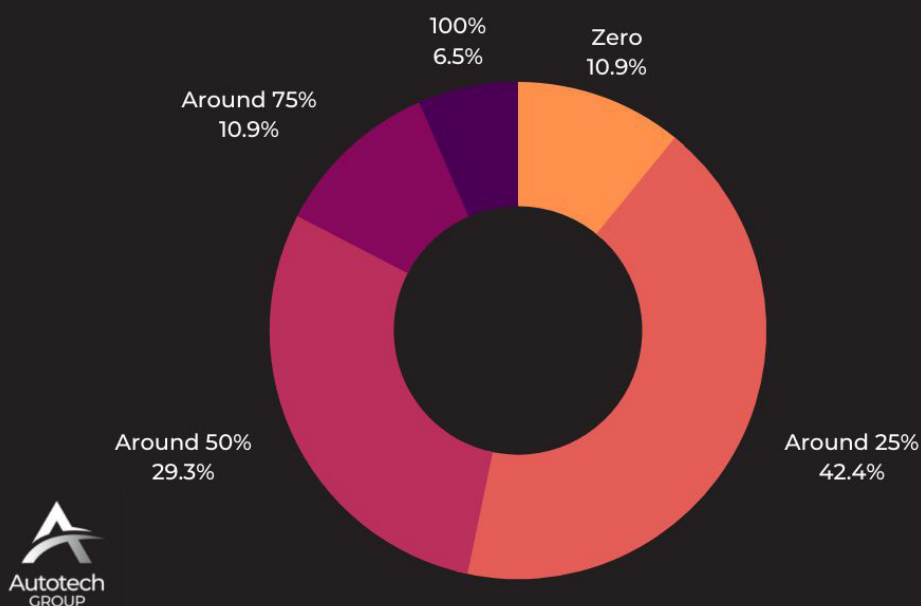
According to our survey, many automotive companies are still lagging behind in this department by offering fairly modest benefits packages. This could ultimately hurt their ability to attract and retain the best workers in the industry - even if they offer competitive salaries.

The most popular benefits offered by automotive employers who took part in our survey include: performance bonus (65%), flexible working hours (29%), additional annual

leave (26%), wellness benefits, such as gym membership (13%), health insurance (10%), and company car (5%).

The highest number of all respondents - 72% (down by 5% compared to last year results) - indicated offering training and professional development as their employee benefit. However, a closer look reveals that over a quarter of employers don't prioritise upskilling their staff. This is alarming, especially in the rapidly evolving automotive world where technological changes like ADAS and electric vehicles are becoming more prevalent. As the old adage goes, a company is only as good as its employees, and neglecting their professional development can lead to decreased job satisfaction, poor performance, and ultimately, a significant disadvantage in a competitive market.

## What proportion of your technical team are trained in Electric/Hybrid Vehicles Level 2 or above?

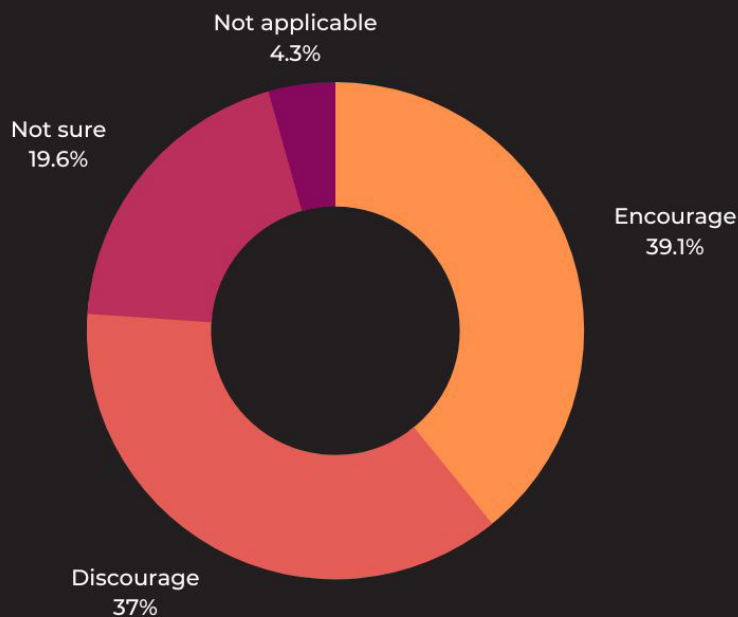


Encouragingly, only 10% of automotive businesses that responded to our survey stated that they don't have any staff trained in electric/hybrid vehicles (compared to nearly a third last year), with 6.5% saying all of their technicians are EV-trained to minimum level 2.

With the rise of electric vehicles, significant changes in the automotive industry are underway.

Employers must continue to support the upskilling of vehicle technicians to prepare for a zero-emission future and meet growing demand. EV training should be a top priority for the aftermarket, leading to a substantial increase in trained professionals.

If your child or dependant wanted to pursue a career in the automotive industry, would you encourage or discourage them?



Parental influence plays a major role in shaping the future career choices of the younger generation. That's why we decided to ask our respondents if they would encourage or discourage their own child's decision to work in the motor sector. Interestingly, our survey revealed that only 39% of automotive employers surveyed would support their own child/dependant's decision to pursue a career in the motor industry.

37% of UK auto employers would advise against their kids pursuing a career in the industry, and 19.6% weren't sure. These results highlight a challenge for our sector both now and in the future.

# CONCLUSION

The automotive industry has been struggling with a shortage of skilled workers for quite some time now. This problem has been perpetuated by several factors including a lack of young talent gravitating towards the sector, an exodus of skilled workers into other industries, and a wave of early retirements. The current economic downturn has made the situation even more challenging. With these factors combined, the automotive industry is feeling the strain more than ever before.

There is no question that attractive remuneration is a top priority for job seekers amidst the current cost of living crisis, but there are other challenges facing automotive employers, aside from salaries.

One of the key considerations is flexibility. This is especially true for jobs where remote work is not possible. In such cases, flexibility around hours and shift patterns can make a big difference for workers who have caring responsibilities or for older workers re-entering the workforce. Flexibility is a valuable benefit that can enhance work-life balance and ultimately lead to greater employee retention.

Another important consideration is training. The switch to electric vehicles and technologies such as ADAS are already having a significant impact on the market and technicians need to hold the relevant skill set to service these vehicles. Training needs to be an immediate priority for the aftermarket to meet not only the growing consumer demand but also to support the professional ambitions of its workforce.

This is a crucial time when the automotive sector needs to put its best foot forward and introduce innovative ways to attract fresh talent. We all need to think beyond traditional methods and create solutions, which will emphasise technological progress and opportunities for growth and development within the motor industry. With the right mix of incentives and opportunities, the automotive sector can regain its position as an attractive industry to work for.

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