Sudbury & Manitoulin Workforce Planning
Planification en main-d'oeuvre

employerone SURVEY

Sudbury & Manitoulin Districts

2015 employerone Survey Results

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO

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EMPLOYERONE SURVEY 2015

Sudbury & Manitoulin Districts

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EMPLOYERONE SURVEY 2015

RESULTS

Sudbury & Manitoulin Districts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Good labour market information is critical to our understanding of the current and projected workforce needs of local employers. While limited information is available through various sources such as Statistics Canada, labour market research, job vacancy postings and key stakeholder consultations, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what employers are looking for now and into the future.

Currently there is no good mechanism to gather information directly from employers. To help supplement what is available, in 2014, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) asked all six Northern Ontario Workforce Planning (NOWP) Boards, including Workforce Planning for Sudbury & Manitoulin (WPSM) to conduct a survey of employers.

In 2014, the *employerone* survey yielded responses from 99 employers representing 3,160 employees from the WPSM area. For the 2015 *employerone* survey, WPSM continued to reach out to all employers, but also targeted larger employers. As a result, responses were received from 130 public and private-sector employers, however, these employers represented 21,359 employees; roughly 27% of the total workforce for the Districts of Sudbury & Manitoulin.

Even though the number of respondents and employees represented increased, it is important to be cautious about the data. For example, most employers in the WPSM area are SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises), so while the data reflects businesses with a larger employee base, smaller companies continue to make up the backbone of our Districts. As well, on closer examination of the data we see that in some cases, only a handful of employers accounted for the highest number of hires and separations. Here is a snapshot of what employers told us:

- ***separations:*** 91 companies reported a turnover rate of 11.2% or 2,233 separations in the previous 12 months, but this includes one large employer responsible for 47% of all separations (seasonal students); by excluding this employer's data, separations drop to 1,436 separations (turnover rate of 6.2%) with just under one half (N=672) of employees quitting their job;
- ***hiring:*** 5,491 people were hired in the previous 12 months; three companies each reported slightly over 1,000 hires; half of all reported hires were contract positions; 1,308 of reported hires were contract trade workers; and only 3% were re-hires (previously laid off employees);
- ***high frequency hiring occupations (30 people or more):*** Labourer (N=556); Faculty (N=520); Student Intern (N=311); Admin Support/Assistant/Clerical (N=126);
- ***recruitment methods:*** Word of mouth and personal contacts/networks/referrals continue to be the most frequently reported method of recruitment followed by online job boards then a company's own website;
- ***training:*** Almost 80% of employers provide ongoing support for employee training and education, however most want educated and experienced employees; 58% said they offer experiential learning opportunities for job seekers and students; and
- ***top five competencies for current/future workforce:*** Customer service skills; work ethic (dedication, dependability); teamwork/interpersonal skills; self motivation/work with little or no supervision; and oral and written communication skills.

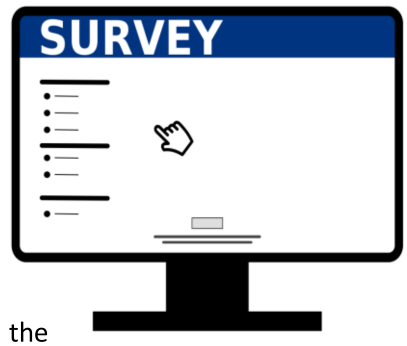
Surveys such as *employerone* help us to better understand the workforce needs of employers. While challenges continue to exist with getting employers to respond, their information is critical to the development, growth and sustainability of our current and future workforce.

INTRODUCTION

It goes without saying...good labour market information is essential to various stakeholders such as: Employment Ontario's Employment Services network who help match local job seekers with available jobs; educators and guidance counsellors who help students explore career options; postsecondary institutions who provide specialized training for both highly skilled professional and skilled trades occupations; towns and municipalities engaged in economic development; and others.

However, obtaining good local labour market data is challenging without further research. Some industries have taken it upon themselves to identify current and future workforce needs within their own industry; however this information is not readily available or consistent across all industries.

In 2014, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities provided funding to all six Northern Ontario Workforce Planning boards to pilot an online employer survey. Employers were asked to answer questions about: demographics of their workforce; current and projected vacancies; recruitment strategies/challenges; perspective on candidate skills, education and training; top competencies required in their business; training they provide and any ongoing workforce concerns. While this survey yielded some interesting results, a limited number of employers completed the survey, often citing that it was cumbersome and long.



In 2015, NOWP reassessed the survey instrument and reduced the number of key questions to make the survey easier to complete. While it was recognized that the majority of businesses in northern Ontario and the WPSM area are Small and Medium Enterprises, outreach strategies included efforts to engage employers with larger numbers of employees.

The survey was implemented June 2015 and ended November 2015. Respondents were asked to report on the previous 12 months. This report summarizes responses provided by 130 employers in the Sudbury & Manitoulin Districts representing 21,359 employees; roughly 27% of the total workforce.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

OUTREACH STRATEGIES: Common NOWP branding and timelines continued to be used for the 2015 *employerone* survey. Other local strategies included: media releases; personalized emails; employer site visits; posting the survey on websites (WPSM and other employer-focussed sites); business targeted mailings; employer connections through other organizations; attending employer-related events; and mailing surveys with self-addressed stamped return envelopes.

EMPLOYER/SECTOR SELECTION PROCESS: While employers of all sizes were targeted with the above outreach efforts, NOWP Boards also agreed to reach out to larger local employers. While this increased the number of employees represented, this did create some concerns about skewing the data (please see: *Findings-limitations* below). Additionally, since close to 60% of employers in the WPSM area are self-employed (according to Canadian Business Counts data, June 2014 to June 2015), they were not a specific target for various outreach efforts.

FINDINGS

LIMITATIONS: While some of the previous limitations with the 2014 pilot were overcome by significantly reducing the overall length of the survey, it was still challenging to get employers to respond to the 2015 survey despite various outreach efforts. Interestingly, the majority of the employers who did respond said they had not responded to the 2014 survey; in other words the 2015 *employerone* survey was completed by a different cohort of employers. Additionally, not all employers who started the survey completed the survey however there was an increase in the number of larger employers which in some cases skewed the results. For example, almost half of the hirings and separations were concentrated in only a handful of employers. As a result, some of the findings reported here exclude some of this data to represent a more accurate picture of the majority of employers who responded. Last, not all respondents answered every question so some survey responses will include the total number who responded to that question.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS: In total, 321 employers started the survey and 130 completed it, with a variable number of respondents for each question. Only 18% (N=24) of respondents indicated that they had been part of the survey last year, when 99 employers had participated.

Respondents reflected a range of industries. Table 1 provides the breakdown of respondents by industry and compares the percentage distribution with the distribution of businesses in Manitoulin, Sudbury and Greater Sudbury in June 2015. The colour-coding for survey results highlights where the 2015 survey percentage share is much greater (green) or much lower (red) than the actual distribution.

TABLE 1: NUMBER AND PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY INDUSTRY

INDUSTRY	NUMBER	PERCENT	ACTUAL
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3	2.1%	1.7%
Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas Extraction	8	5.7%	0.9%
Utilities	0	0.0%	0.2%
Construction	9	6.4%	12.5%
Manufacturing	6	4.3%	4.0%
Wholesale Trade	3	2.1%	5.0%
Retail Trade	17	12.1%	15.8%
Transportation and Warehousing	4	2.9%	3.2%
Information and Cultural Industries	1	0.7%	0.9%
Finance and Insurance	5	3.6%	3.4%
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	1	0.7%	4.7%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	2	1.4%	7.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2	1.4%	0.7%
Administration and Support, Waste Mgmt	1	0.7%	4.1%
Educational Services	12	8.6%	1.1%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	17	12.1%	13.0%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	4	2.9%	2.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	7	5.0%	8.6%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	32	22.9%	9.6%
Public Administration	6	4.3%	0.9%
TOTAL	140	100.0%	100.0%

There are some imbalances when it comes to the distribution of respondents by industry, but far more instances where the survey distribution is quite close to the actual distribution of firms by industry in the study area. Additionally, the distribution of respondents by number of employees shows a greater proportion of respondents with a larger number of employees compared to the actual figures. *Actual* figures are derived from Statistics Canada's Canadian Business Counts, for June 2015.

TABLE 2: PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES TO ACTUAL PERCENTAGE

	1-4 EMPLOYEES	5-19 EMPLOYEES	20-99 EMPLOYEES	100+ EMPLOYEES
SURVEY	20%	39%	29%	13%
ACTUAL	48%	36%	14%	2%

Overall, respondents represented 21,359 employees. In the 2011 National Household Survey, the area covered by Workforce Planning for Sudbury & Manitoulin accounted for 78,435 jobs. While the number of jobs may have grown a few thousand over the last four years, the respondents in the survey are evidently responsible for a sizeable chunk of local employment, somewhere around a quarter of all jobs.

Of jobs reported by respondents:
64% were full time
24% were part time
12% were contract
9% were seasonal
15% filled by youth under 25
18% were filled by those 55 +

SEPARATIONS OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS: Table 3 presents data on separations by type of occupation and by type of separation. For the sake of this data, the figures for "other separations" of the one employer with a high-volume of seasonal separations have been taken out of the calculation, in order that the percentage distribution of the separations more properly represents the mix of employers in the local area.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF SEPARATIONS, BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY AND REASON FOR SEPARATION

OCCUPATION	quit	retirement	temporary lay-off	permanent lay-off	dismissal	Other	TOTAL
Managers/executives	36	31	1	1	12	6	87
Professionals	137	66	6	6	10	28	253
Technical	26	14	0	0	9	10	59
Trades	33	25	22	2	13	12	107
Apprentices	5	0	2	0	1	1	9
Sales & Marketing	10	3	0	2	1	6	22
Admin & Clerical	62	31	17	3	11	30	154
Production Worker	119	34	10	1	39	81	284
Service Worker	197	26	17	2	53	20	315
Other	47	15	7	12	18	47	146
TOTAL	672	245	82	29	167	241	1436

Overall, for 2015, *quits* account for almost half of all separations, with *retirements* and *other* separations accounting for another 17% each. While it may not be surprising that *Production Workers* and *Service Workers* each accounted for roughly one in five separations (20% and 22%), given the larger number of employees in that category (and often higher turnover), what is surprising in the 2015 survey results is that *Professionals* also account for almost one in five (18%) separations.

There are noticeable differences between the 2015 and 2014 survey results. In 2014, *quits* represented 60% of all separations and *temporary lay-offs* were the second most frequently cited reason, while among occupations, 33% of the lay-offs were among the *Trades*. There are large differences in the proportion of separations due to *retirements* and *other* reasons between these years.

All in all, the 2015 survey results are likely more robust, with a higher number of responses, but the high proportion of *Professionals* among the separations warrants some further inquiry. It may be one of the ripple effects of the mining cycle downturn that has been experienced since late 2014.

HIRING OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS: Table 4 lists the number of hires over the previous 12 months, by occupational category and type of employment. Overall, there were 5,491 hirings over the last 12 months, considerably higher than the 2,233 separations over the same period. Among these many hirings, three companies each had slightly over 1,000 hirings, so the majority of these hirings were concentrated among only a handful of companies.

Half of the reported hirings involved contract positions (2,749 out of 5,491). This number of contract hires (N=2,749) actually exceeded the number of hires in all other categories (N=2,742). Part-time hirings accounted for 23%, and the full-time hires only 15%.

TABLE 4: TOTAL NUMBER OF HIRINGS					
OCCUPATION	Full time	Part time	Contract	Seasonal	TOTAL
Managers/Executives	57	11	10	0	78
Professionals	84	555	258	0	897
Technical	26	106	217	35	384
Trades	62	18	1308	20	1408
Apprentices	33	5	5	5	48
Sales & Marketing	17	5	10	0	32
Admin & Clerical	69	75	147	6	297
Production Worker	241	2	89	199	531
Service Worker	69	473	314	95	951
Other	140	29	391	305	865
TOTAL	798	1279	2749	665	5491

The greatest difference between hires and separations was among the *Trades,* however, one respondent claimed to have hired 1,280 contract *Tradesperson*s. There were also substantial gaps between the hires versus separations among *Professionals* (897 versus 255), *Technical* (384 versus 85), *Service Workers* (951 versus 568) and *Other* (865 versus 455).

Respondents were further asked the question: Of the total number of hires in the past 12 months, how many were previously laid-off employees who were re-hired? Of these 5,491 hires, only 184 hirings were identified as re-hires; slightly over 3%.

HIGH FREQUENCY HIRING OCCUPATIONS: There were just over 130 different occupations named among these high frequency hiring occupations, but in many instances, the number of hires was only one or two. Table 5 (below) lists the 13 occupations with at least 30 new hires. These 13 occupations accounted for 78% of 2,693 new hires. In fact, the top 4 occupations accounted for over half (56%).

TABLE 5: LARGEST NUMBER OF HIRINGS AMONG HIGH FREQUENCY HIRING OCCUPATIONS	
OCCUPATION	NUMBER
Labourer	556
Faculty	520
Student Intern	311
Admin Support/Admin Assistant/Clerical	126
Outdoor Rink Staff (PT)	85
Health Care Aide/PSW	78
Technologist	76
Heavy Equipment Operator	75
Truck Driver	75
Tree Planter & Tree Planter Supervisor	65
Registered Nurse	61
Volunteer Firefighter	38
Server/Waitress/Bus Person	37
TOTAL	2103

A few observations regarding this data: almost all the *Labourer* positions are the consequence of two employers (both staffing agencies). As well, all *Faculty* and almost all *Student Intern* positions were with one post-secondary institution. As noted earlier, only one or two employers are responsible for the large numbers for hirings in these occupations. The same cannot be said of the *Admin Support/Admin Assistant/Clerical* category, which was identified by quite a few employer respondents.

Employers were further asked whether any of these high frequency hires were hard to fill. Slightly over half (53%) who identified high frequency hirings said *yes*. Table 6 lists the top four reasons cited and compares these results to the top four reasons cited for the same question in last year's survey. As is evident, the top four reasons are the same, only their ranking has changed slightly.

TABLE 6: TOP FOUR REASONS CITED FOR DIFFICULTY IN HIRING FOR HIGH FREQUENCY HIRES	
2014	**2015**
Applicants Not Meeting Qualification Requirements (education level/credentials)	**Not Enough Applicants**
Not Enough Applicants	**Applicants Not Meeting Qualification Requirements (education level/credentials)**
Applicants Not Meeting Skills Requirements	**Applicants Not Meeting Work Experience Requirements**
Applicants Not Meeting Work Experience Requirements	**Applicants Not Meeting Skills Requirements**

HARD TO RECRUIT: Table 7 shows the reasons why it was difficult to hire by the proportion of employers who indicated that it was difficult to hire in high frequency hiring positions.

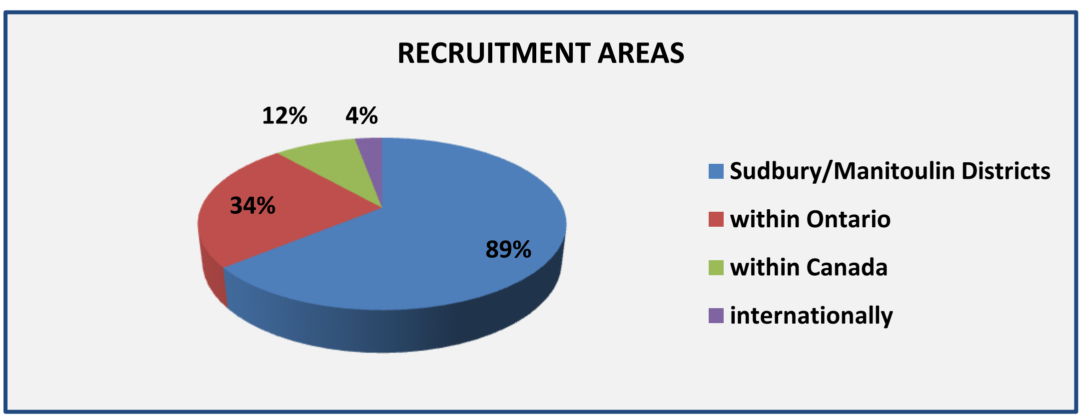
TABLE 7: REASONS - HARD TO RECRUIT IN HIGH FREQUENCY HIRING POSTIONS (BY PROPORTION OF EMPLOYERS WHO REPORTED DIFFICULTIES)	
REASON	**EMPLOYERS (%)**
Applicants Not Meeting Qualification Requirements (education level / credentials)	**68%**
Not Enough Applicants	**51%**
Applicants Not Meeting Skills Requirements	**44%**
Applicants Not Meeting Work Experience Requirements	**33%**
Inability to Compete With Other Employers Due To Pay & Benefits	**32%**
Applicants Not Meeting Motivation, Attitude, or Interpersonal Skills Requirements	**30%**
No Local Qualified Applicants	**23%**
Inability To Compete With Other Employers Due To Remote Location / Poor Public Transit	**12%**
No Applicants At All	**11%**
Applicants Not Meeting Language Requirements	**11%**
Other	**11%**
Inability To Compete With Other Employers Due To Nature of Work (seasonal, shift work, irregular hours, job content)	**9%**
Inability To Compete With Other Employers Due To Lack of Promotion Opportunities	**2%**
Inability To Assess a Foreign Educational Qualification or Credential	**0%**

RECRUITMENT METHODS: Respondents were asked to indicate what mechanisms they used to recruit job candidates, for any hiring. Answers were provided by 105 respondents and the frequency of use for each recruitment method is listed in Table 8.

The top three recruitment methods in this survey are the same as last year, and word-of-mouth continues to occupy the top spot, followed by the more hi-tech approaches of online job boards and the company's own website. It is noteworthy that job fairs came in last. Of the reasons mentioned in the "Other" category, five named social media.

TABLE 8: FREQUENCY OF USE FOR EACH RECRUITMENT METHOD	
RECRUITMENT METHOD	FREQUENCY OF USE
Word of Mouth / Personal Contacts / Referrals / Informal Networks	69
Online Job Boards / Postings	58
Company's Own Website	44
Newspaper Ads	37
Government Employment Centres or Websites	32
On-Site Job Signs or Posters	22
Unsolicited Resumes	20
Non-Government or Community Employment Service Centres/Websites	18
On-site Recruitment At Schools, Colleges, or Universities	16
Trade or Professional Association Publications	13
Other	13
Executive Search Companies or Temporary Help Agencies	8
Job Fairs	6

RECRUITMENT AREAS: Respondents were asked to indicate the areas their recruitment efforts targeted. The pie chart below identifies responses from 105 employers and the percentage of employers selecting each option. Most recruitment efforts by employers focused on the Districts of Sudbury and Manitoulin (N=93), with a fair amount of outreach extending to the province as a whole (N=36), but very little recruitment extends to Canada (N=13) or internationally (N=4). Perhaps what is surprising is that 11% of the respondents who replied claimed that they do not recruit within Sudbury or Manitoulin. (The percentages add up to more than 100% because some employers listed more than one option).



RECRUITMENT ASSISTANCE:

Assistance from a free employment service agency: Employers were less likely to receive employment services from an agency providing assistance, especially those representing a particular demographic group (Aboriginals, persons with disabilities, immigrants, etc.). Of the employers who provided a response to this question, 78% said they received no such assistance. This is very close to the

81% who in 2014 indicated that they received no such assistance. Apart from help in securing youth job candidates, reliance on such assistance amounted only to a small proportion of survey respondents.

Use of paid recruitment agency: Of the employers who answered this question, 8% indicated that they used a paid recruitment agency, compared to 12% who answered in the affirmative last year.

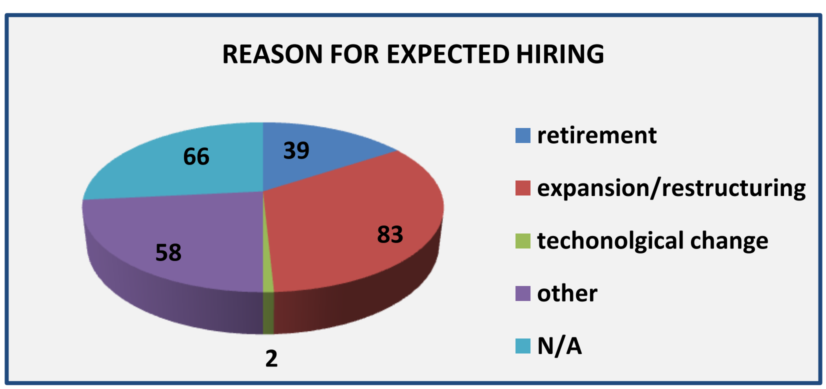
HIRING PLANS FOR THE NEXT 12 MONTHS: Seven out of ten respondents (N=86) indicated that they planned on hiring over the next 12 months, very similar to the hiring intentions in last year's survey (73%). Table 9 shows the number of expected job hirings over the next 12 months, by occupational category and by employment type and compares these figures to the reported hirings over the past year (as noted in table 4).

TABLE 9: NUMBER OF EXPECTED HIRINGS, BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY AND TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

	Full time	Part time	Contract	Seasonal	TOTAL	TOTAL past year
Managers/Executives	30	8	5	1	44	78
Professionals	20	76	181	0	277	897
Technical	26	10	169	7	212	384
Trades	56	12	1200	79	1347	1408
Apprentices	15	6	0	24	45	48
Sales & Marketing	12	1	0	0	13	32
Admin & Clerical	50	33	32	1	116	297
Production Workers	137	1	0	65	203	531
Service Workers	31	25	38	28	122	951
Other	41	8	16	38	103	
TOTAL PROJECTED HIRINGS	418	180	1641	243	2482	
TOTAL PAST YEAR HIRINGS	798	1279	2749	665		5491

It is clear from the respondents that there is a considerable shortfall between the expected hirings for the coming year and the actual hirings over the past year; only in the case of *Trades* is the figure close, however, it is important to remember that this is largely due to one employer who appears to maintain the same pattern of hiring. This discrepancy is different from last year, when the gap between actual hirings and projected hirings was much less. It may also warrant further inquiry to determine if employers actually are more pessimistic about the coming year or if they are simply exercising a high level of caution by not projecting hiring in the next twelve months.

REASON FOR EXPECTED HIRING: For all occupations, the main reason for the hiring was due to *Expansion/Restructuring* with many others citing *Other* reasons or *N/A*. Interestingly, very few cited *Technological Change* although many economists are underscoring the significant impact that technological change will have on jobs in the future. In the 2014 *employerone* survey *Expansion/Restructuring* was a more prominent choice. Notably, *Retirement* was cited more frequently in this year's survey.



LEVEL OF EDUCATION – NEW HIRES: As noted in table 10 below, 62% of employers expect a *Tradesperson* to have a trade's certificate and a high school diploma or no certificate is often sufficient for a *Production Worker* or a *Service Worker*. By and large, *Managers/Executives* are expected to have a college diploma or higher, and the same goes for *Professionals*, with 46% of respondents expecting a professional degree. Overall, the degree most relevant for any occupation is a college diploma, and it is particularly so for *Technical* as well as *Administrative/ Clerical* occupations.

TABLE 10: MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES							
	None	High school	Some post secondary	Trades certificate	College diploma	Undergrad degree	Professional graduate degree
Managers/Executives	**6%**	**7%**	**6%**	**4%**	**23%**	**28%**	**27%**
Professionals (ie: Engineer)	**4%**	**0%**	**0%**	**4%**	**23%**	**23%**	**46%**
Technical	**7%**	**7%**	**2%**	**24%**	**44%**	**15%**	**2%**
Trades (Journeyperson)	**4%**	**17%**	**0%**	**62%**	**15%**	**0%**	**2%**
Apprentices	**5%**	**27%**	**14%**	**35%**	**19%**	**0%**	**0%**
Sales and Marketing	**12%**	**14%**	**21%**	**2%**	**29%**	**21%**	**0%**
Administrative/Clerical	**4%**	**22%**	**25%**	**1%**	**42%**	**4%**	**1%**
Production Workers	**15%**	**51%**	**8%**	**8%**	**15%**	**3%**	**0%**
Service Workers	**22%**	**39%**	**8%**	**5%**	**18%**	**6%**	**3%**

TOP 3 COMPETENCIES: Employer respondents were asked about competencies expected in current and future hires. The competencies listed in Table 11 are in rank order, in other words the total number of times they were named for current workers, although the ranking for future workers varies only a little.

Customer Service Skills, followed by *Work Ethic*, are cited the most, with *Teamwork, Self-motivation* and *Communications Skills* rounding out the top tier of skills. These are often known as "soft skills." *Technical Skills* fall in the middle-ranking range of desired skill competencies, while *Analytical/Research Skills* are cited the least. It is interesting to note that while employer respondents cite these competencies, it is often the case that the employers will not hire unless the job-seeker has the right credentials combined with experience anyways.

TABLE 11: NECESSARY COMPETENCIES CURRENT AND FUTURE WORKFORCE (ALL JOBS)		
Competency	**Current**	**Future**
Customer service skills	**72**	**60**
Work ethic, dedication, dependability	**71**	**63**
Teamwork/interpersonal skills	**63**	**55**
Self-motivated/ability to work (little/no supervision)	**60**	**47**
Communication skills (both oral and written)	**58**	**53**
Technical skills	**44**	**36**
Willingness to learn	**43**	**39**
Professionalism	**43**	**38**
Problem solving, reasoning, creativity	**37**	**35**
Computer literacy skills	**28**	**23**
Time management or organizational skills	**27**	**23**
Analytical/research skills	**16**	**15**

TRAINING/EDUCATION: Employers were asked whether they were able to provide or support ongoing training and education opportunities for their employees over the last year, and four out of five (79%) said *yes*. Among those employers who did not provide training, the following were identified as significant barriers or challenges. The figures add to more than 100% because some employers identified more than one barrier.

TABLE 12: CHALLENGES/BARRIERS TO EMPLOYEES RECEIVING TRAINING OR EDUCATION	
Challenge/barrier	**% of employers**
Cost	**75%**
Distance to travel to facility	**50%**
Loss of productivity during training time	**35%**
Relevant training is not offered locally	**30%**
Awareness of existing training programs	**20%**
Awareness of training support programs	**10%**
Losing trained employees to other businesses	**10%**
Awareness of legislated training	**5%**

Cost was clearly a significant barrier, although among all employers who answered questions about training, those who did not provide training were a smaller minority (20% of the responses), and so overall, even cost appears to be a limited barrier.

Another reason often cited by employers for not training is the concern that other employers will poach their trained workers. However, this concern was only cited by 10% of employers who do not offer training.

Respondents were further asked in what specific ways they supported training or education for their employees. Table 13 identifies the percentage of employers who provided each of the following supports. The figures add to more than 100% because some employers identified more than one support (in fact, 50% of employers provided more than one support).

TABLE 13: PERCENT OF EMPLOYERS PROVIDING SUPPORTS	
supports	**% of employers**
Fund it (fully or partially)	**77%**
Offer flexibility in work schedule	**44%**
Supply information on career advancement	**25%**
Using government hiring/training incentives	**21%**
Other	**14%**

Employers offer relatively 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.

In terms of the sources or delivery methods for the training or education, by far the most common is on-the-job training as reported by employer respondents. Around half of employers (55%) rely on their industry or professional association, as well as via peer-to-peer (49%). Reliance on various post-secondary institutions is lower, but reported by 13-28% of employers depending on the institution.

In terms of providing any workplace-relevant training to students or future workers, only four out of ten (42%) employers said *no*. Of the remaining, the type of training and whether it was paid or unpaid varied as illustrated in table 14. Interestingly, 39% offered more than one such kind of opportunity to students or job seekers.

TABLE 14: PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS PROVIDING WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES (N=125)					
	Paid co-op	Unpaid co-op	Paid internship	Unpaid internship	Apprentice
High school student	3%	23%	2%	2%	6%
College student	9%	14%	14%	8%	14%
University student	6%	10%	10%	9%	5%
Job seeker	0%	3%	3%	2%	4%

Few employers provide internships to high school students, but nearly a quarter of employers provide co-op placements for high school students, the vast majority of them unpaid placements. Co-op placements and internships are provided in roughly equal numbers to college and university students. Despite the efforts to encourage employers to hire an apprentice, only 14% of employers reported that they provide apprenticeship opportunities for students in college where the majority of trade-related programs are offered. Although respondents were asked to identify the industry sector that best represents them, they were not asked if they employ certified journeypersons; in other words, do they have the need or capacity to train and hire an apprentice.

Taken from Women in Trades forum (Sudbury 2014)

SUMMARY COMMENTS - OBSERVATIONS:

As noted, the number of employers who responded to the *2015 employerone* survey increased from 2014, as did the number of larger businesses and employees represented. While most businesses reported a number of hirings and separations, several of these larger businesses accounted for almost one half of all separations and hirings. Some other anomalies did surface with these few employers related to occupations that they are hiring in, but for the most part, occupations continued to be concentrated in the trades and trade-related occupations, health, and administration, although one employer reported a high number of faculty hirings. Various jobs were also seasonal in nature.

However, apart from actual numbers, responses to other questions did not yield significantly different results from the *2014 employerone* survey even though a smaller number of employers representing smaller businesses responded. This might seem to indicate that the results can be generalized to most employers in the area. This also calls into question the value of doing an annual survey and if a biennial survey would be sufficient as there is some congruence with last year's results.

OUTREACH EFFORTS: As with surveys of this nature, getting employers to respond continues to be a challenge. Although the length of the 2014 survey was cited as a reason for the reduced number of repeat respondents, the shortened version used for the 2015 survey along with various outreach efforts seemed to have had a positive effect. Additionally, other organizations and associations (as identified in the acknowledgements) helped extend the reach by personally promoting the value of the survey to their employer members. WPSM took this same approach and personalized its efforts to reach employers, particularly the largest employers in the area. It is evident by the number of larger employers who responded to the survey that this approach was reasonably successful at reaching these employers.

RESPONSE SIMILARITIES: It was somewhat surprising that small, medium and larger employers from both the 2014 and 2015 surveys reported similar strategies and issues related to recruitment methods and challenges, top competencies and commitment to training.

a) ***Recruitment:*** Word of mouth/personal contacts/referrals and informal networks continue to be the number one way that employers recruit followed by online job boards/postings and a company's own internet site. For hard to fill occupations, employers continue to say that applicants did not meet qualification requirements, that there were not enough applicants and that applicants did not meet the skills or work experience requirements. Although this is not a surprise, it is important for employers to assess the bar that they have set in terms of qualifications and for educators to identify ways to help students gain the necessary education, skills and experience required. Additionally, employer recruitment activities continue to target the Sudbury Manitoulin area and less than 4% recruitment internationally. Last, use of recruitment agencies and job fairs were remain low on reported recruitment strategies.

b) ***Top competencies:*** There is no surprise here. Employers continue to cite "soft" skills as necessary competencies in their current and future workforce. Although the order slightly changed from the 2014 survey, in the 2015 survey, employers reported customer service skills; work ethic (dedication and dependability); teamwork/interpersonal skills; self-motivation (ability to work with little/no supervision) and written/verbal communication skills as the top five competencies. This should be a "wake-up" call to everyone as these types of skills by their nature are more personal characteristics; they are learned behaviour and not necessarily something that can be easily addressed without additional education and training.

c) ***Training:*** Just over three-quarters of employer respondents said that they provide training to their employees. For those who do not, various challenges were cited such as cost, distance to training facility and loss of productivity during training. Interestingly a number of employers said that they offer students and job seekers experiential learning opportunities such as paid/unpaid co-ops; paid/unpaid internships; but only 14% offer apprenticeship opportunities. This certainly is an area that needs far great attention. Various reports have expressed a concern about future skilled trade shortages, so it is essential to encourage more employers to hire an apprentice if they have the capacity to do so. If they don't, who will? And how will these good paying jobs be filled and by whom if employers don't provide the necessary training?

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 dimension 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, job seekers and others to understand where their efforts should be placed and who, at the end of the day is hiring, what they are looking for and why.