



North Superior
Workforce Planning Board

employerone
SURVEY



Thunder Bay District

2015 EmployerOne Survey Results



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This Employment Ontario project is funded by the Ontario government.

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2015 EMPLOYER ONE SURVEY PARTNERS:



North Superior
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NISHNAWBE ASKI
DEVELOPMENT FUND



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all employers for taking the time to complete the 2015 EmployerOne Survey. You have provided us with some valuable insight that allows us to continue working together, moving forward to build communities through Workforce Development.

We would like to acknowledge our partners: Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission, Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund, Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, and Thunder Bay Ventures.

A special thank you to Dr. Chander Shahi, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Natural Resources Management and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies at Lakehead University, and his students from the 2015 class of Natural Resource Economics for assisting in surveying employers, and presenting preliminary findings to assist in the analysis of the survey results.

We would like to thank the Northern Policy Institute for their partnership and continued support. We would also like to acknowledge Sam Dirksen, Marketing Coordinator Intern of The Labour Market Group for her creative design work, the assistance of Tom Zizys and James Cuddy for data analysis and labour market expertise as well as Gilles Dignard for his translation services.

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Executive Summary

North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) annually undertakes an analysis of various indicators of the local labour market. NSWPB participates in formal and informal consultations with a broad spectrum of community stakeholders to validate the statistical analysis of local data and to collect anecdotal evidence from the stakeholder's perspective to gain insight into their realities of the labour market.

Through ongoing engagement with community stakeholders, two priorities have emerged. There is a need to increase employer engagement to gain a broader perspective and a need for the development of a deeper understanding of the human resource challenges faced by employers. Having direct contact with local employers provides real time, current information versus statistical data collected at disparate and lengthy intervals. Analyzing various sources of data may not present a true reflection of the labour market state as the data may be out of date or missing key indicators.

In order to supplement available information, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) provided planning boards with funding to administer the Employer One Survey. Despite many efforts to reach out to employers in the Thunder Bay district, just over 100 completed surveys were returned. This was an increase in the number of surveys completed from the previous year, which may be attributed to the targeted area being expanded and the survey being distributed in both official languages.

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. Here is a snapshot of the 2015 *EmployerOne* Survey results:

- EmployerOne respondents represented business across a range of industries and employees across various occupation types;
- Employers indicated that 53% of their workforce are full-time workers, while 74% of their employees were between the ages of 25 and 55 years old
- Two main reasons employees separated from their jobs were due to quitting and retirements 70% of employers plan on hiring in the next 12 months anticipating large sources of these job openings to be a result of expansion/restructuring and retirements
- Hiring challenges among employers can be largely attributed to a skills shortage (i.e., applicants who do not meet skills, work experience and educational requirements) or a lack of labour force participation (i.e., not enough applicants and applicants who do not meet motivation, attitude or interpersonal skill requirements)
- 63% of respondents felt the availability of qualified workers was either 'Fair' or 'Poor.'
- Majority of employers use online job boards/postings and word of mouth to recruit employees
- The top competencies required for current employees include work ethic, dedication and dependability; communication skills (both oral and written); and self-motivation.
- 85% of employers provide or support ongoing training and educational opportunities for their employees
- Roughly a quarter of respondents suggested that a lack of qualified job candidates was the most important work force issue they face.

Introduction

Real-time labour market information is critical to understanding the current human resource demands and needs of local employers, as well as, projecting occupational requirements for the future. Knowing what labour market issues exist locally can assist Employment Ontario service providers in various ways, such as; better job matching, assisting post-secondary institutions in providing relevant education and specialized training for various occupations, and informing community organizations of labour market trends and economic development opportunities. In addition, the information assists employers and stakeholders in working towards solutions that will result in the attainment of a skilled workforce.

In order to for the NSWPB to better match local labour supply to demand; it is imperative to have real time demand identified by the Thunder Bay district employers. In 2014, the MTCU requested workforce planning boards administer the previously piloted (2014) EmployerOne Survey. MTCU provided funding to each northern board to promote and implement the survey. North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) is 1 of the 6 northern local boards who conducted the survey. For more information on NSWPB please visit the website at: www.nswbp.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.

Are you an EMPLOYER facing workforce Development Challenges?

Help us understand your Human Resource requirements by completing the EmployerOne Survey!

The EmployerOne Survey will be available from August 1st - November 30th, 2015



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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 launched the 2015 Survey in August with an end date of December 2015. However, we extended the deadline until mid January to increase participation. This report summarizes the methodology of the survey as well as the findings in aggregate form.

Outreach Strategies

Various outreach strategies were implemented to maximize employer participation in the EmployerOne survey. For consistency in branding the EmployerOne logo was used for promotional materials such as banners, brochures, posters, emails and social media. This year to improve accessibility to the survey we launched a website domain: www.employeroneresurvey.ca

One new strategy was to introduce a “Workplace Wind-Up” event by randomly selecting employers who completed the survey to recognize their participation and the NSWPB staff delivered a catered coffee break. This provided the opportunity for direct consultations with local employers. Additional outreach activities included: attending employer related events, telephone calls, emails and in-person employer visits to directly interact with local employers.



Bruno's Contracting: Workplace Wind-Up Winner, thank you for participating in our EmployerOne survey.

NSWPB EmployerOne Survey Radio Ad

Are you an employer? We need your help!

Local businesses hold the pieces to the workforce development puzzle.

The North Superior Workforce Planning Board is calling all employers to complete a short survey to help us better understand your needs. Share your workforce issues and the challenges you face so we can help your business succeed.

Visit employeroneresurvey.ca to fill out your anonymous survey today. Take 10 minutes of your time and you will be entered into a draw for this month's "workplace windup"! Remember we need to hear what you have to SAY so please visit employeroneresurvey.ca

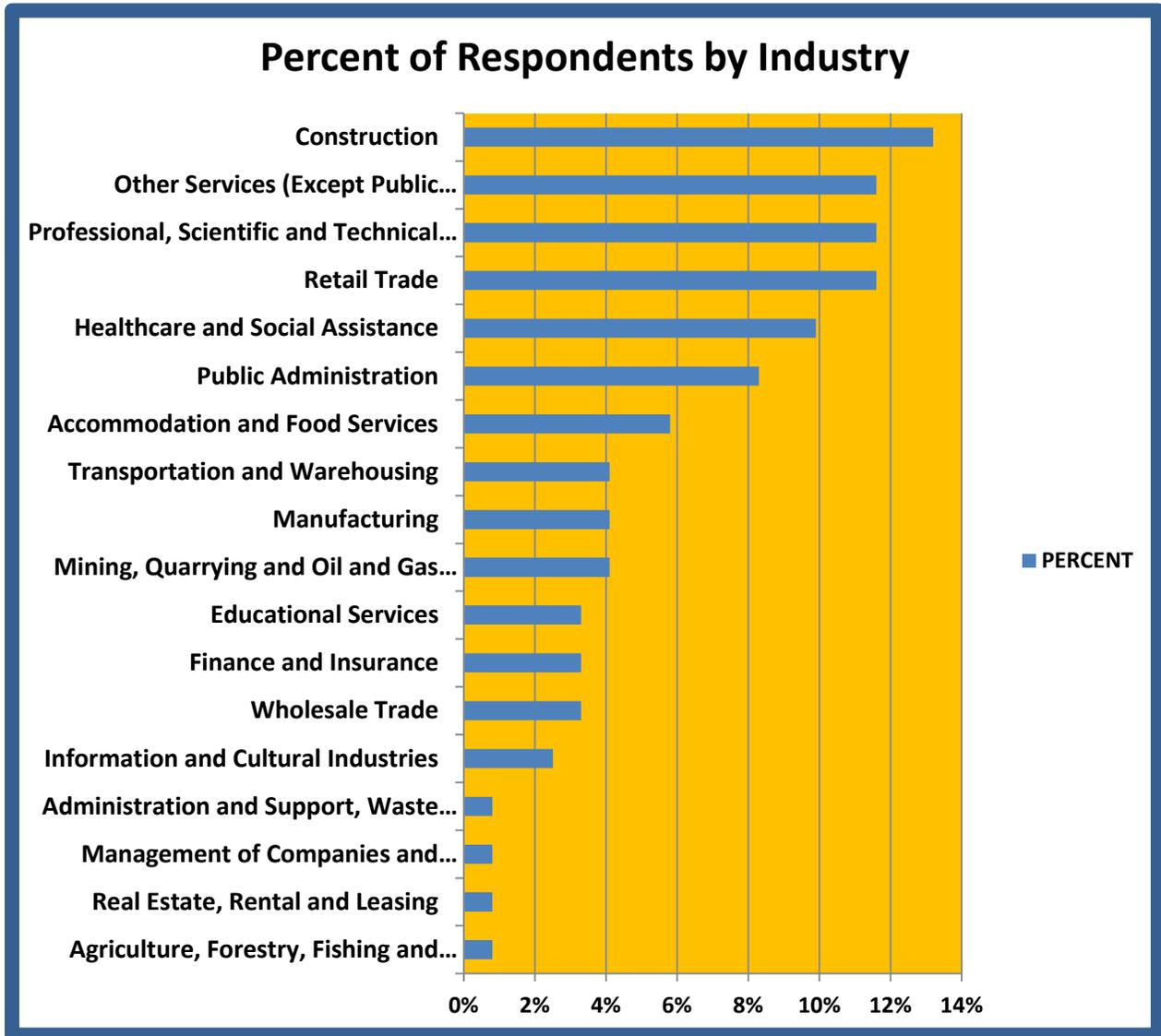
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Survey Findings

Profile of Respondents

In total, 121 employers started the survey and 114 completed it, with a variable number of respondents for each question. Of the 121 respondents, 24 had indicated that they also completed the EmployerOne survey the previous year. This equates to a 20% return of previous participants.

Figure 1: Number and percent of Respondents by Industry



Based on the distribution of sectors the EmployerOne survey has fair representation of all employers for this year’s survey. In review, we did receive 0% completed surveys in the sectors of Utilities and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation which does not allow for representation in these sectors. This is an area we will target in future surveys.

Respondents reflected a range of industries and there are instances where the survey distribution is quite close to the actual distribution of firms by industry in the study area. The following compares the percentage distribution of businesses in the North Superior Workforce Planning Board’s area (Thunder Bay District) to Statistics Canada’s Canadian Business Counts, June 2015.

Table 1: Percent of respondents by number of employees compared to actual percentage

	1-4 employees	5-19 employees	20-99 employees	100+ employees
Survey	18%	36%	30%	16%
Actual	47%	37%	14%	2%

Actual figures from Statistics Canada’s Canadian Business Counts, June 2015

The distribution of respondents by number of employees shows a far greater proportion of respondents with a larger number of employees compared to the actual figures, particularly among those firms with more than 20 employees. In fact, 19% of the 100 employees with more than 100 employees in the Thunder Bay District participated in this EmployerOne survey.

The survey respondents largely represent older firms, most of which were over 10 years old. In fact, 9 of the organizations that participated in the survey indicated that their business was more than 100 years old.

Table 2: Age of Company

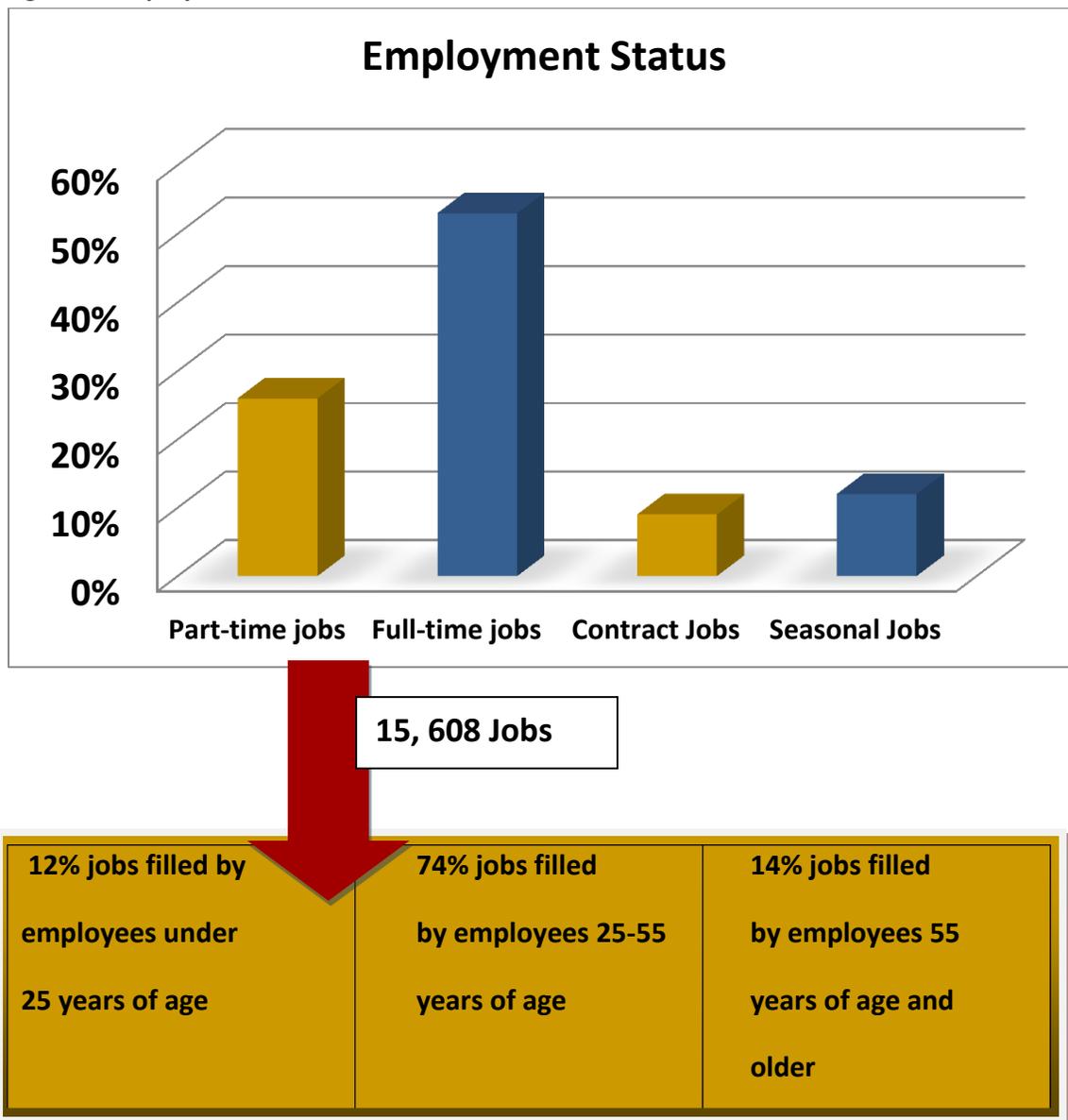
Age of Company:	Less than 2 years old	Between 2 and 5 years old	Between 6 and 10 years old	Between 11 and 20 years old	Over 20 years old
Number of Surveys completed:	5	9	11	27	65

Employee Demographics

Overall, the respondents represented 15,608 employees which can also represent the number of jobs. In the 2011 National Household Survey, Thunder Bay District accounted for 67,975 jobs. While the number of jobs may have increased over the last four years, the respondents in the survey are evidently responsible for approximately 25% of all local jobs.

The following chart is a breakdown of the employment status and age cohort representing employees of survey respondents. Roughly 53 percent of employees were working full-time positions, and approximately three-quarters of all employees were between 25 and 55 years of age.

Figure 2: Employment Status



Number of Hires and Separations over the last 12 months

Separations:

120 companies provided an answer regarding whether they had experienced a separation in the previous year. Of these, 70% reported a separation in the past year. The total separations amounted to 1,298, resulting in an annual turnover rate of 8.4%. It would appear that with a large percentage of separations employers would potentially experience higher than expected recruitment, orientation and training costs if retention is the main issue.

Overall, Quits account for just under half of all separations, with the rest almost evenly dispersed among the other categories.

17% of all separations are a result of retirements which means many skilled workers have left the workforce; while in the north the average proportion was 14%.

Table 3: Number of separations, by occupational category and reason for separations:

	Quit	Retirement	Temp Lay-off	Perm Lay-off	Dismissal	Other	TOTAL
Managers & Executives	24	13	0	4	7	1	49
Professionals	67	23	0	3	3	29	125
Technical	17	10	5	2	8	7	49
Trades	8	13	10	4	0	0	35
Apprentices	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Sales & Marketing	18	12	0	41	7	8	86
Admin & Clerical	37	26	0	5	6	9	83
Production Worker	52	15	102	0	12	7	188
Service Worker	108	19	13	61	30	18	249
Other	250	78	6	18	33	47	432
TOTAL	582	209	137	138	106	126	1298

Hires:

The following chart looks at the total hires over the previous 12 months by occupational categories and by type of employment compared to the number of separations that occurred in the same period.

Table 4: Total number of hires, comparison to total number of separations

	Full-time	Part-time	Contract	Seasonal	TOTAL	SEPARATIONS
Managers & Executives	39	0	2	0	41	49
Professionals	65	95	5	1	166	125
Technical	41	6	15	46	108	49
Trades	23	3	0	0	26	35
Apprentices	9	0	0	10	19	2
Sales & Marketing	44	37	1	20	102	86
Admin & Clerical	51	24	14	2	91	83
Production Worker	31	105	0	0	136	188
Service Worker	72	287	4	43	406	249
Other	128	500	170	117	915	432
TOTAL	503	1057	211	239	2010	1298

Overall, 81% of the respondents reporting hiring last year resulting in 2,010 hires across the identified occupational categories over the past 12 months. This is considerably higher than the 1,298 separations which indicate that the number of hires outpaced the number of separations in the defined time period.

A possible reason for the discrepancy may be the effect of seasonal and contract hires. The employer may not count this type of work as separations, but rather view seasonal and contract work as a natural conclusion to the term of employment. As well, the high number of part-time hires may reflect a succession of hiring in the same position as a result of turnover. The bulk of part-time hiring occurred in the Service Worker and Other categories. Part-time hires made up half of all hires and according to survey respondents make up 26% of the workforce.

The discrepancy between the separation and hiring numbers is primarily evident in two occupations: the Service Worker and Other categories. Major changes occurring with one employer has contributed to a high number in the “quits” and “other” category and a great deal of “other” part-time hires. One in four (24.5%) of the hires involved the re-hiring of previously laid-off workers. (Please note that 70% of these re-hires are the consequence of one employer which may distort how representative this sample is of the entire employer population.)

There were over 130 different occupations identified in the data collection this year. Of those identified, 61 occupations were listed as a single hire. The following chart represents 18 occupations identified by employers with at least 20 new hires in one specific occupation:

Table 5: Frequent hires by employers in various occupations in the past 12 months:

OCCUPATION	NUMBER	OCCUPATION	NUMBER
Personal Support Workers	163	Play Leaders	52
General Labourers	143	Fire Fighters	40
Sales Associates	87	Forest Technicians	28
Crossing Guards	71	Food & Beverage Servers	26
Registered Practical Nurses	71	Administrative Assistants	24
Tree Planters	65	Casual Residential Workers	23
Summer Students	64	Technical Services	22
Aide (Housekeeping or Dietary)	55	Flagger	20
Production Workers	53	Housekeeping	20

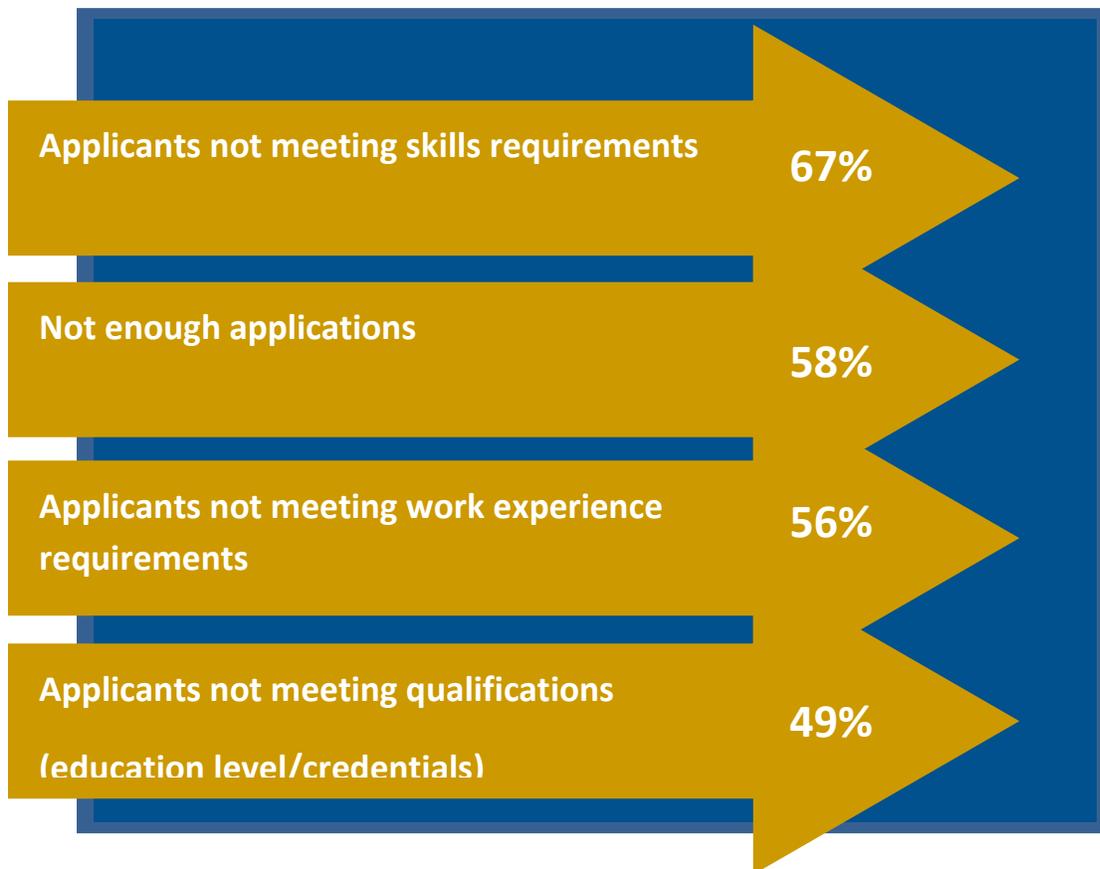
Hiring Challenges

Employers were further asked whether any of these high frequency hires were hard to fill. Exactly half (50%) of the business surveyed identified that they found positions hard to fill. The top four reasons cited are the same as last year only the ranking is different.

2014 Top four reasons cited for difficulty in hiring for high frequency hires:

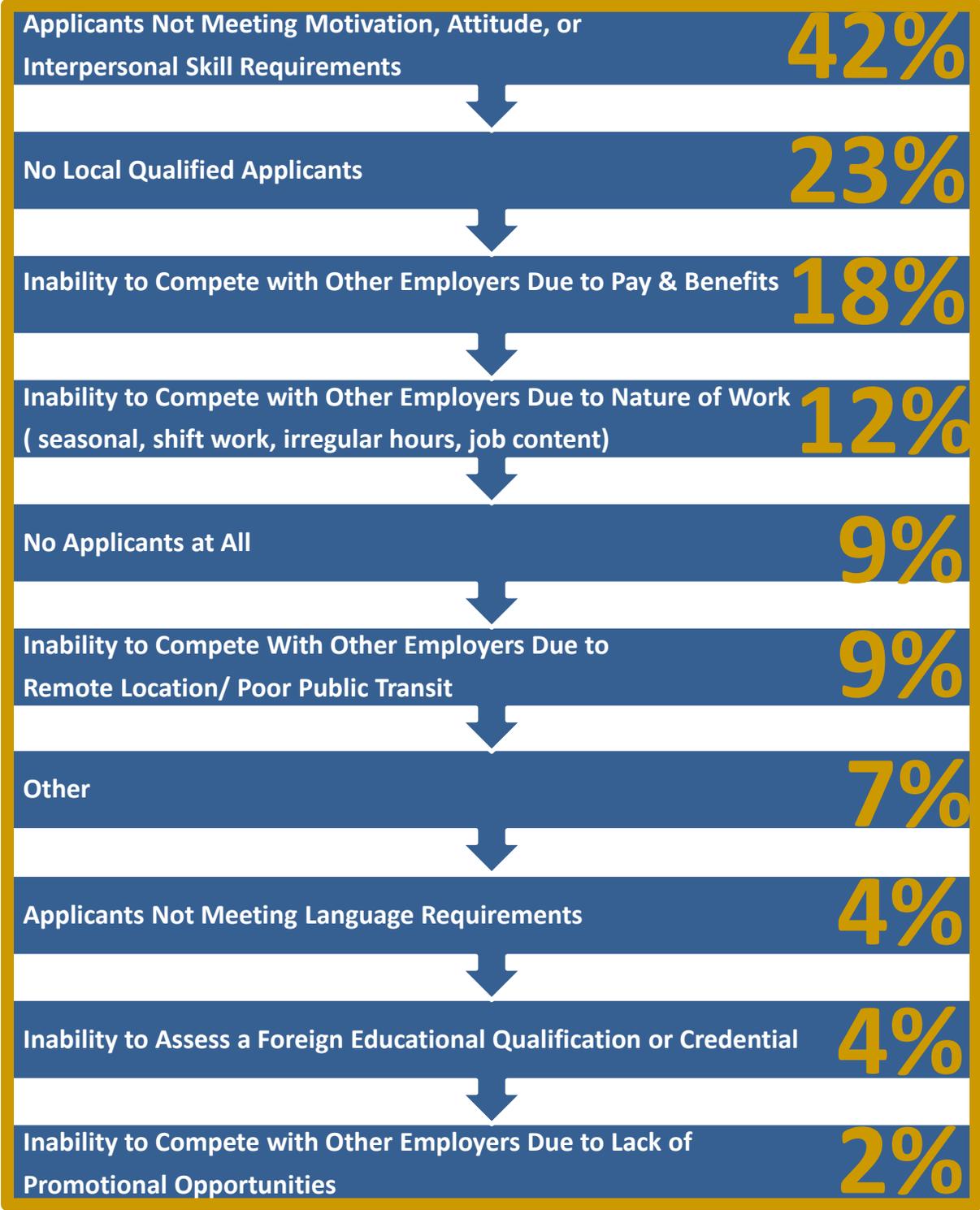
- ➔ Applicants not meeting qualifications (education level/ credentials)
- ➔ Applicants not meeting work experience requirements
- ➔ Applicants not meeting skills requirements
- ➔ Not enough applicants

2015 Top four reasons cited for difficulty in hiring for high frequency hires:



The proportion of employers claiming difficulties in hiring for high frequency positions by the specific reasons for their difficulties is outlined below.

Table 6: Reasons for which it is hard to recruit and the proportion of employers citing that reason



Availability of Qualified Workers

The responses to this year's survey are consistent with the results from the 2014 EmployerOne survey. Employers indicated that more than 60% of available workers had qualifications that they deemed were below fair. Of that percentage, 28% of the availability of qualified workers was rated as "poor" in the Thunder Bay District.

Figure 3: Availability of Qualified Workers



Recruitment Methods



Table 7: Recruitment Methods Used to find Job Candidates

Recruitment method	Frequency of use
Online Job Boards / Postings	63%
Word of Mouth / Contacts and Referrals / Informal Networks	62%
Company's Own Website	49%
Newspaper Ads	31%
On-Site Job Signs or Posters	25%
Government Employment Centres or Websites	25%
Unsolicited Resumes	22%
On-site Recruitment At Schools, Colleges, or Universities	21%
Other	12%
Non-Government or Community Employment Service Centres or Websites	11%
Job Fairs	10%
Trade or Professional Association Publications	10%
Executive Search Companies or Temporary Help Agencies	6%

In terms of frequency of use by employers, the top three methods were the same as last year's results, although on-line job boards have now leaped ahead of word-of-mouth as the most frequently used recruitment methods.

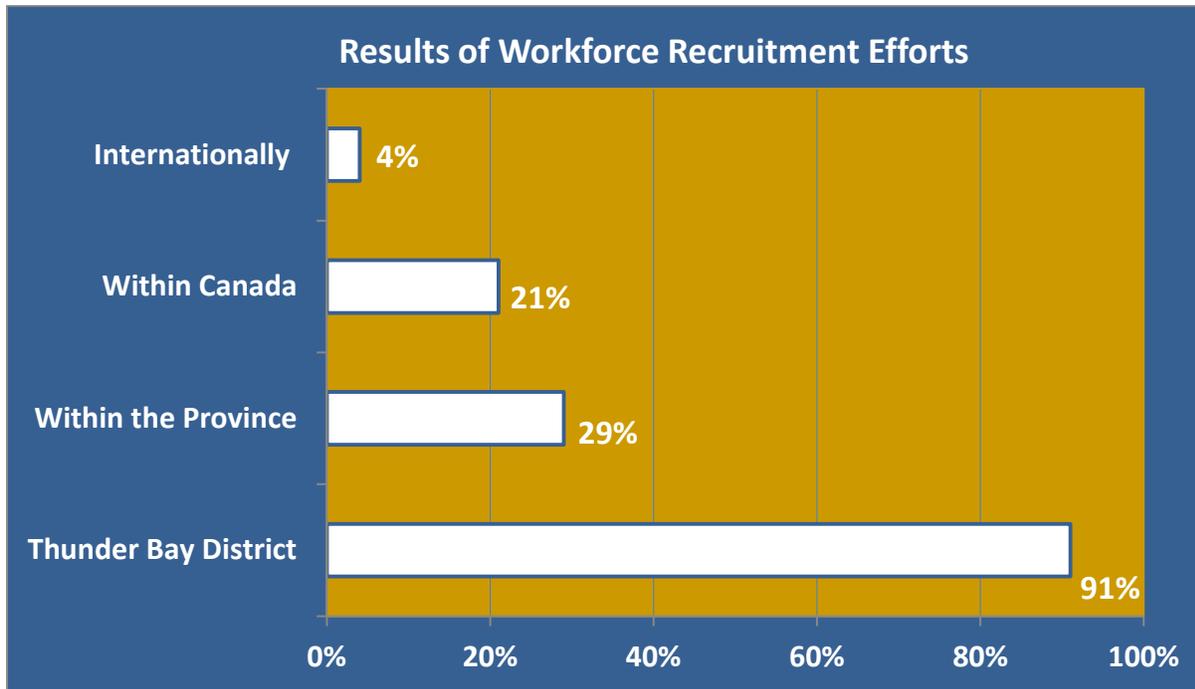
Only 25% use government employment centres/ websites and 11% use non-government or community employment service centres/ websites for their recruitments even though these services are available to assist them.

Respondents included using other methods for recruitment such as social media and Kijiji to advertise job opportunities.

Geographical Area of Recruitment

The majority of employers reported that workforce recruitment efforts were targeted within the Thunder Bay District, with considerable outreach extended to the Province and Canada as well. Very little recruitment extends internationally. Perhaps what is surprising is that 9% of the respondents claimed that they do not recruit within Thunder Bay. (The percentages add up to more than 100% because some employers listed more than one option.)

Figure 4: Results of Workforce Recruitment Efforts



Free Employment Service Agency Recruitment

Employers were less likely to receive employment services from an agency providing assistance on behalf of a particular demographic group. Surveyed businesses were asked if they received any assistance from free employment service agencies which include Employment Ontario service providers, 77% said they received no such assistance. Some employers received assistance in relation to more than one category:

Youth 15-24 years of age	18%
Aboriginals	10%
Persons of Disabilities	7%
Persons 55 year of age and Over	5%
Immigrants	5%

Expected Hires

Seven out of ten (70%) respondents indicated that they planned on hiring over the next 12 months, very similar to the hiring intentions in last year's survey (68%). However, the projected number of hires is considerably lower than last year's hires and, to a lesser extent, the previous survey's hires and projected hires.

Table 8: Projected number of hires in the coming year, compared to hires in past year

	Full-time	Part-time	Contract	Seasonal	TOTAL PROJECTED HIRINGS	PAST YEAR HIRINGS	2014 PROJECTED HIRINGS	2014 ACTUAL HIRINGS
Managers & Executives	14	2	1	0	17	41	16	39
Professionals	57	16	0	7	80	166	113	124
Technical	21	5	1	10	37	108	28	27
Trades	44	4	3	8	59	26	74	40
Apprentices	19	0	0	0	19	19	14	17
Sales & Marketing	22	24	0	6	52	102	42	27
Admin & Clerical	14	4	0	2	20	91	30	52
Production Worker	27	65	0	100	192	136	354	455
Service Worker	72	61	0	12	145	406	363	192
Other	101	46	20	82	249	915	46	44
PROJECTED HIRINGS	391	227	25	227	870	2010	1080	1017
HIRINGS PAST YEAR	503	1057	211	239	2010			

Observations:

- There is a considerable shortfall between the expected hires for the coming year and the actual hires over the past year. There is a very large difference between the projected part-time hires for next year (227) and the actual part-time hires for last year (1057). There is also a considerable difference among the contract hires;
- The one employer responsible for the large number of part-time hires was not in a position to provide an estimate of hires for next year, which accounts for a large proportion of the shortfall;
- That being said, this discrepancy is different from last year, when the gap between actual hires and projected hires was negligible;
- All things considered, it would warrant further inquiry to determine if employers actually are more pessimistic about the coming year or if they are simply exercising caution in projecting future hiring.

Table 9: Employers identified the following reasons they would be hiring

	Managers and Executives	Professionals	Technical	Trades (Journey person)	Apprentices	Sales and Marketing	Administrative / Clerical	Production Workers	Service Workers	Other	TOTAL	2014 TOTAL
Retirements	6	4	7	8	2	1	4	1	2	2	37	20
Expansion/Restructuring	11	9	6	8	4	8	11	4	8	4	73	63
Technological Change	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Other	5	5	2	1	1	6	6	3	5	15	49	24
N/A	5	4	7	5	8	6	6	6	6	4	57	12
TOTAL	27	22	22	22	15	21	27	14	21	25	216	121

Approximately a third of new hires (73 out of 216) are the consequence of expansion or restructuring (last year the figure was around one half). Retirements account for another one out of six (37 out of 216) reasons for hiring, the same proportion as last year. What is noteworthy is that almost half of the responses (49 + 57, out of a total of 216) were either “Other” or “N/A”, suggesting that this question requires a few more options, the two most likely being “Replacement for a Separation” and “Seasonal Hires.”

Educational Requirements

Employers were asked to list the minimum educational attainment requirements for the broad occupational categories. The table below indicates the percentage distribution of the responses that required a particular minimum educational requirement broken down by occupational category.

Table 10: Minimum educational requirements by occupational categories

	NO NE	HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	SOME POST-SECONDARY	TRADES CERTIFICATE	COLLEGE DIPLOMA	UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE	PROFESSIONAL OR GRADUATE DEGREE
Managers and Executives	1%	8%	12%	5%	21%	28%	26%
Professionals (e.g.: Engineers)	4%	3%	4%	4%	16%	28%	40%
Technical	10%	11%	3%	16%	46%	13%	2%
Trades (Journey person)	5%	14%	0%	67%	12%	2%	0%
Apprentices	7%	31%	27%	22%	9%	2%	2%
Sales and Marketing	6%	10%	20%	2%	43%	18%	2%
Administrative and Clerical	2%	25%	20%	2%	43%	10%	0%
Production Workers	17%	39%	22%	6%	11%	0%	6%
Service Workers	25%	27%	18%	2%	16%	8%	4%

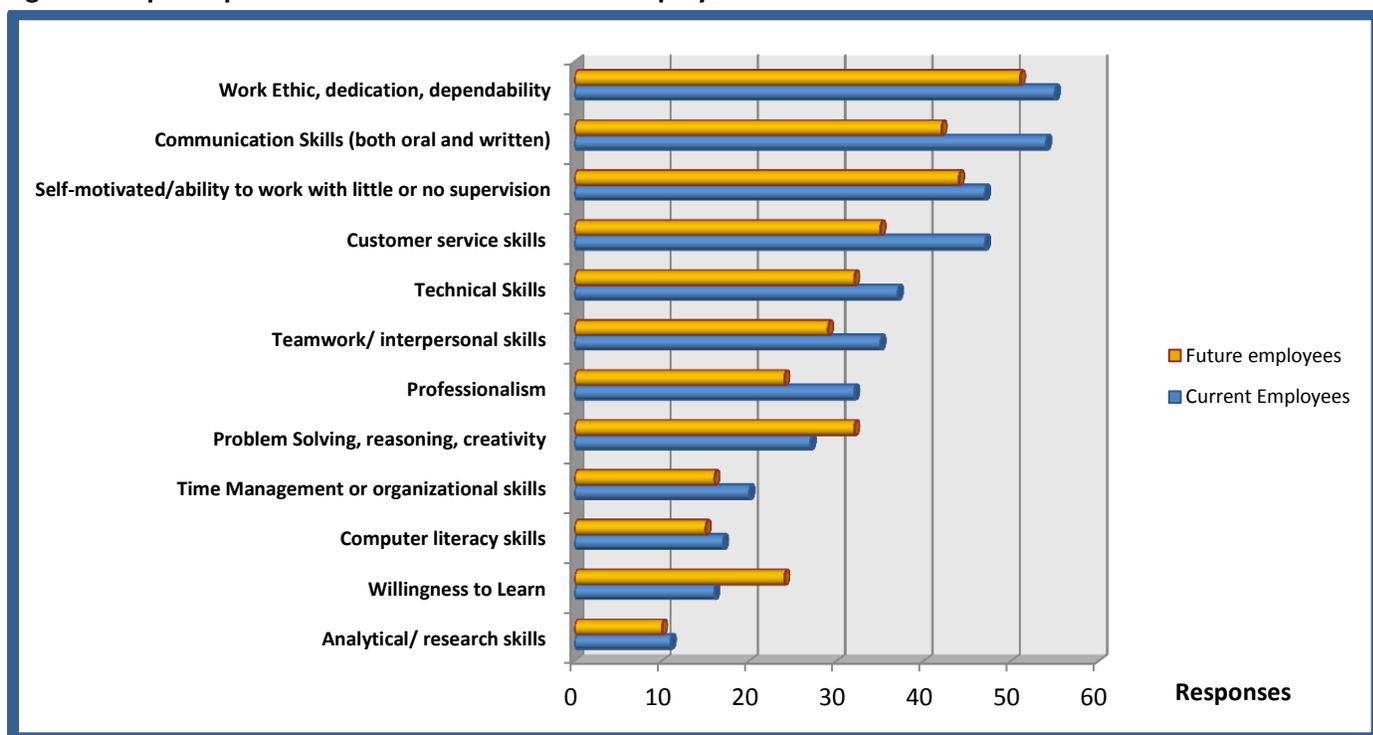
For certain occupations, one specific designation is the clear choice: 67% of employers expect a tradesperson to have a trade certificate. No certificate, a high school diploma or some postsecondary is accepted for a production worker or a service worker. By and large, managers are expected to have a college diploma or higher, and the same goes for professionals, with 40% of respondents expecting a professional degree.

Overall it appears that a high school diploma still counts as the minimum requirement for many lower skilled occupations, while a college diploma has more currency for higher level occupations.

Top Competencies for Current and Future Employees

Employers identified the top 3 competencies that their current and future workforce would need to possess for all jobs and hard-to-fill jobs:

Figure 5: Top Competencies for current and future employees



These competencies are listed in order of the total number of times they were named for current workers, although the ranking for future workers varies only a little. Work ethic and communication skills are cited the most, with self-motivation and customer service skills rounding out the top tier of skills. Following these soft skills, technical skills leads the middle-ranking cluster of required skills.

Last year's survey produced exactly the same top four ranking, with the slight difference that communication skills ranked fourth and customer service skills ranked second.

Training, Skills and Education Needs

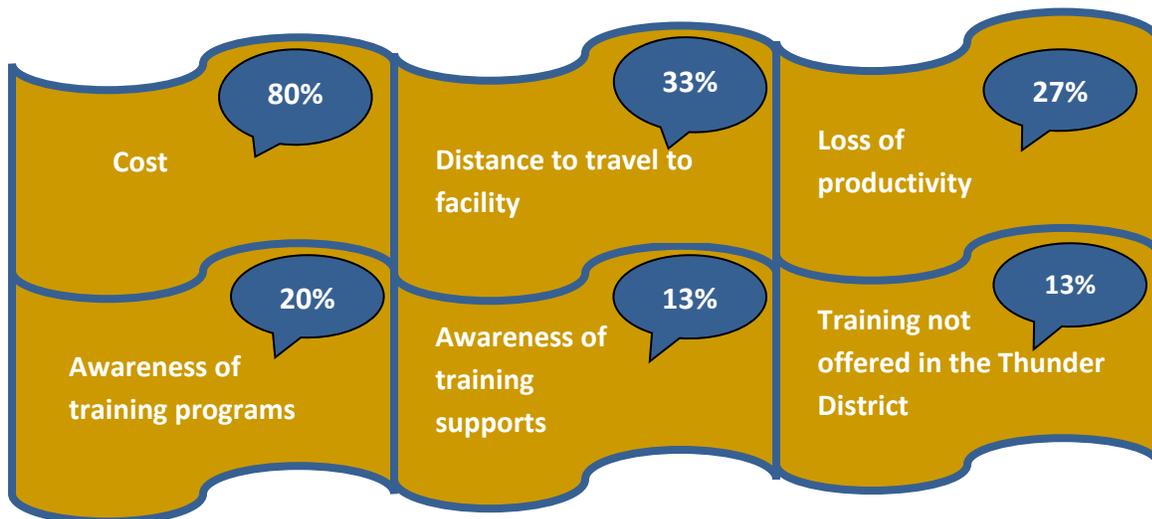
Barriers to Training:

85% of Employers

Said they provide or support ongoing training and educational opportunities for their employees!

Employers indicated the following as challenges/ barriers to employees receiving training or education in the workplace:

Figure 6: Barriers to Training



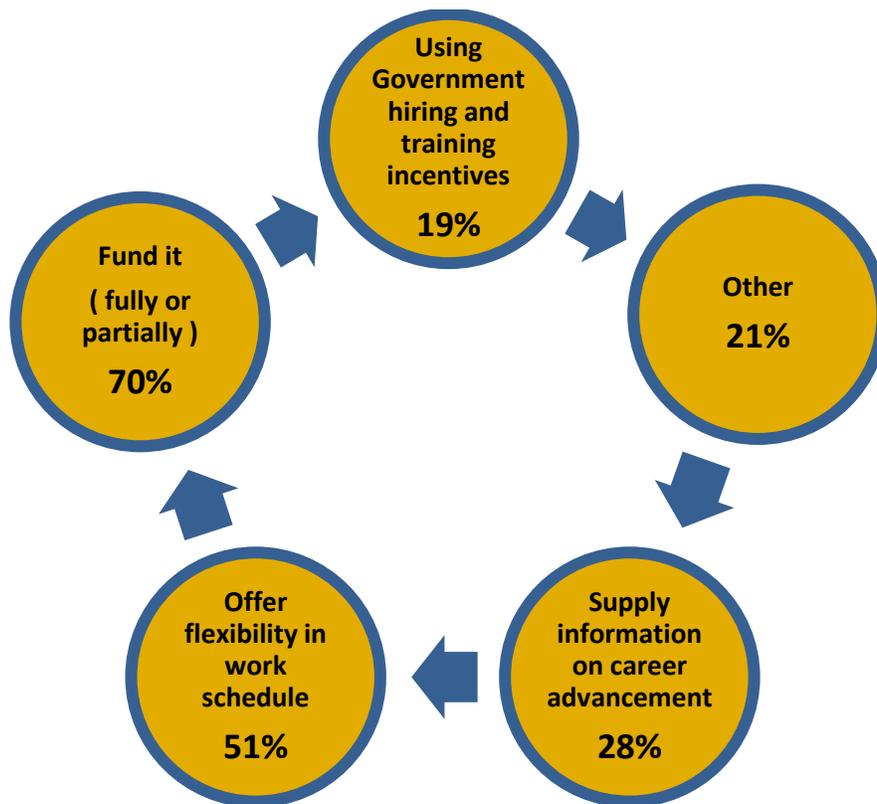
Cost was by far the biggest barrier for these employers, almost all of whom did not engage in training. This finding needs to be seen in context: 85% of the respondents responding to the question about training indicated that they did provide or support training and education opportunities for their employees, so that those employers not providing training for reasons of cost are a small proportion of all employers.

A concern often heard in discussions regarding the lack of training is the poaching of trained workers by other employers. However, this concern was only cited by 7% of those employers who did not engage in training.

Employer Supported Training and/or Education

Employers were asked in what specific ways they supported training or education; half (50%) of employers provided more than one support for training/education options to their employees. Therefore, the figures below add to more than 100%.

Figure 7: Percent of employers providing supports



Employers offer very concrete forms of support, either through funding the training (in whole or in part) or by providing flexibility in the work schedule, as opposed to simply providing information. There is limited reliance on government hiring and training incentives. The “Other” category primarily involved on-the-job training and, to a lesser extent, access to on-line training courses.

In terms of the sources or delivery methods for the training or education, by far the most common is on-the-job training; over half of the employers rely on their industry or professional associations, and conduct peer to peer training. These figures add to more than 100% because some employers identified more than one training method.

Table 11: Method or source of training/education for employees

On the Job	73%	Industry or professional association	55%
Peer to peer	51%	Distance/ online education	28%
College (including continuing studies)	27%	Other	21%
University (including continuing studiers)	13%		

60% of Employers offer workplace-relevant training to students and future workers

Table 12: Percentage of employers providing workplace experience opportunities

	Paid Co-op	Unpaid Co-op	Paid Internship	Unpaid Internship	Apprentices
High school student	9%	34%	3%	1%	5%
College student	11%	22%	12%	6%	12%
University student	9%	14%	16%	6%	8%
Job seeker	5%	3%	8%	2%	8%

40% of Employers provide Co-op placements for high school students (majority unpaid)

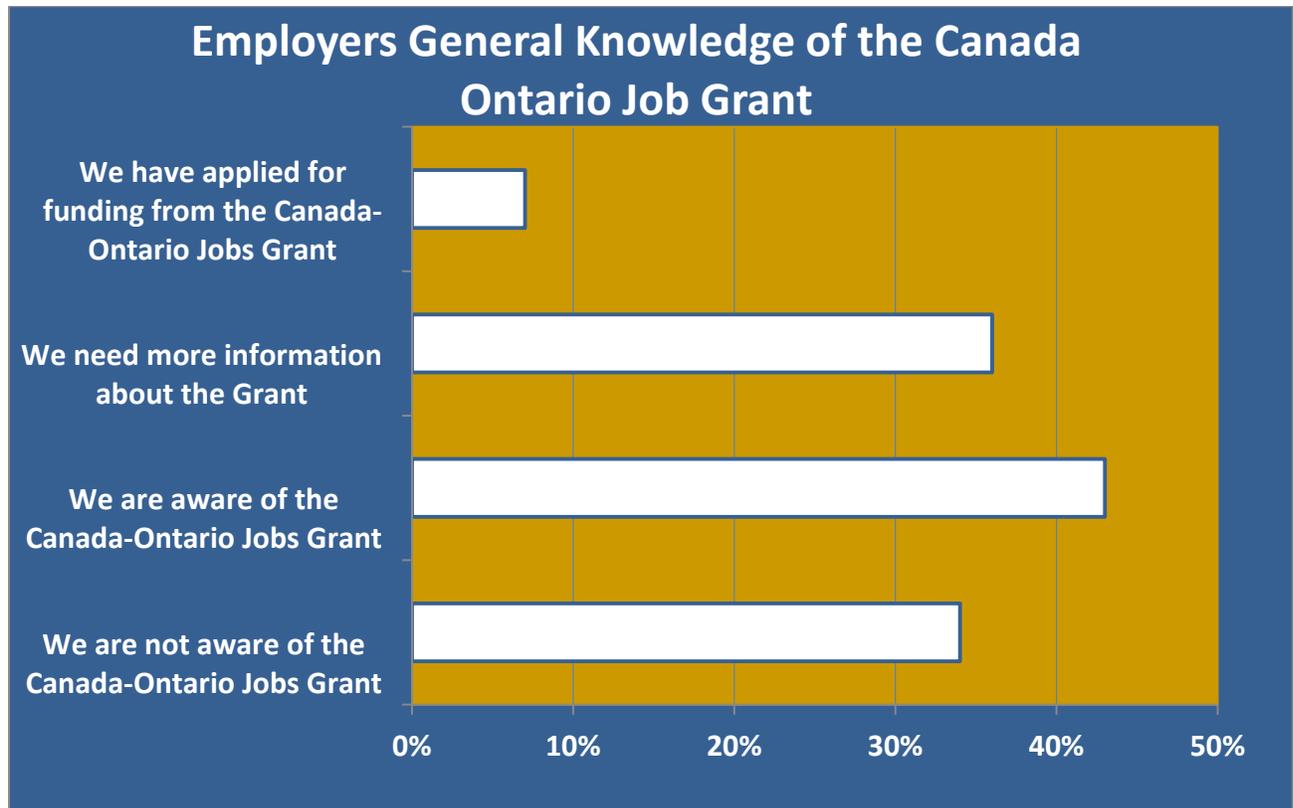
30% of Employers provide Co-op placements to college students (a third of which are paid)

In the case of internships, 80% are paid rather than unpaid

Canada-Ontario Jobs Grant:

In March 2014 Ontario signed the Canada-Ontario Job Fund Agreement with the federal government. The Canada Ontario Job Grant is described as financial support for employers in Ontario to develop their workforce through employer-driven training.

Figure 8: Canada Ontario Job Grant



Several employers chose more than one response so the overall responses do not equate to 100%. Of the employers that responded to the survey 15% had applied for funding and almost a third of these employers had not heard of the program.

Program Eligibility: Training Requests

Training supported through the Grant is driven by employer demand and must be directly related to the skills needs identified by the employer. Employers identify the types of training required to meet their skills needs and the individual(s) who will be trained.¹

1

http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/publications/cojg_employer_training_presentation_5_4_2015.pdf

Basic Skills:

Respondents were asked to rate the skill level of their recent hires and established workers in the following areas: reading, writing, math, and digital literacy, using the following scale below:

Table 13: Rating for basic skills of recent hires and established workers

	Extremely poor	Somewhat poor	Unsure	Somewhat satisfactory	Extremely Satisfactory	Total number of Responses
Reading	0	3	6	46	47	102
Math Skills	1	4	15	43	39	102
Communication	1	8	4	47	43	103
Digital Literacy	1	2	13	40	45	101

Employers appear satisfied with the basic skills of new hires and established workers.

- Over 80% of employers were somewhat or extremely satisfied with their reading, writing, math, and digital literacy abilities.

In fact, at least four out of ten are extremely satisfied with their workers for each of these skills

- 39% of employers were extremely satisfied with their math skills
- 46% of employers were extremely satisfied with their reading skills

Overall the percentage of employers who felt their workers' skills were either "somewhat poor" or "extremely poor" in the following areas:

- Reading: 3%
- Math skills: 5%
- Communication: 9%
- Digital literacy: 3%

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship Consortium

Employers were asked their opinion of the idea of an Apprenticeship Consortium as identified by the Apprenticeship Focus Group. The following text is how the concept was described in the survey:

Many small and medium sized businesses find it difficult to train apprentices due to limited capacity (e.g. not enough journeypersons to meet ratios, not enough work available, unable to provide full scope of practice requirements). An “apprenticeship consortium” encourages employers to collaborate to train apprentices. The consortium model has been successful in other regions of Ontario. It provides flexibility by sharing responsibilities for apprentices’ training and wages. Through this model, employers are not required to sign on as an MTCU apprentice sponsor. Please rate your organization’s level of interest in participating in a Thunder Bay apprenticeship consortium.

Table 14: Employers views regarding an apprenticeship consortium

Option	Number	Percent
We would be interested in participating in an apprenticeship consortium	14	19%
We would like to know more about the consortium model	30	42%
We would not be interested in participating	28	39%
	72	100%

There is certainly some interest in an apprenticeship consortium: one out of five (19%) said they would be interested and another two out of five (42%) said they would like to learn more. This insert provides a brief overview of the Apprenticeship Focus Group:



The Apprenticeship Focus Group brings together employers and employer associations, labour unions, educators, government, employment service providers, and other apprenticeship stakeholders in Northwestern Ontario. The Group works to build an evidence-based understanding of apprenticeship issues in the region, and launch strategies to address these issues.

Focus Group members bring decades of experience with the trades and Ontario's apprenticeship systems to the table. Read below to view our current membership, find information on upcoming and past meetings, or to ask to join the Focus Group.

FOCUS GROUP MEETINGS:

The Apprenticeship Focus Group meets regularly to discuss and initiate action on apprenticeship issues in Northwestern Ontario.

Overall Observations:

	<p>98 Employers provided comments and several common themes were voiced. Roughly a quarter of the comments (26 out of 98) made reference to the lack of qualified job candidates. The term “qualified” came in many forms: reliable, competent, motivated, experienced, skilled – in short, the comments spoke to an insufficient pool of job candidates who fit what the employer was looking for.</p>
	<p>10 Employers made specific mention of being able to hold onto the good employees, citing turnover and retention challenges.</p>
	<p>8 Employers made specific mention of the shortage of skilled tradespersons.</p>
	<p>8 Employers made mention of the challenge of being able to pay a competitive wages.</p>
	<p>4 Employers made mention of the challenge of being able to pay a competitive wage compared to larger institutions or public employers who offer more attractive compensation packages (including benefits)</p>

Employers were asked if they wished to work with the North Superior Workforce Planning Board in planning for workforce and labour market development. 112 responses were received with almost two-thirds (72) stating “yes”. In addition, 66 employers requested a copy of the survey results, demonstrating an interest in the survey findings.

Conclusion

The 2015 EmployerOne survey has provided some important data that validates many of the trends and characteristics we have been hearing across the region for several years now. In particular, the sentiment among employers in our region who responded to the survey is clear: there is a lack of qualified candidates for job openings. This is an important finding as it suggests there is a supply-side issue in the local labour market; while there are job vacancies in the region, many of them are unfortunately not being filled.

The 2015 EmployerOne Survey captures job openings from both the supply-side and the demand-side. On the supply-side, a large number of job separations among respondents were a result of individuals either quitting or retiring. A large number of individuals quitting their job are service workers. This phenomenon should be explored in greater detail to better understand why this is happening. On the other hand, retirements appear to be occurring across all occupational categories. As baby boomers continue to reach retirement age, we should continue to expect this to be a large source of job openings in the near future.

At anytime there may be a number of employed individuals that continually seek employment looking for new employment opportunities and/ or the possibility for career advancement.

On the demand-side, the main reason employers are anticipating job openings in the next 12 months are a result of expansion/restructuring and retirements. This is positive news for the local labour market. While some job openings are a result of separations (i.e., quitting and retiring), other job openings among survey respondents are expected to be created through growth (i.e., expansion) in particular industries.

As noted above, however, many of these employers are finding it a challenge to fill these openings. Among the survey respondents, the top five reasons employers found the position hard to fill included:

1. Applicants not meeting skills requirements
2. Not enough applications
3. Applications not meeting work experience requirements
4. Applicants not meeting qualifications (education level/credential)
5. Applicants not meeting motivation, attitude, or interpersonal skill requirements

These answers can be broken down into two important categories: *skills shortage* and *labour force participation*. Skills shortage can be understood as individuals who do not meet skills, work experience and educational requirements. On the other hand, labour force participation captures the discouraged

sentiment among the working age population who either lack the motivation, attitude, or interpersonal skills that are required for jobs, or are simply not participating in the workforce entirely.

Both of these findings are supported by the analysis conducted in our 2015-2016 Local Labour Market Plan which shows how lower levels of educational attainment and lower participation rates are prevalent in our local labour market as compared to Ontario and Canada as whole. 2 Addressing the skills shortages and encouraging the working age population to participate more in the labour market will be two fundamental challenges the region must address in order to fill the demand for jobs that are arising from several sources including a baby boom retirement and an anticipated expansion of some industries in the economy.

NSWPB is committed to improving conditions in local communities through collection and dissemination of local labour market information. As we continue to engage community partners; now more than ever we need to hear from employers. We want to ensure your voice is at the forefront of the local labour market planning process. We need to listen to your perspectives, understand your workforce needs and challenges so we can influence existing training, employment, education services to improve labour market conditions.

NSWPB will be working more closely with employers by conducting outreach and providing information sessions to employers, industry associations and sector groups to drive local approaches by working together, moving forward and building communities through workforce development.

2 Local Labour Market Plan prepared by North Superior Workforce Planning Board visit www.nswpb.ca/

Appendices

Appendix 1 – EmployerOne Poster



The poster features a large graphic of a person shouting into a megaphone, with the text 'employerone SURVEY' and 'ARE YOU AN EMPLOYER? We need your help!' prominently displayed. Below this, a dark blue banner contains the headline 'YOU HAVE THE MISSING PIECES TO OUR PUZZLE!' and a paragraph explaining the survey's purpose. A central photograph shows five diverse professionals (two men in hard hats, a woman in a lab coat, and two women in business attire) holding puzzle pieces. To the left of the photo are logos for 'NORTHERN ONTARIO WORKFORCE PLANNING' and 'EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO', along with a QR code. The bottom of the poster includes the survey URL 'www.employeronesurvey.ca', contact information for the North Superior Workforce Planning Board, and a small logo for the board.

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.

NORTHERN ONTARIO
WORKFORCE PLANNING

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO
This Employment Ontario project is funded by the Ontario government

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

Please contact us for more information

North Superior
Workforce Planning Board

Appendix 2 – EmployerOne Survey



Northern Ontario employerone Survey 2015

Help us better understand the issues and challenges facing your business by completing this survey.

Introduction

Survey Objective

North Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) is calling on employers like you to help us better understand the issues and challenges facing your business. The survey is designed to collect information from you on a range of workforce issues, including projected vacancies, hiring employees, recruitment strategies and challenges, as well as your perspective on candidate skills, education and training.

Filling in the employerone Survey

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

Confidentiality

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

A copy of the results will be made available at www.nswpb.ca in early 2016.

Need Help?

If at any point you require assistance, please contact Tracy Roblin, Project Coordinator at 1-807-346-2940 or by email at projects@nswpb.ca.

If you would prefer to have someone ask you the questions directly, please contact our office and a team member will set up an appointment to review the survey with you at a convenient time for you!



This Employment Ontario project is funded by the Ontario government.

Section A: Organization and Workforce Characteristics

This section is designed to help identify workforce needs and challenges that are particular to your industry and location.

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

Business Name:

Name of person completing survey:

Location of your Business / Company / Organization:

Community:

Did your organization complete this survey last year?

Yes No

What year was your organization established?

How did you hear about the employereone survey?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Directly from NSWPB | <input type="checkbox"/> | tbnewswatch.com |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Local Chamber of Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Please specify or explain) : |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Radio Ad | | |
-

Select the PRIMARY industrial sector in which you operate:

Please select ONLY 1

- 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 & Insurance
- Real Estate and Rental & Leasing Services
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Management of Companies & Enterprises
- Administration & Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services
- Educational Services
- Healthcare & Social Services
- Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- Accommodation & Food Services
- Public Administration
- Other Services (Except Public Administration)

If other, please specify or explain

Select the OTHER industrial sectors in which you operate:

Please select all that apply

- 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 & Insurance
- Real Estate and Rental & Leasing Services
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- Management of Companies & Enterprises
- Administration & Support, Waste Management, and Remediation Services
- Educational Services
- Healthcare & Social Services
- Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
- Accommodation & Food Services
- Public Administration
- Other Services (Except Public Administration)
- Not Applicable

If other, please specify or explain

Please indicate the total number of people you employ, and how many are in the following categories.

Full-Time Employee: Working 30 or more hours per week, excluding overtime.

Part-Time Employee: Working less than 30 hours per week, excluding overtime.

Contract: A person providing service or products under contract for whom a T4 statement is not required.

Seasonal: Employment that does not continue year-round, but usually recurs.

(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.

Total	Full-time	Part-time	Contract	Seasonal

What percentage (%) of your workforce is under the age of 25?

What percentage (%) of your workforce is over the age of 55?

Section B: Workforce Changes In The Last 12 Months

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

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

1A Did your organization experience any separations over the last 12 months?

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

Yes No

If you answered “No” to question 1A, please skip to question 2A

1B Please indicate the number of separations by category.

Please leave corresponding box blank if the number is zero.

Occupations	Quits	Retirements	Temporary Layoffs	Permanent Layoffs	Dismissals	Other Separations
Managers & Executives						
Professionals (eg. Engineers, Accountants)						
Technical						
Trades (Journey person)						
Apprentices						
Sales & Marketing						
Administrative & Clerical						
Production Workers						
Service Workers						
Other						

If other, please specify or explain:

2A Did your organization hire anyone over the last 12 months?

A hire is simply defined as an open position that has been filled.

Yes No

If you answered “No” to question 2A, please skip to question 11A

2B Of the total number of hires, how many were in the following categories?

Please leave corresponding box blank if the number is zero.

Occupations	Full-time	Part-time	Contract	Seasonal
Managers & Executives				
Professionals (eg. Engineers, Accountants)				
Technical				
Trades (Journey person)				
Apprentices				
Sales & Marketing				
Administrative & Clerical				
Production Workers				
Service Workers				
Other				

If other, please specify or explain:

3 Of the total number of hires in the past 12 months, how many were previously laid-off employees who were re-hired?

4 Please list the three occupations for which you hired the most employees over the last 12 months along with the total number of employees for each.

Please provide job title (eg. Civil Engineer, IT Specialist, Waiter / Waitress, Financial Advisor, etc.)

Job Title	Total Hired

5A Were any of these positions hard-to-fill?

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

Yes No

If you answered “No” to question 5A, please skip to question 6

5B Please select the reasons they were hard-to-fill.

Please select all that apply.

- No Applicants At All
- Not Enough Applicants
- Applicants Not Meeting Qualification Requirements (Educational Level / Credentials)
- Applicants Not Meeting Skills Requirements
- Applicants Not Meeting Work Experience Requirements
- Applicants Not Meeting Motivation, Attitude, or Interpersonal Abilities
- Applicants Not Meeting Language Requirements
- Inability To Assess A Foreign Educational Qualification or Credential
- Inability To Compete With Other Employers Due To Pay and Benefits
- Inability To Compete With Other Employers Due To Lack of Promotion Opportunities
- Inability to Compete With Other Employers Due to Nature of Work (Seasonal, Shift Work, Irregular Hours, Job Content)
- Inability To Compete With Other Employers Due To Remote Location / Poor Public Transit
- No Local Qualified Applicants
- Other

If other, please specify or explain:

6 For all positions you hired for, what recruitment methods were used to help fill these positions?

Please select all that apply.

- Word of Mouth / Personal Contacts / Referrals / Informal Networks
- On-Site Job Signs or Posters
- Unsolicited Resumés
- Company’s Own Internet Site
- Online Job Boards / Postings

- On-Site Recruitment at Schools, Colleges, or Universities
- Job Fairs
- Trade or Professional Association Publications / Sites
- Government Employment Centers or Websites
- Non-Government or Community Employment Services Centers or Websites
- Executive Search Companies or Temporary Help Agencies
- Newspaper Ads
- Other

If other, please specify or explain:

7 How do you rate the availability of qualified workers in the Thunder Bay District?

Please make ONLY 1 selection.

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

8 Which of the following geographic areas were targeted for recruitment?

Please select all that apply.

- Within the local area (Thunder Bay District)
- Within the Province
- Within the Rest of Canada
- Internationally

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

Please select all that apply.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrants and Visible Minorities | <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Youth (15-24 Years of Age) | <input type="checkbox"/> Older Workers (55 Years and Older) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Persons With Disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> No Assistance |

10 Did you use a paid recruitment agency (head hunter)?

- Yes No

11A Do you plan on hiring anyone over the next 12 months?

- Yes No

If you answered “No” to question 11A, please skip to question 13

11B 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.

Occupations	Full-time	Part-time	Contract	Seasonal
Managers & Executives				
Professionals (eg. Engineers, Accountants)				
Technical				
Trades (Journey person)				
Apprentices				
Sales & Marketing				
Administrative & Clerical				
Production Workers				
Service Workers				
Other				

If other, please specify or explain:

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

Please make ONLY 1 selection for each category

Occupations	Retirements	Expansion or Restructuring	Technological Change	Other	Not Applicable
Managers & Executives					
Professionals (eg. Engineers, Accountants)					
Technical					
Trades (Journey person)					
Apprentices					
Sales & Marketing					
Administrative & Clerical					
Production Workers					
Service Workers					
Other					

If other, please specify or explain:

Section C: Skill Shortages, Training and Education Needs

13 What is the *minimum level* of education required for new hires in the following occupation categories?

Please make ONLY 1 selection for each category

Occupations	None	High School Diploma or Equivalent	Some Post-secondary Education	Trade Certificate	College Diploma	Undergraduate Degree	Professional Accreditation or Graduate Degree
Managers & Executives							
Professionals (eg. Engineers, Accountants)							
Technical							
Trades (Journeyman)							
Apprentices							
Sales & Marketing							
Administrative & Clerical							
Production Workers							
Service Workers							
Other							

If other, please specify or explain:

14 Please select the top 3 competencies for most of your employees

Please select only the top 3 competencies (for both your current and future workforce) that each of your employees need to possess.

Competencies	Current Workforce	Future Workforce
Technical Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analytical / Research Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication Skills (Both Oral & Written)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Customer Service Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teamwork / Interpersonal Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work Ethic, Dedication, & Dependability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer Literacy Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time Management Or Organizational Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem Solving, Reasoning, & Creativity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Motivation / 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"/>

15A

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 be more productive.

Yes No

If you answered “No” to question 15A, please skip to question 15d

15B

Please indicate how you support training / education.

Please select all that apply.

- Fund It (Fully or Partially)
- Use Government Hiring & Training Incentives
- Offer Flexibility In Work Schedule
- Supply Information on Career Advancement
- Other

If other, please specify or explain:

15C

What are the most common sources of training / education for your employees?

Please select all that apply.

- College (Including Continuing Studies)
- University (Including Continuing Studies)
- Distance / Online Education
- Other
- Industry & Professional Association
- Peer-To-Peer
- On The Job

If other, please specify or explain:

15D What are the greatest challenges / barriers to your employees receiving ongoing training and education?

Please select all that apply.

- Losing Trained Employees To Other Businesses
- Lack of Awareness of Existing Training Programs
- Lack of Awareness of Training Support Programs
- Relevant Training Is Not Offered Locally (Nipissing or Parry Sound Districts)
- Distance To Travel To Facility
- Other
- Cost
- Lack of Awareness of Legislated Training
- Loss of Productivity During Training Time

If other, please specify or explain:

Please specify by stating job title with the corresponding challenge or barrier.

Job Title:

Challenge / Barrier:

16 Do you provide any workplace-relevant training to students and future workers through any of the following opportunities?

Please select all that apply.

Students & Future Workers	Paid Co-op	Unpaid Co-op	Paid Internship	Unpaid Internship	Apprenticeship
High School	<input type="checkbox"/>				
College	<input type="checkbox"/>				
University	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Job Seeker	<input type="checkbox"/>				

No, we do not provide any workplace-relevant training through the opportunities listed.

17

Workers require basic skills to perform everyday tasks on-the-job. These include reading, writing, math, and digital literacy.

Please rate the skill levels of BOTH your recent hires and established workers in the following areas.

Recent Hires (Hired within the last 2 years) - Please make ONLY 1 selection for each category

Basic Skills	Extremely Poor	Somewhat Poor	Unsure	Somewhat Satisfactory	Extremely Satisfactory
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Math Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Communication (Written & Verbal)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Digital Literacy (Using Digital Devices, Solving Problems with the aid of technology, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Established Workers (Employed more than 2 years) - Please make ONLY 1 selection for each category

Basic Skills	Extremely Poor	Somewhat Poor	Unsure	Somewhat Satisfactory	Extremely Satisfactory
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Math Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Communication (Written & Verbal)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Digital Literacy (Using Digital Devices, Solving Problems with the aid of technology, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

18 This question is for organizations that employ tradespersons ONLY.

If your organization does not employ tradespersons, please skip to question 19.

Many small and medium sized businesses find it difficult to train apprentices due to limited capacity (eg. Not enough journeypersons to meet ratios, not enough work available, unable to provide full scope of practice requirements.)

An “apprenticeship consortium” encourages employers to collaborate to train apprentices. The consortium model has been successful in other regions of Ontario. It provides flexibility by sharing responsibilities for apprentices’ training and wages. Through this model, employers are NOT required to sign on as an MTCU apprentice sponsor.

Please rate your organization’s level of interest in participating in a Thunder Bay apprenticeship consortium.

Please select all that apply.

- We would be interested in participating in an apprenticeship consortium
- We would like to know more about the consortium model
- We would not be interested in participating

19 The Canada-Ontario Job Grant provides direct financial support to employers to cover costs of employee training.

Please select all that apply.

- We are not aware of the Canada-Ontario Jobs Grant
- We are aware of the Canada-Ontario Jobs Grant
- We need more information about the Canada-Ontario Jobs Grant
- We have applied for funding from the Canada-Ontario Jobs Grant
- Other

If other, please specify or explain:

20 What is the **NUMBER 1** workforce issue facing your organization today?

21 The North Superior Workforce Planning Board engages in annual planning planning for workforce and labour market development. Would you be interested in working with us?

- Yes, feel free to contact us
- No, we're not interested at this time

Please share any additional comments you wish to make:

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

Name:

Email Address:

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

We appreciate your participation!



North Superior
Workforce Planning Board

“Connecting community partners to improve the quality of life in our communities through workforce development.”