“Disruptive” advancements in big data and personalized medicine are spiking demand for skills in collecting, managing, analyzing and interpreting large data repositories.

Shift to value-based health care is creating need for expanded skill sets for understanding reimbursement and the health care system, structuring business partnerships, relationship management, and policy and regulatory expertise.

Strong soft skills – effective communication, collaboration, teamwork, listening, leadership, influence- and the ability to adapt, problem-solve and work with ambiguity in a cyclical industry - are frequently cited as just as, or more important than, technical skills.

Diversity (race, ethnicity, gender, culture) on teams creates the most robust solutions and yields the best decisions, but will require much greater industry and academic effort to fully develop this talent pipeline.

Industry partnerships with academia at all levels are vital for developing collaborative research and preparing and inspiring new generations of talent with industry-relevant knowledge.
**GROWTH**

The life science industry continues to be a significant job engine for the state of California with over 281,000 life science employees reported in 2014 (2016 California Life Sciences Industry Report). Survey results indicate job growth over the past two years and expected growth over the next two years to be at similar levels.

**ATTRACTING & RETAINING TALENT**

Life science companies often compete with tech and other industries for top talent. Long discovery and commercialization timelines can act as barriers to attracting individuals who wish to keep skills current in cutting-edge technologies. Also challenging is the misperception of the industry as solely responsible for the increasing costs of healthcare.

Life science employers agree that more should be done to communicate the exciting career pathways available in the industry, as well as its positive impact on human health and other global challenges. Many also recognize that the key to attracting and retaining the best talent is through developing employees and providing career growth opportunities.

“The most effective thing for private industry to do is to take care of their people, as they are the best spokespersons for the company. By engaging our current talent and providing them rewarding career experiences, they build our reputation as an employer of choice.”

**METHODODOLOGY**

The 2016 Talent Integration: California Workforce Trends report is based on the aggregation of statewide data collected during the first quarter of 2016 from 34 qualitative interviews with industry executives and an additional 248 quantitative surveys with HR and hiring managers, as well as analysis of some 16,000 online California job postings collected by Burning Glass Technologies for 2015.