

employerone

SURVEY



North Superior
Workforce Planning Board

Thunder Bay District

2014 - 2015 employerone Survey Results



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For further information please contact:

**Madge Richardson, Executive Director
North Superior Workforce Planning Board
107B Johnson Ave.**

Thunder Bay, ON P7B 2V9

Phone: (807) 346-2940 or (888) 800-8893 Fax: (807) 344-5464

Email: mrichardson@nswpb.ca

Website: www.nswpb.ca

2014 EMPLOYER ONE SURVEY PARTNERS:



North Superior
Workforce Planning Board



Thunder Bay
Chamber
of Commerce



Thunder Bay
Ventures
Community Futures Development Corporation

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Executive Summary

North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) annually undertakes an analysis of numerous indicators of the local labour market. NSWPB participates in both formal and informal consultations with a broad spectrum of community stakeholders to validate the information gathered through statistics analysis and to collect anecdotal evidence from the stakeholder's perspective to gain insight into the realities experienced by them in the labour market.

One of the priorities identified through this ongoing engagement with community partners through the district is to increase employer engagement and to develop a better understanding of their human resources challenges. Having direct contact with local employers would also provide real-time, current information versus accessing and analyzing statistics collected and released at disparate and lengthy intervals. This data is sometimes not a true reflection of the labour market's state because it is out of date or there is much data missing. To help supplement available information, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities provided NSWPB (and other northern workforce planning boards) funding to survey local employers using the online *EmployerOne* Survey. While many efforts were made to reach out to employers in the Thunder Bay CMA, fewer than one hundred (100) employers completed the survey.

Although the number of survey submissions is low, survey responses do provide some valuable insights into the workforce needs and challenges faced by employers today. In some cases, employer responses verified what we have already heard and in other cases, enhanced our knowledge. Here is a snapshot of the 2014 *EmployerOne* Survey results:

- EmployerOne respondents represented a range of industries
- Employers indicated that 67% of their workforce are full-time, permanent workers
- The number of hires in the past 12 months exceeded the number of separations by about 40%
- Much recruitment still relies upon word-of mouth and personal contacts
- 68% of respondents indicated that they plan on hiring over the next 12 months and overall those employers expect to hire around 6% more than they hired last year
- Employers indicated that work ethic, dedication, and dependability were the top competencies needed for current and future workforces
- Technical skills were cited as one of the top skills in greatest demand today
- 82% of employers were able to provide or support training or education for their workers in the last year
- The three top barriers to training employees was cost, unavailability of relevant training locally and loss of productivity
- 66% of EmployerOne respondents assessed the local availability of qualified workers as fair or poor

As NSWPB continues to engage community partners in its local labour market planning process, it will be important to continue to keep the perspectives, practices and recruitment challenges of employers in mind to help shape our efforts to cultivate our current and future workforce.

Introduction

Real-time labour market information is critical to understanding current human resource demands and needs of local employers as well as projecting occupational requirements for the future. Knowing what labour issues exist locally can assist Employment Ontario service providers in better matching job seekers with available jobs, assist postsecondary institutions in providing the most relevant education and specialized training for various highly professional occupations and skilled trades, inform community organizations who are interested in labour market trends and economic development opportunities, as well as assist employers and stakeholders in working towards solutions that will aid organizations in their efforts to attain a skilled workforce.

In order to allow the NSWPB to better match labour supply to demand; it is imperative to have real time demand identified by the employers within the district. In 2014, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) requested local workforce planning boards in northern Ontario to conduct an online employer survey using the pre-existing *EmployerOne* Survey instrument which was pilot-tested by several local boards across Ontario the previous year. MTCU provided funding to each northern board to promote and implement the survey. North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) is one of six (6) local boards in the north who conducted this survey. For more information on NSWPB please visit the website at: www.nswpb.ca

The *EmployerOne* Survey is a comprehensive survey designed to gain an understanding of the demand-side in the local area's labour market. The survey collects information from local employers related to: the demographics of their workforce; current and projected human resource vacancies; recruitment strategies and challenges; their perspective on candidate skills, education and training; top competencies required in their business; and any ongoing workforce concerns. The Survey instrument can be found in Appendix 2.



It is expected that the *EmployerOne* Survey would ultimately provide employers with a voice to communicate their current and future occupational needs to government, policy makers, and those responsible for the education and training of potential employees.

NSWPB implemented the survey in September 2014. The survey was open for 4 months, closing in December 2014. This report summarizes the methodology of the survey as well as the findings in aggregate form.

Survey Methodology

Employer/Sector Selection Process

The 2014 *EmployerOne* Survey was introduced as a pilot project, and for that reason, the Northern Workforce Planning Boards chose to target a set number of employers for the first year. In the early planning stages, it was determined that NSWPB would only target employers within the Thunder Bay CMA for the 2014 *EmployerOne* Survey project and then expand into the District if possible. In an effort to ensure a coordinated data collection, the Northern Workforce Planning Boards opted for an evidence-based approach. Based on the most recent labour market indicator data that had been provided at the time (June 2013), it was decided that each Board would aim to survey 5% of the top ten industries sectors by number of employers. Table 1 below shows actual numbers of the 5% of the top ten industries by number of employers for each northern board district, which amounts to a target number of 204 employers for the Thunder Bay area.

Table 1: Number of Employers Targeted, by District (5% of Top 10 totals)

(Source: Statistics Canada, *Canadian Business Patterns – June 2013*)

Industry by 3-digit NAICS code	Kenora	Rainy River	Thunder Bay	Cochrane	Temiskaming	Algoma	Manitoulin	Sudbury	Greater Sudbury	Nipissing	Parry	Total
111 – Crop Production					4							4
112 – Animal Production		5			6		3					14
113 – Forestry and Logging		5		7				2				14
236 – Construction of Buildings	6	2	14	7	3	10	2	2	16	8	13	83
238 – Specialty Trade Contractors	11	3	26	13	6	17	2	3	29	18	17	145
445 – Food and Beverage Stores	5											5
484 – Truck Transportation		3		8	5			2		7	6	31
523 – Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investment and Related Activities			14	7		8			17			46
531 – Real Estate	13	3	37	17	7	25	2	3	50	28	16	201
541 – Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	9	2	33	16	6	21	2	2	45	19	11	166
551 – Management of Companies and Enterprises									15			15
561 – Administrative and Support Services			13			6			15	8	5	47
621 – Ambulatory Health Care Services	7	2	26	11	4	17	2	2	32	13	5	121
721 – Accommodation Services	18	4					3	5			6	36
722 – Food Services and Drinking Places	5		16	9	4	12	2	2	17	8	5	80
811 – Repair and Maintenance	5		12	8	3	8	2		13	7	6	64
813 – Religious, Grant-Making, Civic, and Professional and Similar Organizations	5	2	13			11	1	2		7		41
Total	84	31	204	103	48	135	21	25	249	123	90	1113

Unfortunately, as survey implementation progressed, it became apparent that limiting industry responses could result in an even lower response rate. As such, local boards readily accepted responses from any industry sector to realize the greatest possible response.

Outreach Strategies

Various outreach strategies were used including: the development of common branding for the use of promotional materials (*EmployerOne* logo, banner, brochures and poster (Appendix 1)), use of local media through holding a press release; personal employer visits; emailing employer databases (limited by the new anti-spam legislation); posting and sharing the link through social media; reaching out to organizations that connect with employers; attending employer-related events; and mailing survey packages with return self-addressed stamped envelopes.



EmployerOne Survey Press Release, September 11, 2014, NSWPB

On October 31st, NSWPB hosted the first of a series of planned activities for the coming year to engage employers in workforce planning and economic development. The event held was an Employer Engagement Breakfast held in Lakehead University's Faculty Lounge with the assistance of LU's Forest Economics students. Eleven (11) employers representing upwards to one thousand (1,000) employees attended that morning, along with community partners. The session included a brief presentation from Dr. Chander Shahi on Skills Mismatch and Madge Richardson, Executive Director of NSWPB facilitated a roundtable discussion. The students of Dr. Chander Shahi's Forest Economics class assisted in recording the discussions, compiled the information, and presented NSWPB with the results. Employers who attended the breakfast were provided with *EmployerOne* Survey packages and were encouraged to complete the survey.



Employer Engagement Breakfast, October 31st, 2014, Lakehead University's Faculty Lounge

Limitations and Challenges

Throughout the implementation process of the 2014 *EmployerOne* Survey, NSWPB as well as the other northern local planning boards, those who assisted with implementation of the survey and the employers themselves observed a number of limitations and challenges that were brought on by the design and nature of the survey. These limitations and challenges, listed below, are believed to have impacted the completion rates and research findings.

- a) **Cumbersome and long survey instrument:** Anywhere from 15 minutes to 1.5 hours was required to complete the survey depending on size of workforce and who was completing the survey. Some employers said this was far too long and others skipped questions, or did not complete the survey.
- b) **Quality of questions:** The wording/intent of questions, definitions used and lack of logical flow created some challenges. While northern boards adapted the survey instrument to make it easier to read, efforts were made to remain consistent as alterations to content were not allowed.
- c) **Survey fatigue:** Local boards in the north recently conducted a survey/study to identify forecasted recruitment needs in the mining and mining supply services sectors and several local boards also engaged in a workforce survey of the tourism sector. Local boards have found that employers are fatigued as they are repeatedly being surveyed.
- d) **Employer profile:** The majority of businesses in Thunder Bay are small businesses (under 100 employees). However, regardless of size, some employers did express concern about their capacity to complete a survey of this nature given the level of HR detail required. In addition, various store managers said that they could not complete the survey without approval of their head office.
- e) **Online vs. traditional paper survey:** An online survey format was developed using Fluid Survey. However, some employers were uncomfortable navigating the internet and preferred a paper format which did present some reformatting challenges. Several also mentioned that having the paper survey on their desk reminded them to complete the survey. Once the completed paper surveys were received, the Project Coordinator transferred the information into the online format.
- f) **Interpretation:** Although the integrity of the questions was paramount, it is possible that slight word changes, employer response interpretation and data transfer may have impacted on some findings.
- g) **Implementation cost and time:** Despite the cost and time dedicated to encourage employers to complete the survey, fewer than one hundred (100) employers took the time to do so.



Survey Findings

Survey Methodology as established by the Northern Workforce Planning Boards, determined that for the 2014 *EmployerOne Survey*, NSWPB’s targeted sample size would be 204 employers. For the responses to be publicly recognized as statistically representative of this sample size, 20% response rate of 41 survey responses would be acceptable.

In **total**, 88 employers (43% of target sample) participated in the *EmployerOne Survey* and 70 employers (34% of target sample) completed it.

It is important to note that not all respondents answered every question; therefore the analysis for each survey question will include the number of respondents. Response percentage’s total thereby may not equal 100%.

Profile of Respondents

Of those that provided a **location**, 87% were located in the City of Thunder Bay. No other location had more than one employer responding.

Respondents represented a range of **industries**. Table 2 provides the percentage breakdown by industry for survey respondents, and compares the figures to the actual breakdown of establishments by industry in the Thunder Bay District with one or more employees.

Table 2: Number and percent of respondents by industry

INDUSTRY	NUMBER	PERCENT	ACTUAL
Accommodation and Food Services	6	6.9%	8.2%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	3	3.4%	4.2%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1	1.1%	1.6%
Construction	20	23.0%	12.0%
Educational Services	1	1.1%	1.6%
Finance and insurance	9	10.3%	3.9%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	9	10.3%	12.0%
Management of companies and enterprises	2	2.3%	0.6%
Manufacturing	1	1.1%	2.9%
Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction	4	4.6%	0.8%
Other Services (except public administration)	9	10.3%	10.5%
Professional, scientific and technical services	8	9.2%	7.7%
Public administration	1	1.1%	0.9%
Real estate and rental and leasing	2	2.3%	4.5%
Retail Trade	4	4.6%	14.4%
Transportation and warehousing	2	2.3%	4.8%
Wholesale trade	5	5.7%	4.4%
TOTAL	87	100.0%	95.0%

Even for a relatively small sample, the representativeness of the sample by industry is oftentimes quite close to the distribution of establishments with employees in the District of Thunder Bay. In most cases, the percentage distribution is within 2%, except for several industries: the Construction as well as Finance & Insurance industries are considerably over-represented (shaded green), while the Retail Trade sector is considerably under-represented (shaded red). The Mining, Quarrying and Oil & Gas Extraction industry is also somewhat over-represented.

Respondents were asked if their establishment represented a head office or a branch of a business. Two thirds (68%) indicated that they were a head office and one-third (32%) were a branch.

Respondents were further asked to indicate the current **life-cycle stage** of their organization:

Table 3: Life-cycle stage of organization (N=87)

Start-up	5%
Growth	24%
Established	71%



The survey respondents represented a range of **establishment sizes**. Compared to the distribution by employee size of establishments with at least one employee in the District of Thunder Bay (Statistic Canada’s Canadian Business Patterns data, June 2014), the survey sample is clearly more weighted toward establishments with more employees (e.g. 20-99 employees and 100 or more employees).

Table 4: Respondents by number of employees (N=81)

	Number of employees			
	1-4	5-19	20-99	100+
Survey number	12	34	23	12
Survey percentage	15%	42%	28%	15%
Actual percentage	48%	36%	14%	2%

Employee Demographics

EmployerOne respondents were asked to provide numbers regarding their workforces, by age and by type of employment. Table 5 tabulates the responses for all respondents, while Table 6 provides the percentage distribution for all the responses.

Table 5: Number in workforce, by age and employment status (N=78)

AGE	PERMANENT		TEMPORARY		Independent contractor	TOTAL
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time		
Under 25	249	180	41	86	6	562
25-44	1210	295	93	198	26	1822
45-54	1146	221	76	66	44	1553
55-64	671	115	32	49	29	896
65+	91	34	14	14	7	160
TOTAL	3367	845	256	413	112	4993

Table 6: Percentage of workforce, by age and employment status

AGE	PERMANENT		TEMPORARY		Independent contractor	TOTAL
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time		
Under 25	5%	4%	1%	2%	0%	11%
25-44	24%	6%	2%	4%	1%	37%
45-54	23%	4%	2%	1%	1%	31%
55-64	13%	2%	1%	1%	1%	18%
65+	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	3%
TOTAL	67%	17%	5%	8%	2%	100%

Overall, 67% of the **jobs** are full-time, permanent jobs. The combined part-time jobs (permanent and temporary) account for another 22% of the positions. Among youth (aged under 25 years old), roughly half of the workers are employed in part-time jobs, while for those aged 45 to 54 and 55 to 64 years old, the proportion is closer to 20%.

Independent contractors make up a small proportion of the reported workforce, only 2%. Of these 112 positions, 92 are with two establishments, a financial advisory service and a real estate company.

Number of Hires and Separations over the last 12 months

Separations:

Almost two-thirds (65%) of respondents experienced a workforce separation in the last 12 months. Table 7 presents the numbers, by occupational category and by reason for the separation. Table 8 presents the percentage distribution for the same results.

Table 7: Number of separations, by occupational category and reason for separation (N=79)

	Quit	Retirement	Temp Lay-off	Other	TOTAL
Managers & Executives	8	10	0	6	24
Professionals	50	11	0	33	94
Technical	6	4	4	2	16
Trades	8	22	8	4	42
Apprentices	4	0	3	2	9
Sales & Marketing	12	0	0	4	16
Admin & Clerical	19	7	0	17	43
Production Worker	147	48	113	21	329
Service Worker	66	8	22	29	125
Other	22	1	2	7	32
TOTAL	342	111	152	125	730

Table 8: Percentage distribution of separations, by occupational category and reason for separation

	Quit	Retirement	Temp Lay-off	Other	TOTAL
Managers & Executives	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%
Professionals	7%	2%	0%	5%	13%
Technical	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%
Trades	1%	3%	1%	1%	6%
Apprentices	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Sales & Marketing	2%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Admin & Clerical	3%	1%	0%	2%	6%
Production Worker	20%	7%	16%	3%	45%
Service Worker	9%	1%	3%	4%	17%
Other	3%	0%	0%	1%	4%
TOTAL	47%	15%	21%	17%	100%

According to the survey, almost half (47)% of all employment separations are as a result of an employee quitting, while another 21% are the consequence of a temporary lay-off. Retirements account for a significant proportion of separations among the trades, technical staff, and managers & executives.

The figures for Production Workers are high. Three establishments account for over 80% of these numbers: one firm reported 124 quits (of 147 in this category), a second firm reported 47 retirements (of 48 in this category), and a third firm accounted for 100 temporary lay-offs (of 113). Together, these three firms may be distorting the results, so these figures should be used with caution.

If these three firms were taken out of the calculation, then Production Workers would only account for 13% of all separations, as opposed to 45%, and Service Workers would occupy the top position in separations, at 27%.

Hires:

Eight out of every ten respondents (82%) hired someone in the last 12 months. Table 9 presents the numbers, by occupational category and type of employment. Table 10 provides the percentage distribution of the same numbers.

Table 9 compares the number of hires to the number of separations, by occupational category. Overall, the number of hires exceeded the number of separations by about 40%. In every instance except one, employers in the survey report considerably more hirings than separations in the last 12 months. The one exception is among the trades, where the number of hires falls just a little short of the number of separations (40 versus 42). The consistency of these numbers across all occupations suggests an improvement in the employment situation last year.

Table 9: Total number of hirings, comparison to total number of separations (N=59)

	PERMANENT FULL-TIME	PERMANENT PART-TIME	TEMPORARY FULL-TIME	TEMPORARY PART-TIME	INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR	TOTAL	SEPARATIONS
Managers & Executives	34	0	1	0	4	39	24
Professionals	50	17	10	47	0	124	94
Technical	26	0	0	1	0	27	16
Trades	24	1	3	8	4	40	42
Apprentices	15	0	2	0	0	17	9
Sales & Marketing	12	0	0	0	15	27	16
Admin & Clerical	30	11	4	5	2	52	43
Production Worker	273	136	7	39	0	455	329
Service Worker	54	35	11	92	0	192	125
Other	29	5	6	3	1	44	32
TOTAL	547	205	44	195	26	1017	730

Table 10: Percentage distribution of hirings, comparison to distribution of employment status (N=59)

	PERMANENT FULL-TIME	PERMANENT PART-TIME	TEMPORARY FULL-TIME	TEMPORARY PART-TIME	INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR	TOTAL
Managers & Executives	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Professionals	5%	2%	1%	5%	0%	12%
Technical	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Trades	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	4%
Apprentices	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
Sales & Marketing	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	3%
Admin & Clerical	3%	1%	0%	1%	0%	5%
Production Worker	27%	13%	1%	4%	0%	45%
Service Worker	5%	3%	1%	9%	0%	19%
Other	3%	1%	1%	0%	0%	4%
TOTAL	54%	20%	4%	19%	3%	100%
TOTAL WORKFORCE	67%	17%	5%	8%	2%	100%

When it comes to the distribution of hires by employment type (Table 10), the proportion of jobs that are permanent full-time among the new hires is lower than their share in the existing workforce (54% versus 67%). That difference is made up among temporary part-time hires, whose proportion of all hires is 19% compared to 8% in the present workforce. That suggests that among the new hires there is a larger share of more precarious employment.

Education of New Hires:

Of 1017 new hires, 312 held a post-secondary degree or diploma, 31% of the total. Of the post-secondary degree holders, 48% held a college diploma and 52% possessed a university degree. (This latter figure is an estimate: respondents were asked to indicate, in the case of post-secondary certificate hires, whether the degree was a college diploma or a university degree. In the instance where employers indicated both, there was no provision to indicate the proportions for each type of certificate, and so one had to assume an even split. This may or may not reflect the actual proportions.)

Occupation of New Hires:

There were over 80 different occupations named among these high frequency hiring occupations, but in around half of the instances, the number of hires was only one or two. Table 11 lists those occupations with at least 10 new hires. These 14 occupations account for over three quarters (77%) of all these hirings.

Table 11: Largest number of hirings among high frequency hiring occupations

OCCUPATION	NUMBER
Labourer (other)	147
Labourer (construction)	79
Personal support worker	55
Miner	52
Truck driver	52
Registered practical nurse	37
Tradesperson	33
Registered nurse	29
Food and beverage server	20
Heavy equipment operator	15
Snow removal operator	15
Housekeeper	14
Engineer	10
Front desk associates	10
TOTAL	568



Labourer (other) includes labourers in pulp and paper mill, car wash labourers, and so on.

Labourer (construction) includes traffic control workers.

Tradesperson was named generically. Specific trades made the list separately, such as carpenters.

Recruitment Methods

Respondents were asked to indicate what mechanisms they used to recruit job candidates for these high frequency hirings. These results are reported in two ways: (1) the number of times an employer used a particular recruitment method; and (2) the number of job recruitments that relied on that particular method.

Table 12: Frequency of use and number of jobs by recruitment method (N=51)

Recruitment method	Frequency of use	Number of jobs
Word of Mouth / Personal Contacts / Referrals / Informal Networks	78	567
Online Job Boards / Postings	61	489
Company's Own Internet Site	43	401
Unsolicited Resumes	37	511
Newspaper Ads	33	271
Government Employment Centres or Websites	18	365
On-Site Job Signs or Posters	17	282
On-site Recruitment At Schools, Colleges, or Universities	17	151
Non-Government or Community Employment Service Centres or Websites	14	250
Job Fairs	10	146
Trade or Professional Association Publications	10	22
Other	9	44
Executive Search Companies or Temporary Help Agencies	5	15

By far, much recruitment still relies upon word-of-mouth and personal contacts. Coming in second place was the use of on-line job boards, in third place was the company's own website, and in sixth was government employment centers or websites, indicating that the Internet is an important job recruitment tool. In between, in fourth and fifth places, were unsolicited resumes and newspaper ads. Conversely, few employers make use of executive search companies and temporary help agencies, trade or professional association publications, or job fairs.

For the high frequency hiring jobs, respondents were given the opportunity to indicate the areas their recruitment efforts targeted. Table 13 lists the responses, based on the number of jobs associated with the recruitment activity.

Geographic areas targeted:

Table 13: Geographic target areas for job recruitment activities (N=51)

WITHIN DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY	WITHIN THE PROVINCE	WITHIN CANADA	INTERNATIONALLY
683	227	216	0



Most of the recruitment effort of employers is focused on the District of Thunder Bay, but the amount of recruitment which targets the province and Canada as a whole is considerable, no doubt because a good proportion of the recruitment takes place via the Internet, which has a wider reach. That being said, employers expressed the view that none of their recruitment extends internationally.

Assistance from a free employment service agency:

Employers were less likely to receive employment services from an agency providing assistance on behalf of a particular demographic group. In seven out of ten instances (71%) when employers were recruiting, they received no such assistance. In most cases, reliance on such assistance amounted only to a handful:

- 10 instances where an employer indicated they received employment services from an agency assisting youth (15-24 years of age)
- 8 instances of assistance from an agency serving immigrants or visible minorities
- 7 instances of assistance from an agency serving Aboriginals
- 5 instances of assistance from an agency serving persons with disabilities
- 5 instances of assistance from an agency serving older workers (55 years and older)

Assistance from a paid recruitment agency:

Of the 58 employers who answered this question, 4 indicated that they used a paid recruitment agency, resulting in 7% of those responding to the question confirming that they used a paid recruitment agency.

Hard to fill positions:

Employers were further asked whether any of these high frequency recruiting jobs were difficult to fill. Of the 60 employers answering this question, 52% said yes while 48% said no.

Employers were then asked to identify for which reasons these jobs were difficult to fill. The answers in Table 14 represent the number of jobs associated with a given reason. Employers were very clear – job applicants lacked a specific attribute:

- Applicants did not meet the educational qualification requirements (1st reason)

- Applicants did not meet the work experience requirements (2nd reason)
- Applicants did not meet the skills requirements (3rd reason)
- Applicants did not have the right motivation, attitude or interpersonal skills (5th reason)

In between, the fourth reason was that there were simply not enough job applicants.

Issues related to the job, such as level of pay, a remote location/poor public transit, or the nature of the work (for example, seasonal work), were less of an issue.

The following reasons were infrequently the cause for a job being hard to recruit for:

- The inability to assess a foreign educational credential (no employer cited this as a reason)
- Applicants did not meet the language requirements (no employer cited this as a reason)
- The inability to compete with other employers due to a lack of advancement opportunities
- No applicants at all
- No local qualified applicants

Table 14: Reasons for which it is hard to recruit and the number of jobs associated with that reason

REASON	NUMBER OF JOBS
Applicants Not Meeting Qualification Requirements (education level / credentials)	172
Applicants Not Meeting Work Experience Requirements	130
Applicants Not Meeting Skills Requirements	118
Not Enough Applicants	106
Applicants Not Meeting Motivation, Attitude, or Interpersonal Skills Requirements	73
Inability to Compete With Other Employers Due To Pay & Benefits	41
Inability To Compete With Other Employers Due To Remote Location / Poor Public Transit	31
Inability To Compete With Other Employers Due To Nature of Work (seasonal, shift work, irregular hours, job content)	30
No Local Qualified Applicants	10
No Applicants At All	3
Inability To Compete With Other Employers Due To Lack of Promotion Opportunities	2
Applicants Not Meeting Language Requirements	0
Inability To Assess a Foreign Educational Qualification or Credential	0

One caution: The smaller overall sample size, and the fact that only around half of the respondents indicated difficulty hiring, meant that only 26 employers provided a response for this question, a considerably smaller number.

Minimum level of education for high frequency hires:

Table 15 presents the minimum educational requirements for all the hirings under the category of high frequency hirings in the last 12 months (that is, the top three occupations for which an employer hired the most employees).

Table 15: Minimum level of education required for all high frequency hirings in the last 12 months (N=41)

	TOTAL	HIGH SCHOOL	SOME POST- SECONDARY	TRADES CERTIFICATE	COLLEGE DIPLOMA	UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE	PROFESSIONAL OR GRADUATE DEDGREE
NUMBER	556	285	49	34	126	41	21
PERCENT	100%	51%	9%	6%	23%	7%	4%

These results may provide a slightly distorted picture. It is not the case that of all new hires last year, 51% of the jobs only required a high school diploma. These jobs represent the top three hires, and so would include large numbers for entry-level positions. Table 9 showed that in the previous last 12 months, there were a total of 1017 new hires. So, the responses in Table 15, being skewed toward high frequency hires, will produce a profile of educational attainment expectations that is likely lower than that required by all new hires.

That being said, it bears recalling that in Table 14, the most often cited reason why it was hard to recruit for these high frequency hiring occupations was on account of applicants not meeting the educational level requirements. This likely is a greater issue for those jobs which do require a higher educational certificate, for example, the 23% of high frequency hirings which require a college diploma.

Expected Hires

Two-thirds (68%) of respondents indicated that they planned on hiring over the next 12 months (75 employers answered this question).

Table 16 shows the number of expected job hirings over the next 12 months, by occupational category and by employment type. In total, employers expect to hire for 1080 positions, around 6% more than the actual 1017 hires that took place last year.

Table 16: Number of expected hirings, by occupational category and type of employment

	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR	TOTAL
Managers & Executives	15	1	0	16
Professionals	73	40	0	113
Technical	27	0	1	28
Trades	74	0	0	74
Apprentices	13	1	0	14
Sales & Marketing	41	1	0	42
Admin & Clerical	18	12	0	30
Production Worker	284	70	0	354
Service Worker	114	249	0	363
Other	14	31	1	46
TOTAL	673	405	2	1080

Table 17 takes the same numbers and provides the percentage distribution. By and large, the distribution of projected hirings by type of employment is similar to the hiring pattern for the previous year, and in both years the percentage of the hires which are full-time is lower than the actual proportion of full-time employees in the workforce.

What is noteworthy is that around 80% of the projected production worker hires are full-time, while almost 70% of the projected service worker hires are part-time.

Compared to the distribution of hires last year by occupational category, in most categories the percentage share of total hires is about the same, except for a large difference among both production workers and service workers, with production workers making up a considerably smaller share of projected hires (33% of all projected hires, versus 45% of all hires last year), and, conversely, an almost equal increase in the projected proportion of hires among service workers.



Table 17: Percentage distribution of expected hirings, by occupational category and type of employment

	FULL-TIME	PART-TIME	INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR	TOTAL	TOTAL HIRES LAST YEAR
Managers & Executives	1%	0%	0%	2%	4%
Professionals	7%	4%	0%	11%	12%
Technical	3%	0%	0%	3%	3%
Trades	7%	0%	0%	7%	4%
Apprentices	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Sales & Marketing	4%	0%	0%	4%	3%
Admin & Clerical	2%	1%	0%	3%	5%
Production Worker	26%	7%	0%	33%	45%
Service Worker	11%	23%	0%	34%	19%
Other	1%	3%	0%	4%	4%
TOTAL	63%	38%	0%	100%	100%
TOTAL WORKFORCE	72%	25%	2%	100%	
TOTAL HIRES LAST YEAR	58%	39%	3%	102%	

When asked to choose from reasons for the expected hiring, just a little over half point to expansion or restructuring for the reason. One out of six chose “Other” as the reason, and another one out of six chose “Retirements.” Technological change was only mentioned twice.

Table 18: Reason for the expected hiring

	Managers and Executives	Professionals	Technical	Trades (Journey person)	Apprentices	Sales and Marketing	Administrative / Clerical	Production Workers	Service Workers	Other	TOTAL
Expansion or Restructuring	4	9	8	7	8	7	8	3	7	2	63
Other	2	1	2	3	4	0	2	6	3	1	24
Retirements	3	1	1	3	1	2	5	1	2	1	20
N/A	2	1	1	1	1	2	0	2	1	1	12
Technological Change	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
TOTAL	11	12	13	14	14	11	16	12	13	5	121

Employers were asked to list the minimum educational attainment requirements for the broad occupational categories. Table 19 lists the percentage distribution of the responses by each occupational category.

Table 19: Minimum educational requirements by occupational categories (N=65)

	HIGH SCHOOL	SOME POST-SECONDARY	TRADES CERTIFICATE	COLLEGE DIPLOMA	UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE	PROFESSIONAL OR GRADUATE DEGREE
Managers and Executives	4%	9%	7%	32%	26%	22%
Professionals (e.g.: Engineers)	0%	5%	5%	8%	30%	53%
Technical	7%	5%	20%	49%	12%	7%
Trades (Journeyman)	19%	5%	62%	7%	2%	5%
Apprentices	50%	19%	22%	9%	0%	0%
Sales and Marketing	26%	14%	6%	40%	9%	6%
Administrative and Clerical	29%	27%	2%	38%	4%	0%
Production Workers	65%	3%	16%	16%	0%	0%
Service Workers	42%	15%	6%	27%	9%	0%
Other	50%	25%	0%	0%	0%	25%

In Table 19, the light-shaded cells indicate values of over 15%, and the darker shaded cells indicate values of 50% or more. For certain occupations, one specific designation is the clear choice: 62% of employers expect a tradesperson to have a trades certificate; a high school diploma is usually sufficient for a production worker or a service worker. Professionals are expected to have a professional degree (53%) or at least a university degree (30%). Managers are expected to have a post-secondary degree (32% college, 26% undergrad degree, 22% professional or graduate degree).

For a number of occupations there appear to be two clusters of responses. For such occupations as Sales & Marketing, as well as Administrative & Clerical, a portion of employers are satisfied with a high school diploma, maybe some post-secondary, while another sizeable minority desires a college diploma. The same applies to Service Workers, where 27% of respondents wanted to see a college diploma. Even among Production Workers, where almost two-thirds were content with a high school diploma, the other third were equally divided between a trades certificate or a college diploma. It is likely that among this latter group of employers seeking a college diploma that one would find the discontent regarding the level of education that explains their difficulties in hiring (Table 14).

Top Competencies for Current and Future Employees

Table 20 tabulates the scoring of all respondents who identified the top three competencies their employees needed to possess, both for their current as well as future workforce. This question was asked in relation to all jobs, as well as hard-to-fill jobs.

Table 20: Necessary competencies, current and future workforces, all jobs and hard-to-fill jobs

Competency	ALL JOBS		HARD-TO-FILL		TOTAL
	Current Workforce	Future Workforce	Current Workforce	Future Workforce	
Work Ethic, Dedication, & Dependability	43	33	33	30	139
Customer Service Skills	30	29	24	20	103
Self-Motivation / Ability To Work With Little Supervision	32	24	23	22	101
Communication Skills (both oral and written)	30	28	15	11	84
Willingness To Learn	18	22	14	12	66
Technical Skills	17	17	15	13	62
Teamwork / Interpersonal Skills	23	19	8	5	55
Professionalism	14	13	13	12	52
Problem Solving, Reasoning, Creativity	10	9	13	15	47
Time Management or Organizational Skills	15	15	8	7	45
Computer Literacy Skills	15	12	8	10	45
Analytical / Research Skills	5	7	4	4	20

These competencies are listed in order of the total number of times they were named. Work ethic easily tops the list, with high scores also ascribed to customer service skills and self-motivation.

Communication skills come in fourth and after that the rest of the skills more or less cluster in a mid-range of values. Coming in a distant last are analytical/research skills.

Apprenticeship

Employers were asked two questions concerning apprenticeships: *Is the ratio of apprentices to journeymen appropriate/correct in your opinion?; Would you hire more apprentices if the ratio were lower?* Results showed that fewer employers have experience with or need for apprentices, and so the number of responses for these questions was limited to 24 respondents, who were almost equally divided on the first question, with 13 feeling that the ratio of apprentices to journeymen was not appropriate and 11 feeling that it was.

On the further question of whether a lower ratio would result in more apprentice hirings on their part, the responses were as follows:

Table 20: Expected apprentice hiring if ratio were lower

NO , do not believe the ratio is appropriate YES , with a lower ratio would hire more	9
NO , do not believe the ratio is appropriate NO , with a lower ratio would not hire more	4
YES , believe the ratio is appropriate YES , with a lower ratio would hire more	3
YES , believe the ratio is appropriate NO , with a lower ratio would not hire more	7
YES , believe the ratio is appropriate No response on second question	1



Roughly half of the respondents (12 responses) indicate that they would be likely to hire more apprentices if the ratio of apprentices to journeymen was lower. Not all respondents who felt the current ratio was inappropriate would increase their level of hiring (4 responses), just as some employers who felt that the current ratio was alright nevertheless indicated that they would hire more apprentices if the ratio was lowered (3 responses).

Skills, Training, and Education Needs

Do you provide any workplace-relevant training to students and future workers?

Some employers do provide opportunities for students or for unemployed individuals to acquire some workplace experience, either through a co-op or internship or through mentorships. The actual proportion of respondents to this question is harder to assess, because it is not known from the data how many employers would have answered “No” or how many just declined to answer. Table 21 indicates how many employers actually do provide such opportunities, according to three possibilities: paid co-op or internship placements, unpaid co-op or internship placements, or mentoring.

Table 21: Provision of workplace experience opportunities (N=77)

	Paid co-op or internship	Unpaid co-op or internship	Mentoring
High school student	7	17	7
College student	12	15	9
University student	13	10	12
Job seeker	5	0	5

Overall, employers are more or less equally likely to provide such assistance to high school students, college students and university students, but less so to job seekers. When employers do provide co-op or internship placements, these are far more likely to be unpaid when it comes to high school students, but equally likely to be paid or unpaid when it comes to college or university students, and always so for job seekers (though for this category this is a small number of respondents on which to draw a definitive conclusion).

Skills, training and education needs, for employees and for job applicants, now and in the future:

Employers were asked to list the specific skills, training and education needs they felt were in greatest demand today, among their employees and among job applicants, as well as which will be in greatest demand in the future.

This was an open-ended question, so employers could answer as they wished. In the case of identifying skills, the responses tended to cluster into one of four categories:

- *Technical skills*, such as financial analysis, project management or trade skills;
- *Soft skills*, such as time management, flexibility and motivation;
- *Experience*;
- *Customer service skills* (received enough mention to warrant its own category).

The number of responses dropped off as one moved from current needs for employees, then to job applicants, then to future needs for employees and job applicants. Table 22 tabulates the number of responses under each need, by different target group.

Table 22: Skill needs, for employees and job seekers, now and in the future

	Technical skills	Soft skills	Experience	Customer service skills	Number of employers responding
Current employees	32	25	7	5	39
Current job applicants	15	7	6	1	24
Future employees	12	6	2	1	15
Future job applicants	13	6	3	0	18

Clearly, technical skills are cited most often. Among current employees, the need for soft skills comes a close second, but for the other populations, the numbers fall off somewhat.

The training needs expressed by these employers cover a vast range of requirements, with no ability to cluster the responses, apart from a number of references to the skilled trades and journeypersons. Table 23 lists all the responses for all population categories.

Table 23: Training needs, for employees and job seekers, now and in the future

Current employees			
AC, gas journey persons	Job specific training	Post -Masters training	Computer skills
Safe food handling	2-3 year apprentice	Phone training	Trade skills
Culinary management /apprentices	Certified financial analyst	Diploma, degree, industry experience	Most training is done "in house"
Journey person qualifications	Regularly update certification	Legislated requirements	Product knowledge training
Writing courses/diplomas/degrees	Certified security guards	Traffic control, safety training, WHMIS	Smart serve, safe food handling
Smart serve, hospitality, health and safety	University or college degree in business	Skilled labour with all safety certificates	Red Seal
RIBO certified insurance related courses	Mental health training/ sensitivity training/ violence and harassment training/ WHMIS	P. Eng. designation or C.E.T. designation or E.I.T. designation PMP certification is an asset	Regulatory policy management system and auditing (i.e. ISO)
read and comprehend information interpreting text problem solving			
Take courses to better their skills on their own			
Current job applicants			
Job specific training	Journey person	Valid driver's license	2-3 year apprentice
Skilled trades	Skilled trades	Skilled trades	Grade 12
Journeymen (mechanics)	smart serve/ safe food handling	P. Eng. designation or C.E.T. designation	Mill common core certification and gold milling experience
Legislated requirements	Certified sales marketing	Mutual fund license	
Future employees			
Certified security guards	Pilot licensing upgrades	Job specific training	Safe food handling
Red Seal for welding and boiler-making			
Future job applicants			
Gas fitting	Grade 12	Skilled trades	Social work
Mutual fund license	Valid driver's license	GIS and computer programming	

The expectations regarding current and future education needs, both area of study and level, were similarly widespread. Table 24 summarizes the results.

Table 24: Education needs, by area of study and level for employees and job seekers, now and in the future

	High school	Specialized	Trades certificate	College	University	Technical	Professional	Post-graduate
Current employees	5	3	2	9	10	4	2	1
Current job applicants	5	3	1	1	0	2	0	0
Future employees	1	3	1	2	1	0	0	0
Future job applicants	2	0	2	0	1	1	1	0

Specialized refers to a specific course of shorter duration, such as a Personal Support Worker or computer skills training.

Technical refers to a technologist or engineering diploma or degree.

Professional refers to an MBA or legal degree.

Post-graduate refers to a Master’s or higher, other than a Professional degree.

There are too few responses to make confident conclusions regarding the latter three population categories, but for current employees, there is a wide dispersion of responses, with higher numbers for college and university graduates.

Provision of Training:

When asked whether they were able to provide or support training or education for their workers in the last year, 82% of employers answered “yes” (of 71 responding). When asked for which three positions employers provided/supported the most training or education, 56 employers named 111 occupations, distributed across the following categories:

Table 25: Occupational categories for high frequency training (N=56)

Managers & Executives	14
Professionals	19
Technical	17
Trades + Apprentices	16
Sales & Marketing	10
Admin & Clerical	14
Production Worker	12
Service Worker	9
TOTAL	111



There is a generally even distribution of training by occupation according to these broad categories. However, given the overall distribution of workers by these various categories, one can surmise that proportionately more training is dedicated to the higher level occupations such as Managers & Executives, Professionals, Technical, and Trades and Apprentices. Or to put it another way: according to Table 25, 19% of the occupations cited for training were among either Production Workers or Service Workers, yet it is likely that Production Workers and Service Workers make up more than 19% of the entire workforce.

Employers were also asked to identify the kind of training or education that was applicable for each of these 111 occupations. Needless to say, the list was quite varied, with few large clusters of training needs, rather a long string of distinct needs, except for one item which received several mentions, namely Health & Safety.

Sources of Training:

For each of the instances attracting the most training or education, employers were asked the source for that training or education. Table 26 shows the accumulated score, counting responses for the three top positions receiving the most training or education.

Table 26: Source of training/education for top instances of training/education (N=57)

On-the-job	85
Industry and professional association	58
Peer-to-peer	55
Distance/on-line education	32
College	27
Other	9
University	8

By a clear margin, on-the-job training is the most common source for training, with industry and professional association, then peer-to-peer, also receiving high scores. Of the seven options (including “Other”), University came last and College came third to last.

Method of Supporting Training or Education:

When it comes to support, employers put their money where their mouth is. In almost half of the training or education instances, employers indicated that they provide financial support, either fully or in part. Coming a more distant second and third, employers also offer flexibility in the work schedule, as well as supply information on career development.

Table 27: method of support (N=56)

Fund it (Fully or partially)	104
Offer flexibility in work schedule	64
Supply information on career advancement	47
Other	2

Top Training Needs:

Employers were asked to indicate their top three training needs. This was an open-ended question, and 35 employers identified 78 training needs. These have been clustered into the following categories:

Table 28: Top training needs by category (N=35)

Training category	Number of mentions
Technical skills	26
Staying up-to-date; acquiring or renewing certification	16
Health and safety	11
Computer skills	8
Soft skills	8
Management/supervisory skills	5
Customer service skills	4

By far, the most common training need related to technical skills, which varied considerably, from product knowledge to family therapy training, from sales skills to manufacturing processes. Simply staying up-to-date with information, including acquiring or renewing certification was also cited frequently. Health and safety training was a consideration, as was computer training, which ranged from basic computer skills to learning industry-specific software. Soft skills training often referred to communication skills.

Barriers to Training:

Both employers who undertook training as well as those who did not were asked about the biggest barriers they faced to training. Table 29 lists the responses for both groups.

Table 29: barriers to training (N=68)

Employers who train		Employers who do not train	
Cost	32	Cost	25
Relevant training is not offered locally (Thunder Bay CMA)	32	Loss of productivity during training time	22
Loss of productivity during training time	25	Relevant training is not offered locally (Thunder Bay CMA)	18
Distance to travel to facility	21	Distance to travel to facility	14
Losing trained employees to other businesses	17	Awareness of existing training programs	12

Awareness of existing training programs	9		Losing trained employees to other businesses	11
Awareness of training support programs	9		Awareness of training support programs	6
Awareness of legislated training	4		Awareness of legislated training	1
Other	3			

While there are slight differences between the responses of employers who train versus those who do not train, overall the general pattern is the same, and three top barriers (albeit in slightly different order) are:

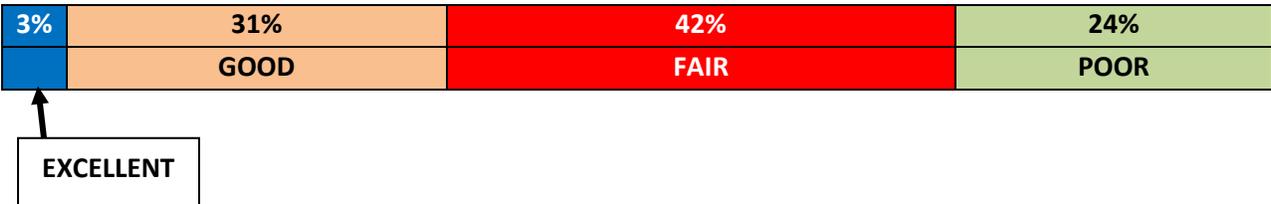
- Cost
- Unavailability of relevant training locally
- Loss of productivity

While poaching is often raised as a potential barrier, among these employers the concern that trained employees may be lost to other employers was no higher than fifth on either list.

Rating the Availability of Qualified Workers in the District of Thunder Bay

Employers had a relatively low opinion regarding the availability of qualified workers in the District of Thunder Bay.

Diagram 1: Rating the availability of qualified workers in District of Thunder Bay (N=74)



Two thirds (66%) of respondents assessed the local availability of qualified workers as fair or poor. If one assigned a numerical value to each choice, where “3” = Excellent, “2” = Good, “1” = Fair, and “0” = Poor, and added up the score and divided by the total number of responses, the average figure would be 1.12, much closer to Fair (1.0) than to Good (2.0).

Other Comments

Survey respondents were invited to add any comments they wished at the end of the survey.¹⁶ respondents offered further views on a range of topics: several were very small operations and noted that the depth and breadth of the survey went beyond the scope of their experience. A few wished to see the journey person/apprentice ratio lowered to accommodate more apprentices. Another few lamented the low work ethic and high expectations among many current job seekers.

Overall Observations

Surveys such as this are often the starting point of a discussion, not a definitive answer to a question. The results publicized in this report warrant review and feedback, both to validate that these answers reflect the broader reality, but also to provoke further insights which the numbers themselves cannot provide. In that context, the following represent both some further questions as well as some themes for further discussion:

- 1) What accounts for an apparently high turnover of Production Workers? Is the work seasonal or cyclical?
- 2) Is the higher proportion of part-time workers among new hires a consequence of higher turnover or more cyclical work in this category, or does this reflect a trend among new hires generally toward more part-time and fewer full-time workers?
- 3) When it comes to recruitment, how do employers define the difference between government employment centres and non-government or community employment centres?
- 4) What does it mean that employers actually target the rest of the province and of Canada for recruitment? Is it simply because web-based recruitment has such a reach, or are they seriously looking elsewhere to meet their recruitment needs?
- 5) The results regarding the reasons why some occupations are hard to fill suggest there is a need to identify potential solutions to these issues (the question about necessary competencies also points in this direction, namely the need to improve work ethic and dependability). It would be worthwhile to explore the views of employers regarding the following workforce development interventions:
 - Pre-employment programs, that provide training in relation to employability and essential skills;
 - Greater use of co-op and internship programs, involving high school, college and university students;
 - Further exploration of which college degree programs are in particular demand.

- 6) Would employers think that these kinds of interventions could help improve the availability of qualified workers in the District of Thunder Bay, which employers currently assess as only fair?

- 7) The questions relating to training revealed a wide range of responses, with technical skills proving to be the greatest need, but which can be quite distinct for each employer. It does suggest the need for more in-depth inquiry among employers in the same industry subsector, to identify opportunities for economies of scale among several employers in the same field when it comes to technical training, especially given that about a frequently cited barrier to training is the lack of relevant training in the Thunder Bay District area. That being said, there is also an evident need for soft skills training, and this would likely cross a number of industry, but would also benefit from further consultation regarding the most suitable kind of training for the largest audience of employers. These consultations would also need to inquire about the issue of costs.

Summary

Implementation of the *EmployerOne Survey* was met with some challenges in this first year and as noted, various limitations likely contributed to lower response rates. Nevertheless, the information that employers (who responded and completed the survey) did provide, yielded some valuable insight into current and projected hiring, hiring practices, occupations in demand and employee competencies expected. The success of future *EmployerOne Survey* implementation will rely on a greater outreach strategy, strong partnerships with specific sector or business organizations to increase response rates as well as a review and potential redesign of the current survey instrument.

While broader labour market data is key to understanding what is happening in industry (trends, changes and growth/decline) and what occupations people are employed in, direct employer information and feedback provides yet another critical piece to a very complex picture. Only by hearing from employers who are willing to share information on questions related to their workforce and their workforce needs will we begin to gain a true understanding of what employers are looking for in their current and future workforce. This will in turn help planners, economic development leads, educators, employment service providers, decision-makers, students and job seekers to understand where their efforts should be placed and who is hiring, what they are looking for and why.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – EmployerOne Poster



The poster features a white background with a blue diagonal banner. At the top left is the 'employerone SURVEY' logo, which includes a stylized figure holding a megaphone. To the right, the text 'ARE YOU AN EMPLOYER?' is written in large, bold, black letters, followed by 'We need your help!' in blue. The blue banner contains the text 'YOU HAVE THE MISSING PIECES TO OUR PUZZLE!' in white, bold letters. Below this, a paragraph explains the survey's purpose. Further down, another paragraph encourages participation. The central image shows five professionals (two men in hard hats and two women) whose bodies are composed of puzzle pieces. The bottom section is a dark blue banner with white text providing the survey website and contact information. Logos for Northern Ontario Workforce Planning and North Superior Workforce Planning Board are also present.

employerone
SURVEY

ARE YOU AN EMPLOYER?
We need your help!

YOU HAVE THE MISSING PIECES TO OUR PUZZLE!

To better understand workforce development challenges faced by employers across northern Ontario, six workforce planning boards from across the north are calling on local employers to help identify their labour market needs through the employerone survey.

Help us better understand the issues and challenges facing your business by completing this survey online, in person or over the telephone.

Complete the survey online at: www.nswpb.ca
107B Johnson Ave, Thunder Bay, ON · P7B 2V9 · 807-346-2940

Please contact us for more information

NORTHERN ONTARIO
WORKFORCE PLANNING
EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO

North Superior
Workforce Planning Board

Appendix 2 – EmployerOne Survey



EmployerOne Survey 2014-2015

Introduction

Survey Objective:

The EmployerOne Survey will provide Businesses and Educators within Thunder Bay (Census Metropolitan Area) with valuable insights into local Human Resource requirements.

The survey is designed to collect information annually from employers on a range of labour issues, such as labour turnover, hard-to-fill positions, recruitment difficulties, current and future skills shortages, as well as any issues in training and education practices.

Why Participate?

Sharing information pertaining to your organization's Human Resource requirements will allow North Superior Workforce Planning Board and Community Partners to look at the labour issues that exist, and work towards solutions that will aid organizations in their efforts to attain a skilled workforce.

Filling in the EmployerOne Survey:

Your business may receive EmployerOne from more than one source, but the survey should only be completed once. You decide who is the most appropriate person in your business or organization to complete it.

Confidentiality:

The survey has been designed to protect your identity. All answers given will be treated in strict confidence and they will be used for statistical purposes and published in aggregate form only.

Only the aggregate information will be shared with EmployerOne partners, who have each signed an agreement on use of the data.

Need Help?

For assistance, please contact North Superior Workforce Planning Board at 807-346-2940 or via email at admin@nswpb.ca.

Section A: Organization and Workforce Characteristics

This section is designed to establish key parameters. It is the necessary first step towards identifying workforce needs and challenges that are particular to your sector and location. If you are a branch office with a head office in this Economic Region please check with your head office who is filling out the survey.

Please answer the following questions in this section as accurately and completely as possible and remember that for the purpose of this survey, consider only paid employees (those receiving a T4 slip) of the location identified in question 1.

1. Business Name:

2. Street Address:

3. Location of your business/company/organization:

Location simply refers to the place of business receiving this survey.

Please select between the following communities:

- City of Thunder Bay
- Fort William 52
- Township of Gillies
- Municipality of Neebing
- O'Connor Township
- Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge
- Township of Shuniah
- Conmee Township
- Other, please specify... _____

- Postal Code (First 3 characters only)
- P7A
 - P7B
 - P7C
 - P7E

- P7G
- P7J
- P7K
- P7L
- P0T
- P0S

4. Contact Information

Name of person completing survey

Position/Title

Email Address

5. Is your organization a head office or a branch?

- Head Office
- Branch

6. At what stage of the life-cycle is your organization?

- Start-up
- Growth
- Established

7. Select the industrial sector in which you operate:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting
- Mining, quarrying and oil and gas extraction
- Utilities
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale trade
- Retail Trade

- Transportation and warehousing
- Information and cultural industries
- Finance and insurance
- Real estate and rental and leasing
- Professional, scientific and technical services
- Management of companies and enterprises
- Administration and support, waste management and remediation services
- Educational Services
- Healthcare and Social Assistance
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Other Services (except public administration)
- Public administration

If other, please specify

8. Does your company participate in Workplace Wellness Programs?

- Yes
- No

9. What is the total number of employees within your organization?

10. Of the total number of people you employ, how many are in the following age groups and categories?

This question helps us in several ways:

1. *It gives a count of the number of people you employ in total, which not only tells us the size of your organization--an important factor in determining workforce patterns--but it also gives us the ability to broadly measure employment growth and decline in your sector and location annually.*
2. *It allows us to monitor patterns in employment status, which has become an increasingly important measurement as businesses and organizations in general are clearly facing new long-term labour-cost pressures and realities.*
3. *As the boomer population has begun moving into retirement, and will continue to do so over the next two decades, the answers to this question will allow us to more accurately identify the demographic shifts and patterns by sector and location in our economic region.*

Employee type defined:

Permanent employee: an employee who has no set termination date.

Non-Permanent employee: an employee who has a set termination date (temporary or seasonal).

Full-time employee: working 30 or more hours per week, excluding overtime. **Part-time employee:** working less than 30 hours per week, excluding overtime.

Independent contractor: a person providing products or services under contract but for whom the completion of a T4 statement is not required.

(Please note that we understand it may be very difficult to answer this question precisely in some if not all of the categories, so your best estimate is acceptable here.)

Please leave corresponding box blank if the number is zero.

	Permanent Full-time	Permanent Part-time	Temporary Full-time	Temporary Part-time	Independent Contractor
Under 25					
25 to 44					
45 to 54					
55 to 64					

65 and older					
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Section B: Labour Turnover and Recruitment Methods

This section is designed to identify specific patterns in labour turnover, hard-to-fill positions, and recruitment methods and challenges particular to your sector and location.

Please answer the following questions in this section as accurately and completely as possible; and remember that for the purpose of this survey, consider only paid employees (those receiving a T4 slip) for the location identified in question 1.

11. Did your organization experience any separations over the last 12 months?

Separations are defined as retirements, dismissals, permanent layoffs, temporary layoffs and other separations.

If the answer is "No", please skip to Question #13.

- Yes
- No

12. Of the total number of separations, how many were in the following categories?

Please leave corresponding box blank if the number is zero.

	Quits	Retirement	Temporary Layoffs	Other
Managers and Executives				
Professionals (eg. Engineers, Accountants)				
Technical				
Trades (Journeyman)				
Apprentices				
Sales and Marketing				
Administrative and Clerical				
Production Worker				
Service Worker				
Other				

13. Did your organization hire anyone over the last 12 months?

A hire is simply defined as an open position filled.

If the answer is "No", please skip to Question #24.

- Yes
- No

14. Of the total number of hires, how many were in the following categories?

Please leave corresponding box blank if the number is zero.

	Permanent Full-time	Permanent Part-time	Temporary Full-time	Temporary Part-time	Independent Contractor
Managers and Executives					
Professionals (eg. Engineers, Accountants)					
Technical					
Trades (Journey person)					
Apprentices					
Sales and Marketing					
Administrative and Clerical					
Production or Service Workers					
Service Worker					
Other					

15. How many of your new hires were post-secondary grads?

16. What type of post-secondary institute did your new grad hires graduate from?

- College
- University

17. a) Please list the occupations (up to 3) for which you hired the most employees over the last 12 months:

Please provide job title, e.g. civil engineer, IT specialist, waiter/waitress, financial advisor, etc.

Occupation 1

Occupation 2

Occupation 3

b) As well as the total number of people hired for each occupation over the last 12 months:

Please re-enter the job title.

The occupations identified in this answer, will become variables in questions 18, 19, 20, 23 and 35.

	Job title	Total hired
Occupation 1	<input style="width: 300px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 150px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Occupation 2	<input style="width: 300px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 150px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>
Occupation 3	<input style="width: 300px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 150px; height: 25px;" type="text"/>

18. What recruitment methods were used to help fill the following positions?

Please check all that apply.

	Occupation 1	Occupation 2	Occupation 3
Word of mouth/personal contacts/referrals/informal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

networks			
On-site job signs or posters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unsolicited resumes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Company's own internet site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online job boards/postings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
On-site recruitment at schools, colleges, or universities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job fairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade or professional association publications/sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government employment centres or websites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Non-government or community employment service centres or websites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Executive search companies or temporary help agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspaper ads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If other, please specify:

(e.g., if positions were filled internally, including transfers from other locations, or by rehire or recall from layoff or any other form of separation, etc.)

Please state the job title before specifying the corresponding reason.

19. Which of the following geographic areas were targeted during the recruitment of the following positions?

Please check all that apply.

	Occupation 1	Occupation 2	Occupation 3
Within the local area (Thunder Bay Census Metropolitan Area)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Within the province	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Within the rest of Canada	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internationally	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. Did you receive any assistance from a free employment service agency representing one of the following groups when recruiting for these occupations?

Please check all that apply.

	Occupation 1	Occupation 2	Occupation 3	Other Occupations
Immigrants and visible minorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth (15-24 years of age)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Persons with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aboriginals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older workers (55 and older)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. Did you use a paid recruitment agency?

- Yes
- No

22. Were any of these positions hard-to-fill?

Hard-to-fill positions are positions for which the search for workers takes longer than usual or lasts longer than originally planned.

If the answer is "No", please skip to Question #24.

- Yes
- No

Were any other positions hard to fill? Please specify:

23. Please select the reasons that the following positions were hard to fill:

Select all that apply, and please leave the corresponding column blank if there were no hard-to-fill positions for the occupation.

	Occupation 1	Occupation 2	Occupation 3	Other Occupations
No applicants at all	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not enough applicants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicants not meeting qualifications (education level/credentials)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicants not meeting skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicants not meeting work experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicants not meeting motivation, attitude, or interpersonal abilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applicants not meeting language requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inability to assess a foreign educational qualification or credential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inability to compete with other employers due to pay and benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inability to compete with other employers due to promotion opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inability to compete with other employers due to nature of work (seasonal, shift work, irregular hours, job content)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inability to compete with other employers due to remote location/poor public transit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No local qualified applicants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If other, please specify:

Please state the job title before specifying the corresponding reason.

24. Do you plan on hiring anyone over the next 12 months?

If the answer is “No”, please skip to Question #27.

- Yes
- No

25. Of the total number of planned hires, how many do you expect will be in the following categories?

Please leave corresponding box blank if the number is zero.

	Full-time	Part-time	Independent Contractor
Managers and Executives			
Professionals (eg: Engineers, Accountants)			
Technical			
Trades (Journeyman)			
Apprentices			
Sales and Marketing			
Administrative and Clerical			
Production Worker			
Service Worker			
Other			

26. Please select the main reason you anticipate job openings in the following occupation groups over the next 12 months:

	Retirements	Expansion or Restructuring	Technological change	Other	N/A
Managers and Executives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professionals (eg: Engineers, Accountant)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Technical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trades (Journeyman)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Apprentices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sales and Marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administrative and Clerical	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Production Worker	<input type="radio"/>				
Service Worker	<input type="radio"/>				
Other	<input type="radio"/>				

If other occupations, please identify:

If other reason, please identify:

Section C: Skill Shortages, Training and Education Needs

This section is designed to identify specific patterns in skills, training and education requirements that are challenges particular to your sector and location.

Please answer the following questions in this section as accurately and completely as possible.

27. How do you rate the availability of qualified workers in Thunder Bay (Census Metropolitan Area)?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

28. What skills, training, and education needs are in greatest demand today?

In the "applicants for employment" box, please list only the needs that differ from those of your current employees.

	In your employees	In applicants for employment
Job Related Skills		
Training/Certification		
Education (area of study & level)		

29. What skills, training, and education needs will be in greatest demand in the future?

Please only respond to this question if there is anything new to add to the previous question.

	In your employees	In applicants for employment
Job Related Skills		
Training/Certification		
Education (area of study & level)		

30. Was your organization able to provide or support ongoing training and education opportunities for your employees last year?

"Provide" means offering training/education directly; "support" can mean funding, allowing a flexible work schedule, and/or any other incentive for your employees to seek the skills and knowledge necessary to be more productive.

If the answer is "No", please skip to Question # 34. If the answer is "Yes", then exclude Question #34.

- Yes
- No

31. Training Needs:

a) What are the 3 positions in which your organization provides the most direct training/education for?

For this question as well as question 2, please give the job title (e.g. civil engineer, IT specialist, waiter/waitress, financial advisor, etc.) and note the specific skills or areas of knowledge you are looking to enhance the most.

	Job Title	Training Needs
Occupation 1		
Occupation 2		

Occupation 3		
--------------	--	--

b) What are the most common sources of training/education for each occupation identified in question 1?

Please check all that apply.

	Occupation 1	Occupation 2	Occupation 3
College (including continuing studies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University (including continuing studies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Distance/online education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industry and professional association	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peer-to-peer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
On-the-job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If other, please specify by stating the job title with the corresponding source:

c) How do you support training/education for each occupation identified in question 1?

Please check all that apply.

	Occupation 1	Occupation 2	Occupation 3
Fund it (fully or partially)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Offer flexibility in work schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supply information on career advancement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If other, please specify by stating the job title with the corresponding support measure.

32. What are the greatest challenges/barriers that prevent your employees from receiving ongoing training and education?

Please check all that apply.

- Cost
- Awareness of existing training programs
- Awareness of training support programs
- Relevant training is not offered locally (Thunder Bay CMA)
- Distance to travel to facility
- Losing trained employees to other businesses
- Awareness of legislated training
- Loss of productivity during training time
- Other, please specify _____

33. What are the top 3 training needs for your employees?

34. If "no" to the previous question (Q. #30), what are the greatest challenges/barriers that prevent your employees from receiving ongoing training and education?

Please check all that apply.

- Cost
- Awareness of existing training programs
- Awareness of training support programs
- Relevant training is not offered locally (Thunder Bay CMA)
- Distance to travel to facility
- Losing trained employees to other businesses
- Awareness of legislated training
- Loss of productivity during training time
- Other, please specify _____

35. What is the minimum level of education required for the following occupations?

Insert the Occupations that were identified in Question #17.

	Occupation 1	Occupation 2	Occupation 3
High school diploma or equivalent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some postsecondary education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trade certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
College diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Undergraduate degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional accreditation or graduate degree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

36. What is the minimum level of education required for new hires in the following occupational categories?

	High school diploma or equivalent	Some postsecondary education	Trade certificate	College diploma	Undergraduate degree	Professional accreditation or graduate degree
Managers and Executives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professionals (eg: Engineers, Accountants)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trades (Journeyman)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apprentices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sales and Marketing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative and Clerical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Production Worker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Service Workers	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>					

37. Please select the top 3 competencies required for most of your employees:

	Current Employees	Future Employees
Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analytical/research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication (both oral and written)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teamwork/interpersonal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work ethic, dedication, dependability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time management or organizational	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem solving, reasoning, creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-motivated/ability to work with little or no supervision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professionalism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Willingness to learn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

38. Please select the top 3 competencies required for your hard to fill positions:

	Current Employees	Future Employees
Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analytical/research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication (both oral and written)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teamwork/interpersonal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work ethic, dedication, dependability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time management or organizational	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Problem solving, reasoning, creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-motivated/ability to work with little or no supervision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professionalism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Willingness to learn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

39. Does your organization provide any workplace-relevant training to students and future workers through any of the following opportunities?

	Paid Co-op or Internship	Unpaid Co-op or Internship	Mentoring
High School	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
University	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Job Seeker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you or your organization employs journeymen and/or apprentices, please answer the following two questions:

40. Is the ratio of apprentices to journeymen appropriate/correct in your opinion?

- Yes
- No

41. Would you hire more apprentices if the ratio were lower?

- Yes
- No

42. Please share any comments that you wish to make:

If you would like a copy of the survey results, please give us your name and email address.

Name	
Email address	

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the EmployerOne Survey.