

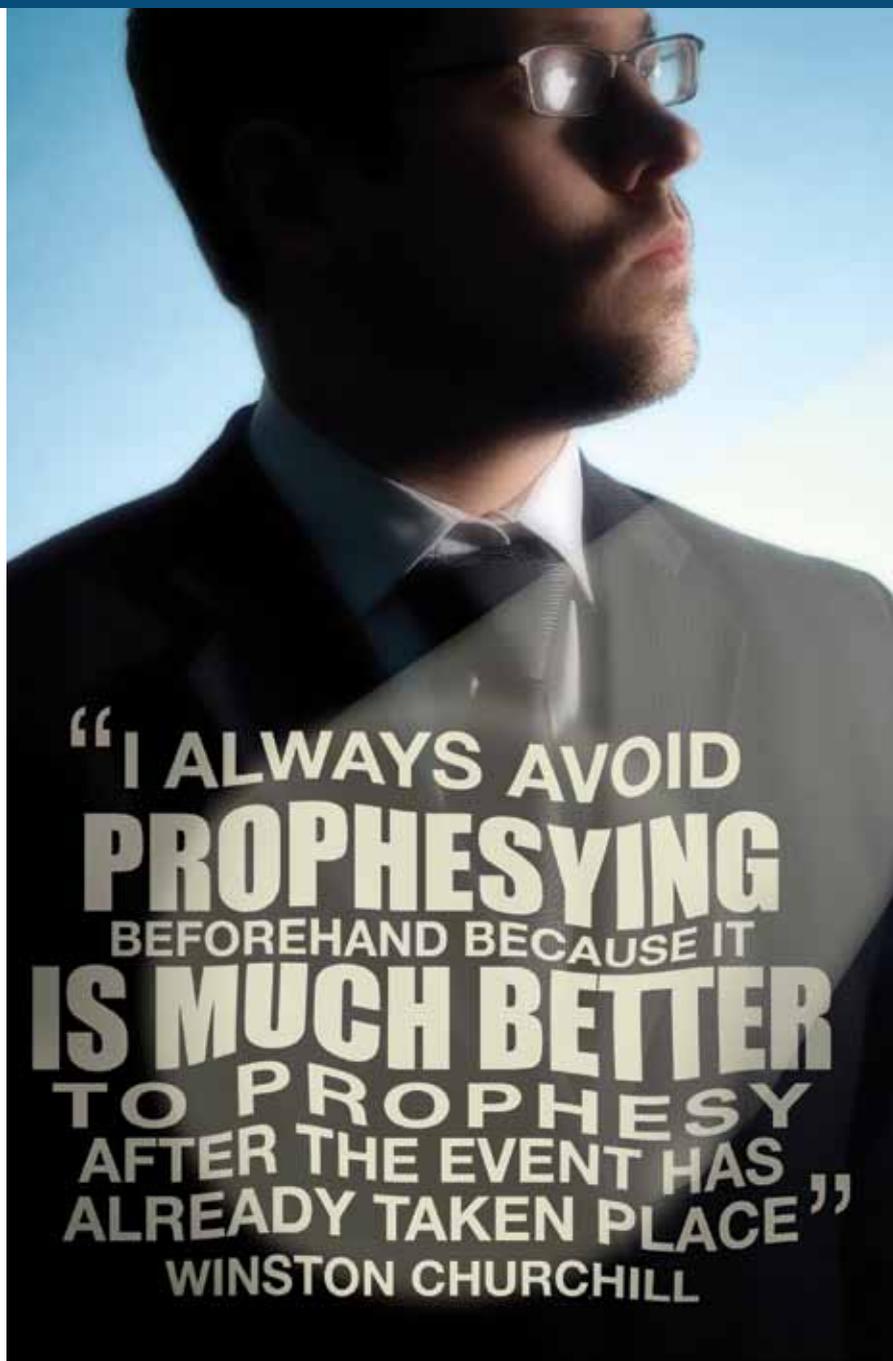
Utah's

New Occupational Projections—2008-2018

One of the most difficult parts of my job is making occupational projections. After all, I don't really know the future and projecting economic outcomes is as much art as science. However, having said that, I'm aided by lots of current data, long-term trends, a time-honored methodology, and the chance to renew my projections every two years. We're currently releasing the most recent occupational projections.

A few things to remember:

- Demand but no supply. Projection numbers represent only the "demand" side of the demand/supply equation. An occupation may produce lots of openings but still have even more workers willing to work in that particular career.
- Growth and replacements. Openings come from two sources—growth and the need to replace workers who have left the occupation for any reason (retirement, changing careers, leaving the labor force, promotion, etc.)
- Large occupations—large number of openings. Large occupations typically have large numbers of projected openings. In Utah the occupations with the highest employment levels are retail sales workers, customer service representatives, cashiers, and fast food workers.
- Growth rates versus number of openings. A fast-growing occupation may not necessarily have many



openings. For example, an occupation that showed employment of 10 in 2008 and projected employment of 20 in 2018 would display a 10-year growth rate of 100 percent. However, it would have created only 10 additional jobs. It's important to look at both growth rates and the number of openings.

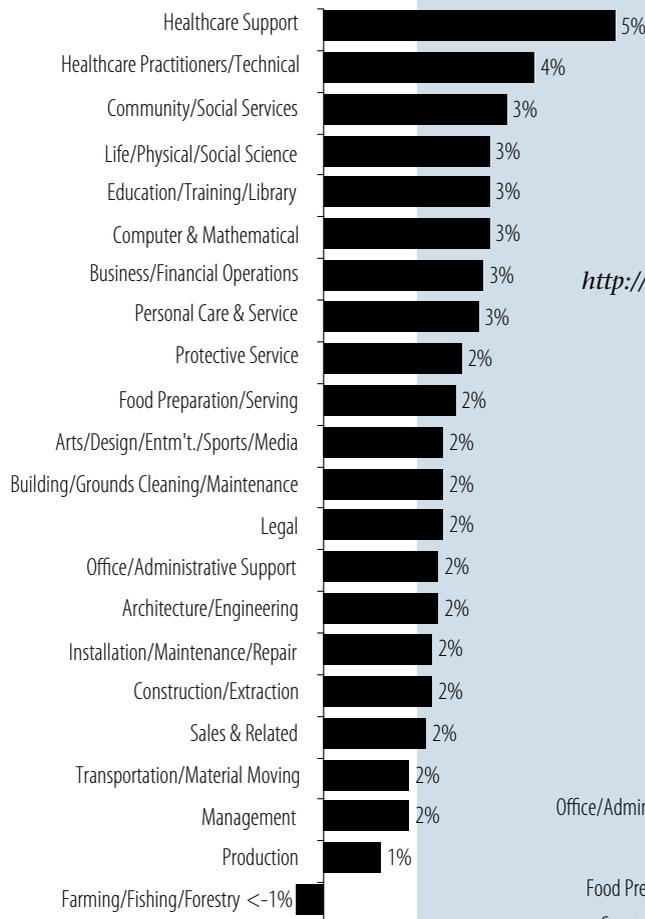
- Wages are important, too. An occupation could have absolutely tons of openings, but pay a relatively low wage. That might make it a poor career choice. Check out the star ratings for individual occupations

on our website for a measure that combines employment outlook and wage information.

A picture (graph to an economist) is worth a thousand words. So, take time to look at the graphs included with this article and then wend your way to our website. Until then, here are some of the points I think are important to understand about the current set of occupational projections:

- Current projections indicate that on average each year between 2008 and 2018, Utah will grow about 2 percent

Utah Major Occupational Groups Annual Average **GROWTH 2008-2018**



For more information:

<http://jobs.utah.gov/jsp/wi/utalmis/gotoOccinfo.do>

Utah Major Occupational Groups Annual Average **OPENINGS 2008-2018**



and generate 64,000 openings. That's noticeably lower than past projections and indicative of an economy recovering from recession in the early years.

- Growth and replacement openings should account for roughly equal shares of total employment opportunities.
- Recession-resistant healthcare-related occupations are among the fastest growing careers—and provide numerous occupational openings. However, not all healthcare occupations pay high wages.
- Individual occupations in computer-related fields continue to provide good employment opportunities.
- Education pays. Statistically, occupations requiring high levels of education and analytical/science skills pay the best wages.
- Even though many occupations (such as construction careers) are currently in economic distress, most will see renewed growth as the economy recovers and expands during the next decade.
- Only one major occupational group—farming, fishing, and forestry—is expected to contract. However, even declining occupations will need replacement workers. 📍

Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.