

BUSINESS SURVEY OF WORKFORCE NEEDS
KOOCHICHING COUNTY

DATA SUMMARY REPORT
JUNE 2017



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Introduction

In 2015, four studies were conducted in Koochiching County to acquire feedback from residents and business owners about the county's assets and barriers. Two recurring topics of concern were an unskilled workforce and the lack of educational/training opportunities. To address these concerns, the Voyage Forward Workforce Development committee surveyed employers in Koochiching County to identify the skills and training required of their workforce.

The online survey asked employers to respond to questions about: business identity, current workforce issues, recruiting, and training. Eighty-seven employers, with representation from all major industries, completed the survey. This broad scope of input has provided a valuable starting point for assessing workforce needs in Koochiching County. The labor market information obtained from the survey will be shared with local economic development agencies, educational institutions, employment services, and others who play a key role in developing a skilled, trained, and educated workforce. **The Data Summary Report will be accessible to the Koochiching County community at www.voyageforward.org.**

The online survey was available December 1, 2016 through December 21, 2016. This report summarizes the responses and includes textual analysis of the data.

Survey Methodology

Survey Design: Research and review of workforce development components was conducted by members of the Workforce Development committee to design the question database. The survey questions were reviewed and approved by the committee as a whole. The online survey builder SurveyMonkey was used to create, administer, and collate data regarding workforce needs in Koochiching County.

Outreach Strategies: The business database for Koochiching County was acquired from www.referenceusagov.com. Employers were contacted by phone to explain the purpose of the survey and acquire an email address. This effort resulted in 239 direct email invitations to complete the online survey. In addition, media sources were utilized to encourage all Koochiching County employers to participate by accessing the survey from the Voyage Forward web site.

Outcome: *Eighty-seven employers, with representation from all major industries, completed the survey.*

Findings

The results from the *Business Survey of Workforce Needs* will be instrumental in devising the five year strategic plan to “Develop a Skilled, Trained, and Educated Workforce” in Koochiching County. A synopsis of findings from the survey include:

Workforce Needs

To assess the framework of the labor market in Koochiching County, employers were asked to rate the workforce in various categories. Forty-five percent of employers indicated their highest area of concern is “not enough **qualified** applicants available” to fill positions. Of these employers, 36% gave the **quality** of workforce a “below average” or “poor” rating. This is in direct correlation to the 49% response rate indicating one of their major recruiting difficulties is “no qualified applicants”.

Recruiting

During the 2016 calendar year, 65.9% of the employers surveyed experienced difficulty recruiting candidates.

Recruiting difficulties for employers include not enough applicants, inadequate job specific skills and being soft skills deficient. Some employers hire under-qualified applicants due to an inability to find qualified applicants. A majority of under-qualified applicants typically do not have enough work experience or had an unstable work history. Employers based their hiring decisions on interview performance, stable work history and demonstrated work-related skills.

Training

A great number of employers are currently training their employees via “in-house training”. Supervisors, co-workers and training departments are providing training needs. Manuals, videos and training materials are additional methods utilized. Customized on-site and web based training are the preferred practices to provide instruction. General skills training is needed in the areas of soft skills (work ethic, attitude, attendance, problem solving and teamwork) and interpersonal communications.

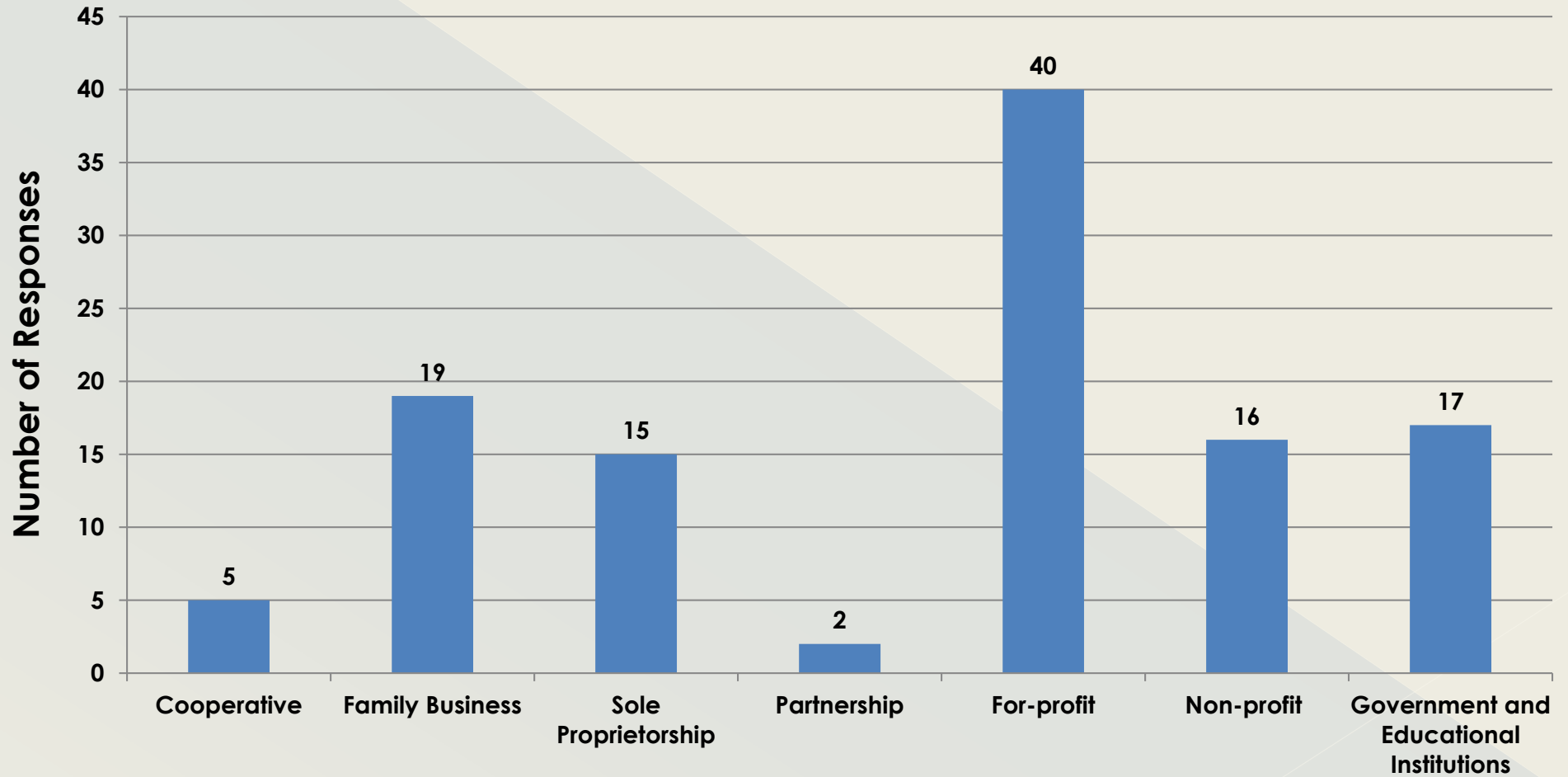
Questions 1-6

Employers were asked to list

- 1. Business Name**
- 2. Business Address**
- 3. Survey Participant's Name**
- 4. Phone Number**
- 5. Email Address**
- 6. In which city is your business located?**

***This information is confidential.**

7. Please check all that apply to the ownership of this business.



8. Which industry describes your business?

<u>Answer Options</u>	<u>Response Percent</u>	<u>Response Count</u>
Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (Animal Systems, Agribusiness Systems, Environmental Service Systems, Food Products & Processing Systems, Plant Systems, Power, Structural, & Technical Systems)	3.4%	3
Communications & Information Systems (Audio/Video Technology & Film, Journalism & Broadcasting, Printing Technology, Telecommunications, Information Support & Services, Network Systems, Programming & Software Development, Web/Digital Communication)	1.1%	1
Engineering, Manufacturing, & Technology (Transportation, Distribution, Logistics, Architecture & Construction, Manufacturing, Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics)	18.0%	16
Health Science Technology (Diagnostic Services, Support Services, Health Informatics, Therapeutic Services)	10.1%	9
Human Services (Law, Public Safety, Corrections, Security, Government and Public Administration, Human Services, Education and Training)	21.3%	19
Business, Management, & Administration (Marketing, Finance, Sales and Service, Hospitality & Tourism, Business, Management, & Administration)	38.2%	34

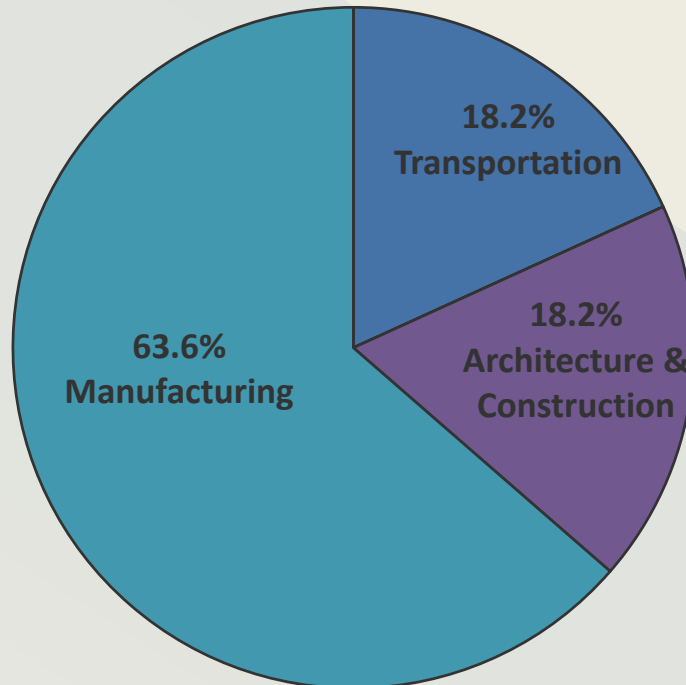
9. In the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources area, select which answer best describes your business:

<u>Answer Options</u>	<u>Response Percent</u>	<u>Response Count</u>
Animal Systems	0.0%	0
Agribusiness Systems	66.7%	2
Environmental Service Systems	0.0%	0
Food Products & Processing Systems	33.3%	1
Plant Systems	0.0%	0
Power, Structural, & Technical System	0.0%	0

10. In the Communications & Information Systems area, select which answer best describes your business:

<u>Answer Options</u>	<u>Response Percent</u>	<u>Response Count</u>
Audio/Video Technology & Film	0.0%	0
Journalism & Broadcasting	0.0%	0
Printing Technology	0.0%	0
Telecommunications	0.0%	0
Information Support & Services	0.0%	0
Network Systems	0.0%	0
Programming & Software Development	0.0%	0
Web/Digital Communication	0.0%	0
Library	100.0%	1

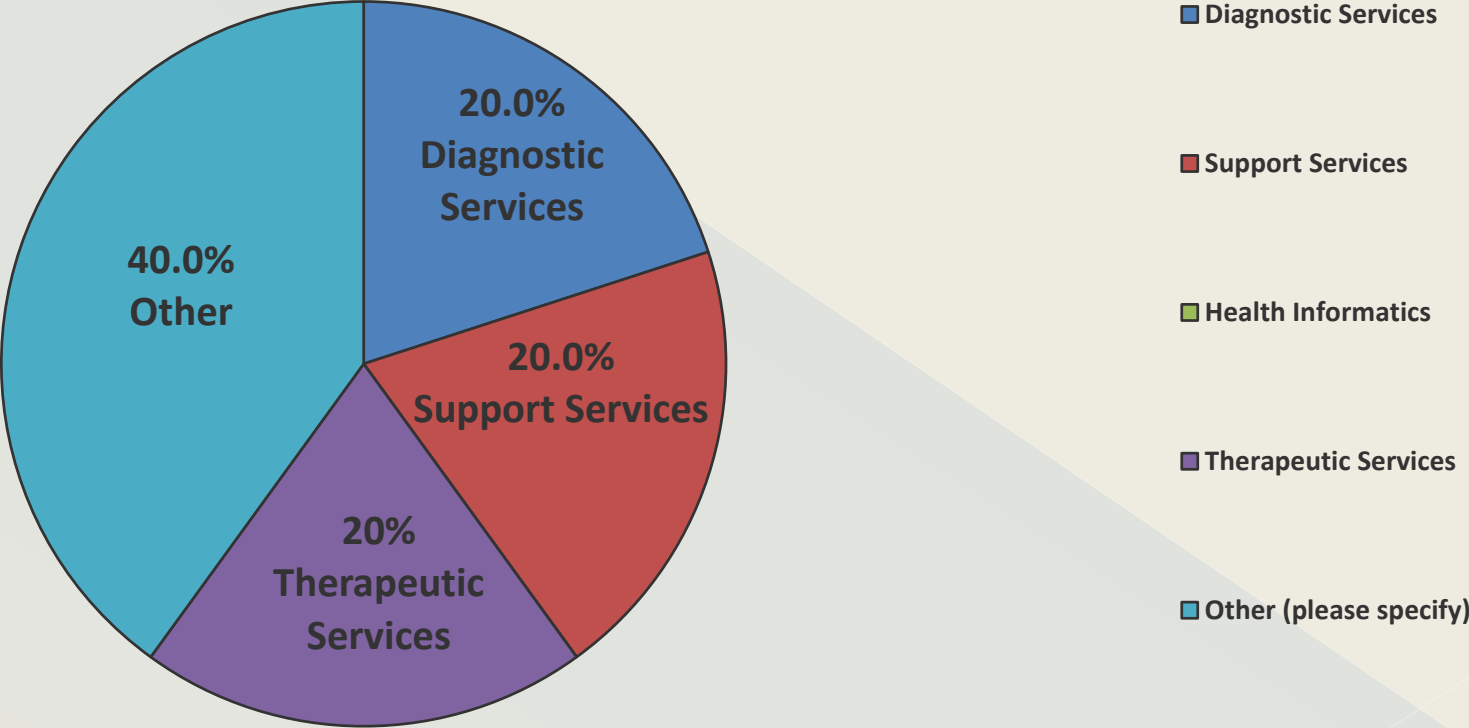
11. In the Engineering, Manufacturing, & Technology area, select which answer best describes your business:



- Transportation
- Distribution
- Logistics
- Architecture & Construction
- Manufacturing
- Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics
- Other (please specify)

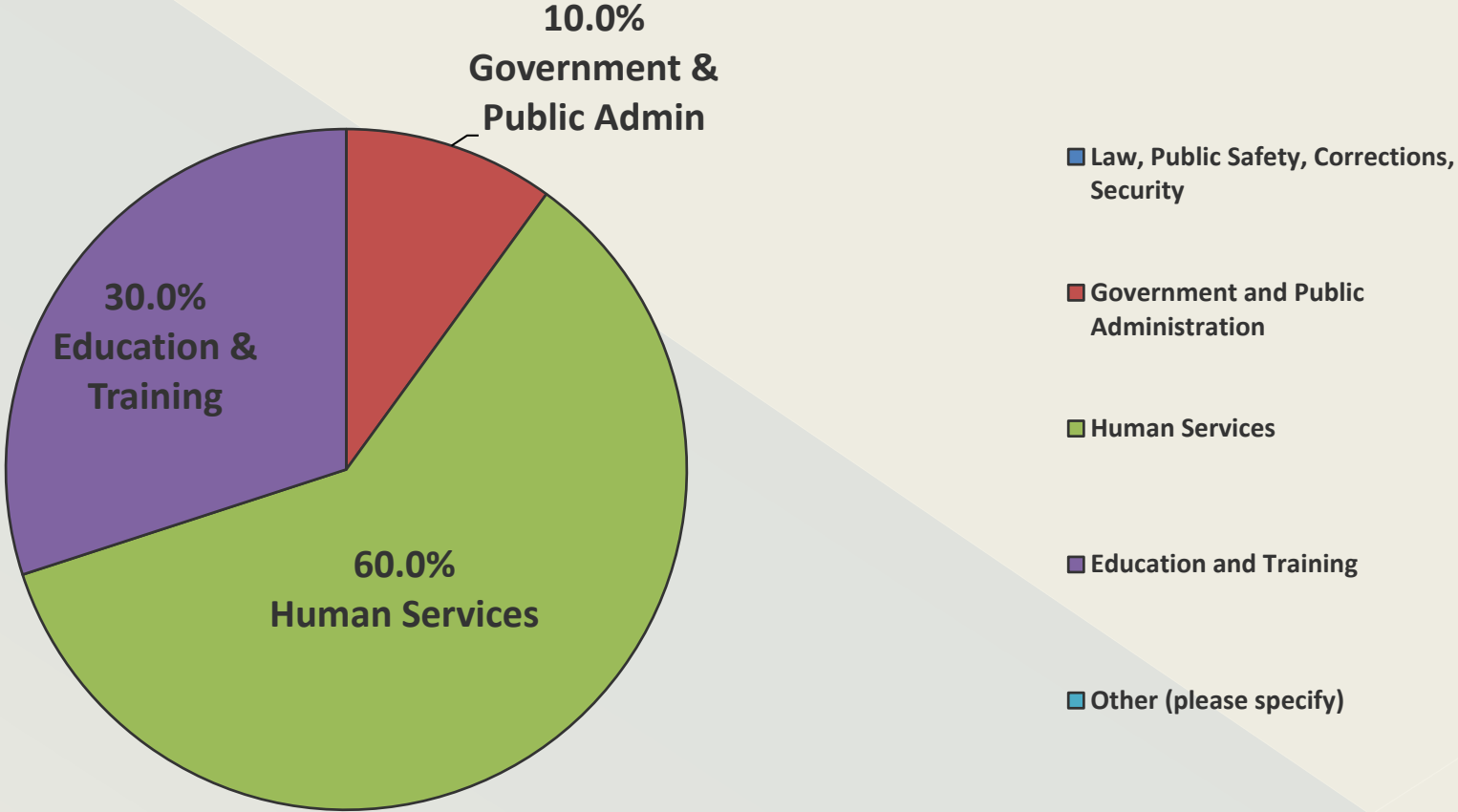
Response Count: 16

12. In the area of Health Science Technology, select which answer best describes your business:



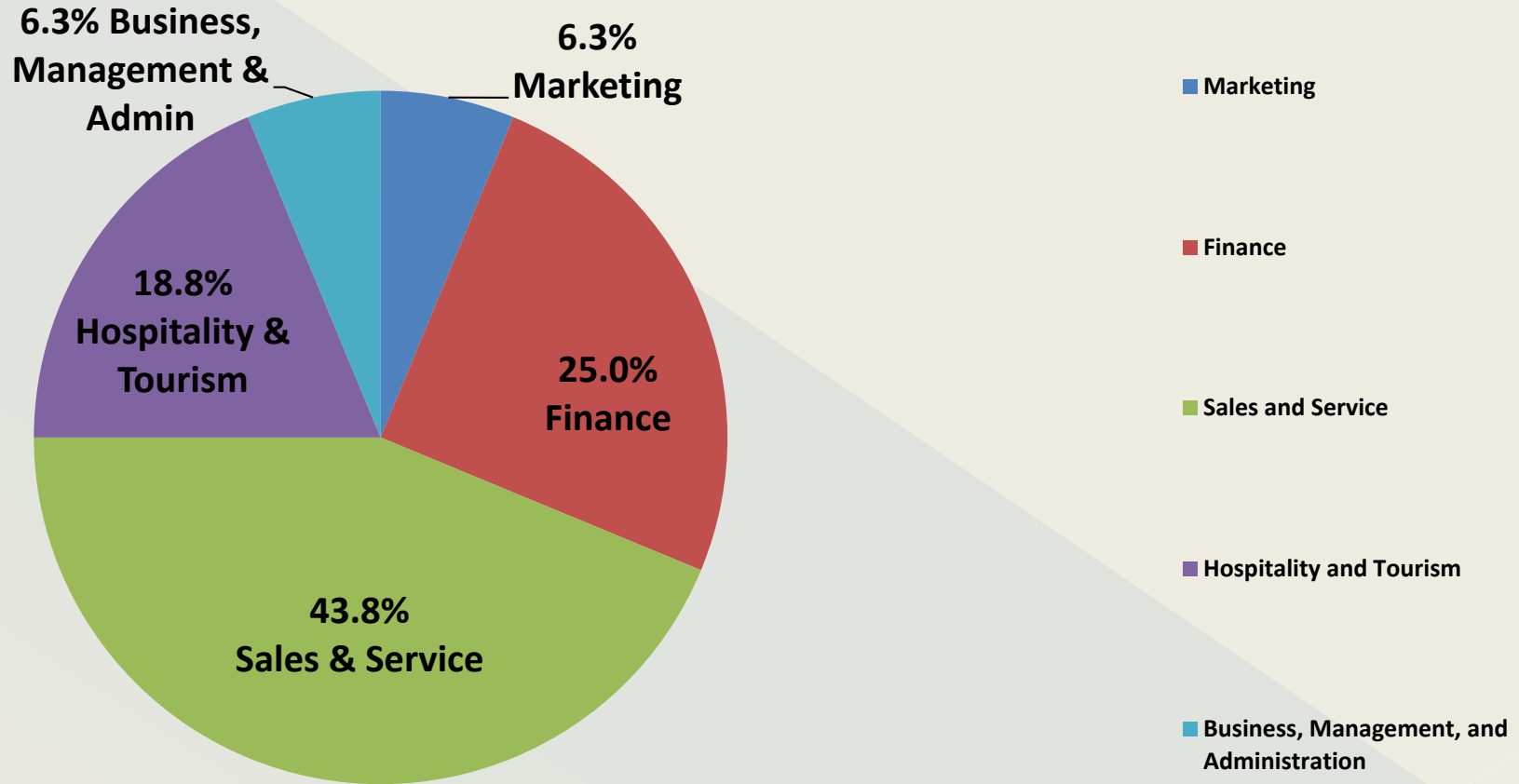
Response Count: 9

13. In the Human Services area, select which answer best describes your business:



Response Count: 19

14. In the Business, Management, and Administration area, select which answer best describes your business:



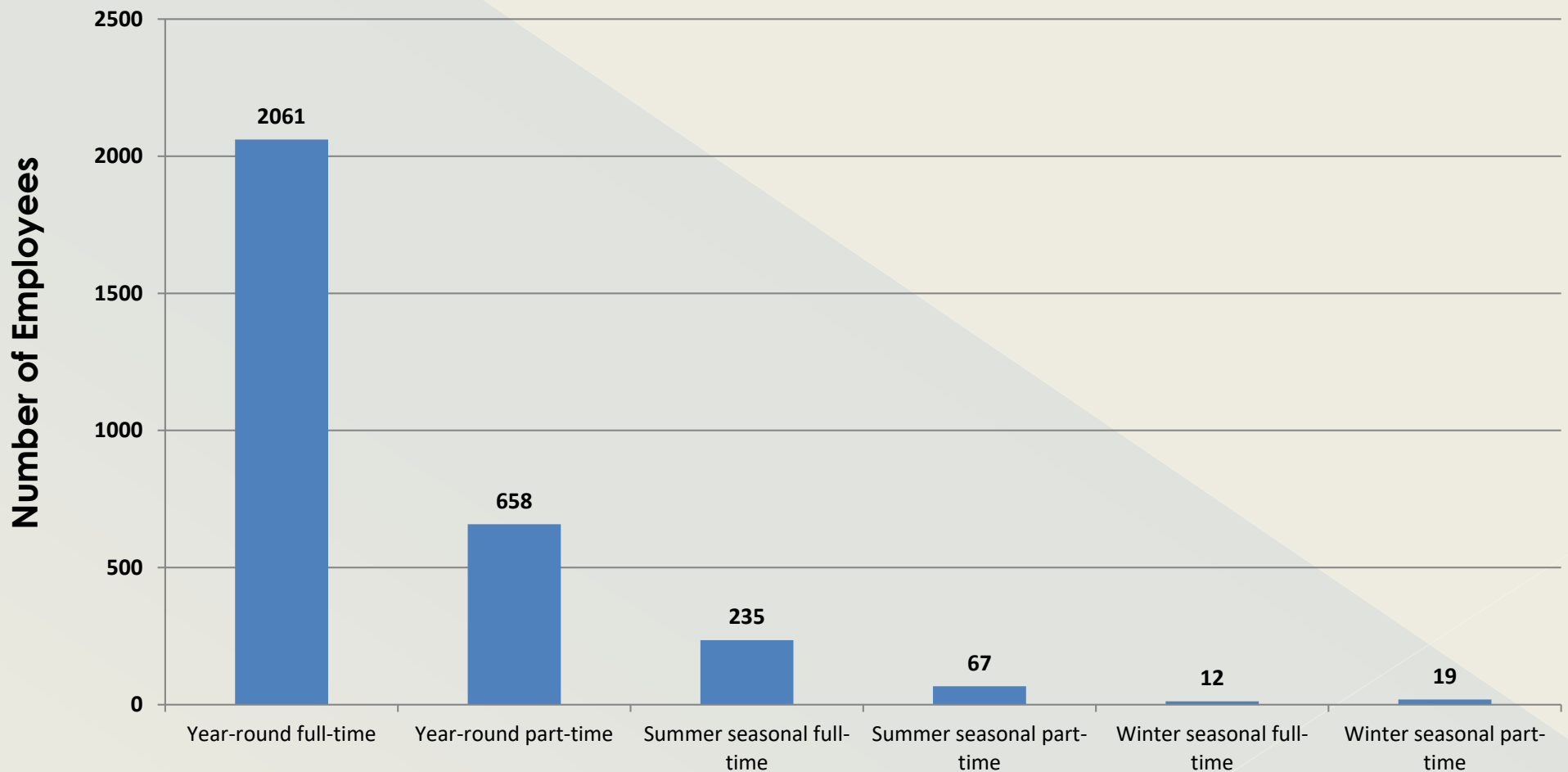
Response Count: 34

15. List the major products and services provided by this establishment. Responses grouped by industry classification system.

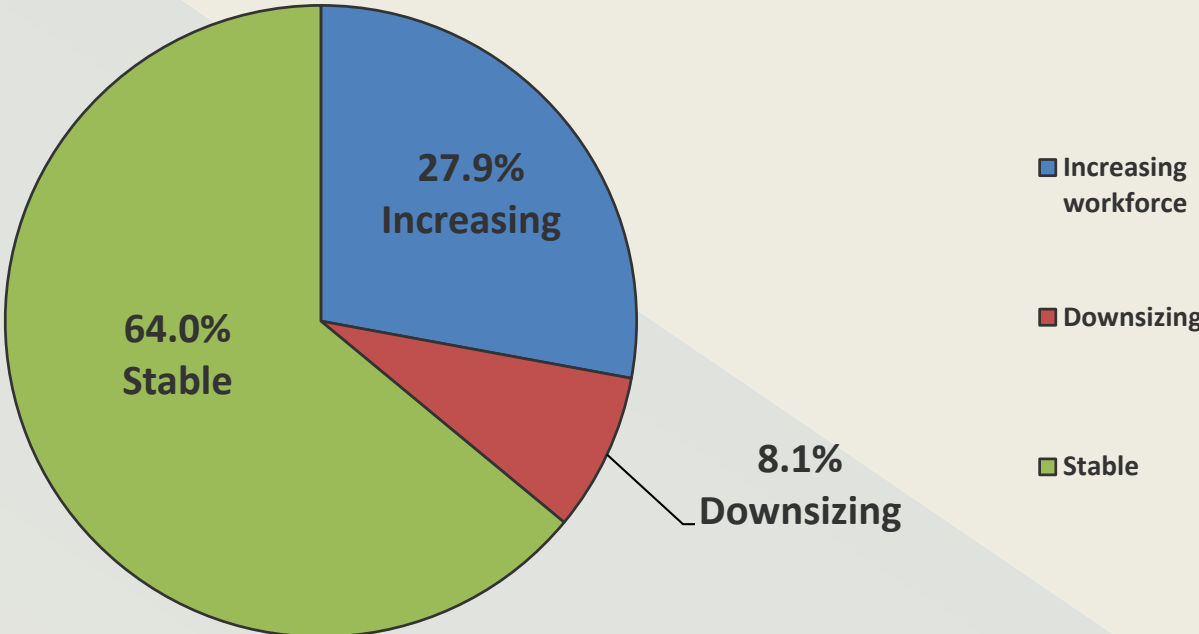
<p><u>Accommodation & Food Services</u> Food and Beverage Lodging Recreational Hotel/Motel</p>	<p><u>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting</u> State Land Management Timber and Land Sales</p>	<p><u>Arts, Entertainment & Recreation</u> Historical Education/Preservation Rental Space, Community Programs, Arts & Culture Visitor Services</p>	<p><u>Automotive Services</u> Auto Repair Tires Trailers Automotive Collision Repair Certified service on automobiles and trucks and certified body repairs Repair and refinishing of color coated items</p>
<p><u>Cleaning Services-Waste Management</u> Janitorial cleaning, carpet, floors, furniture. Fire and water restoration</p>	<p><u>Construction</u> Crushed Aggregates Plumbing & HVAC Underground Utilities, Logging, Cement and Aggregate supply Underground Construction, concrete, rock, sand, dirt</p>	<p><u>Education Services</u> Awarding the A.A. A.S. A.A.S. Certificate Degrees or Diplomas Education, community use of school building, transportation of students Employment and Career Training Public School</p>	<p><u>Finance and Insurance</u> Banking, Loans, Mortgages Banking Products Behavioral Health Claim Processing Financial Services - loans, deposits, financial planning, insurance Home, Auto, Commercial, Life and Health, Individual and Group Insurance</p>
<p><u>Health Care and Social Assistance</u> Advocacy for crime victims-Social Assistant Apartment living for those 55 plus, meal and chore services available Chiropractic Care, Footleveler's, Multivitamins Elderly Care and Dementia Support Family and Children Services Fitness classes, weight loss guidance and personal training Health and fitness Health Care Services & Outpatient Services Healthcare - Emergency, Inpatient, Outpatient, Clinic, Lab, X-ray and Therapy Services Home Care and Hospice Care Patient Care (listed 2 times) Personal Care Attendant Services Referral and program services to older adults and their support networks Skilled Nursing Facility - short and long term care and rehabilitation. Assisted Living - 24hr staffed long term care, Home Health Care - Skilled nursing, home health aide, therapy in patients home, Out-patient Therapy - PT, OT, ST to people of all ages, Housing with Services - Support for elders with "Activities of Daily Living" Surgery, vaccines, diagnostics, laboratory, pharmacy, therapy, resale</p>	<p><u>Information</u> Commercial Printing, Newspapers, Labels, Magazines, Posters Information and entertainment retrieval and distribution</p>	<p><u>Manufacturing</u> Apparel and promotional items Crown Royal Stoves - Outdoor Home/Business Heating Systems Dental appliance and indirect restorations Distribution of beer, soda and water Fiberboard Roof Insulation Pallets and Lumber Paper Making Valve Lifters</p>	<p><u>Professional, Scientific & Technical Services</u> Income and payroll tax reporting Legal services Website design, social media management, e-newsletter design, graphic design</p>
	<p><u>Public Administration</u> City Council and administration support services, law enforcement, Fire/Rescue/EMS, parks and recreation, water plant production and distribution, HUD Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance Liquor, water, sewer, street & highway maintenance Local Governmental Entity Project planning services, membership promotion, community advocacy Sanitary sewer and storm sewer collection systems, streets and general public works services, and VNP Headquarters/Garage ownership and maintenance</p>	<p><u>Real Estate, Rental and Leasing</u> Full Service Real Estate Sales Real Estate appraisals</p>	<p><u>Retail Trade</u> Apparel, Gifts and Souvenirs Convenience Stores & Bait Custom decorated apparel and accessories, specialty design services; Dry ice, walleye, gift shop Food-Grocery Store Furniture & Flooring Home Improvement Retail Trade Ladies and Men's Apparel New and used equipment for logging and agriculture, and parts to maintain equipment Office Supplies, Consumer Electronics Outdoor Sporting Goods Quilting fabrics & supplies Retail Drug Store and Gift Shop Sale of retail building materials and hardware</p>
		<p><u>Transportation & Warehousing</u> Rail Service and Equipment School Bus Services Specialized transportation of raw forest products and aggregate materials, Aggregate products, excavation and other dirt work services Towing</p>	
		<p><u>Utilities</u> Electricity Electrical services</p>	

16. How many paid employees currently work at this establishment (including yourself and family members)?

Total number of paid employees from all respondents by category.



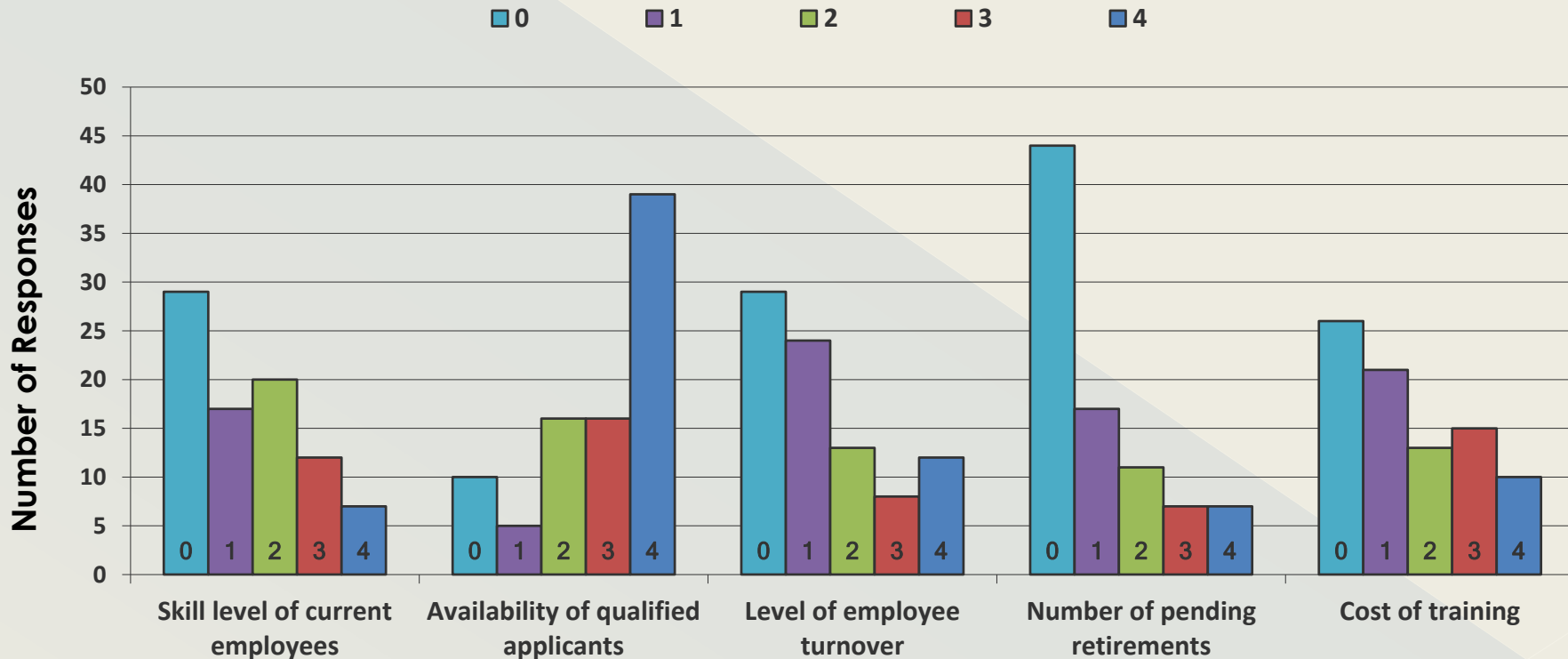
17. What is your current employment hiring state?



About 92% of Respondents indicate a stable or increasing workforce.

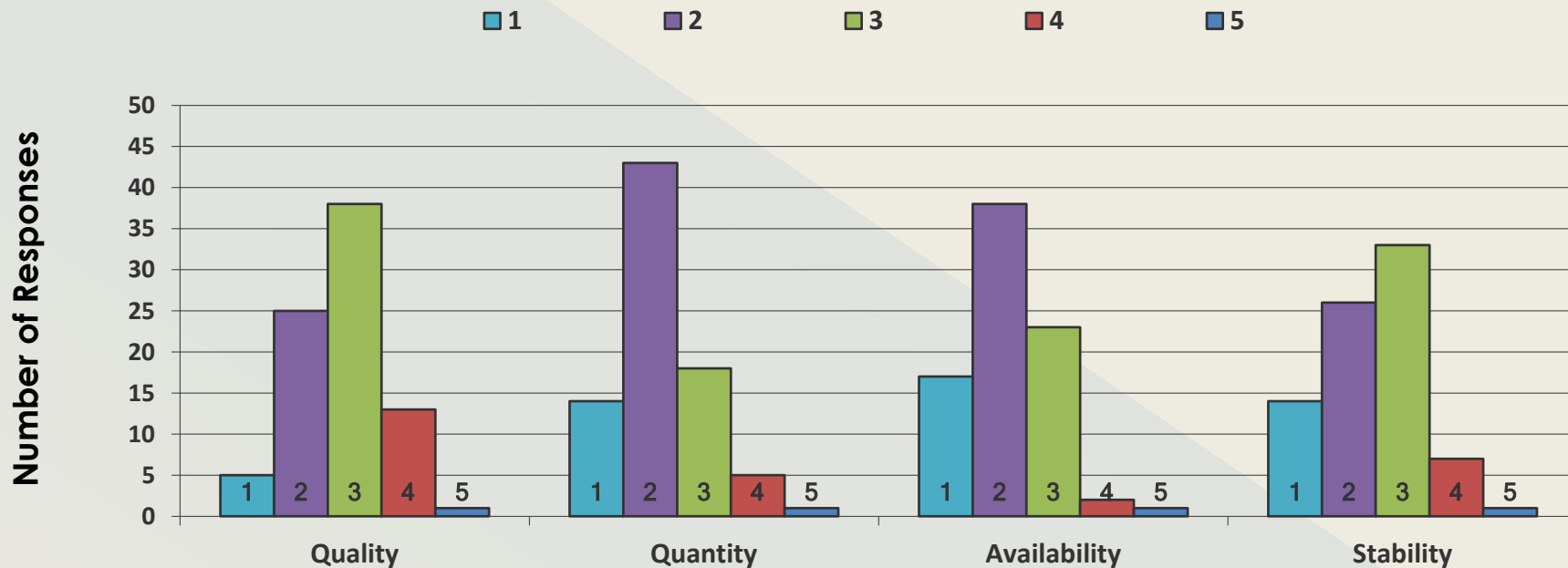
18. Are you concerned with any of the following issues?

Issues ranked 0-4 with 0 being no concern and 4 being of greatest concern.



19. How do you rate the workforce in the Koochiching County area?

Workforce ranked: 1 = Poor 2 = Below Average 3 = Average 4 = Above Average 5 = Excellent



Quality - 63% of businesses rate the **quality** of the workforce as average or better.

Quantity - 29% of businesses rate the **quantity** of the workforce as average or better.

Availability - 32% of businesses rate the **availability** of the workforce as average or better.

Stability - 50% of the businesses rate the **stability** of the workforce as average or better.

20. How many unfilled positions currently exist within your business?

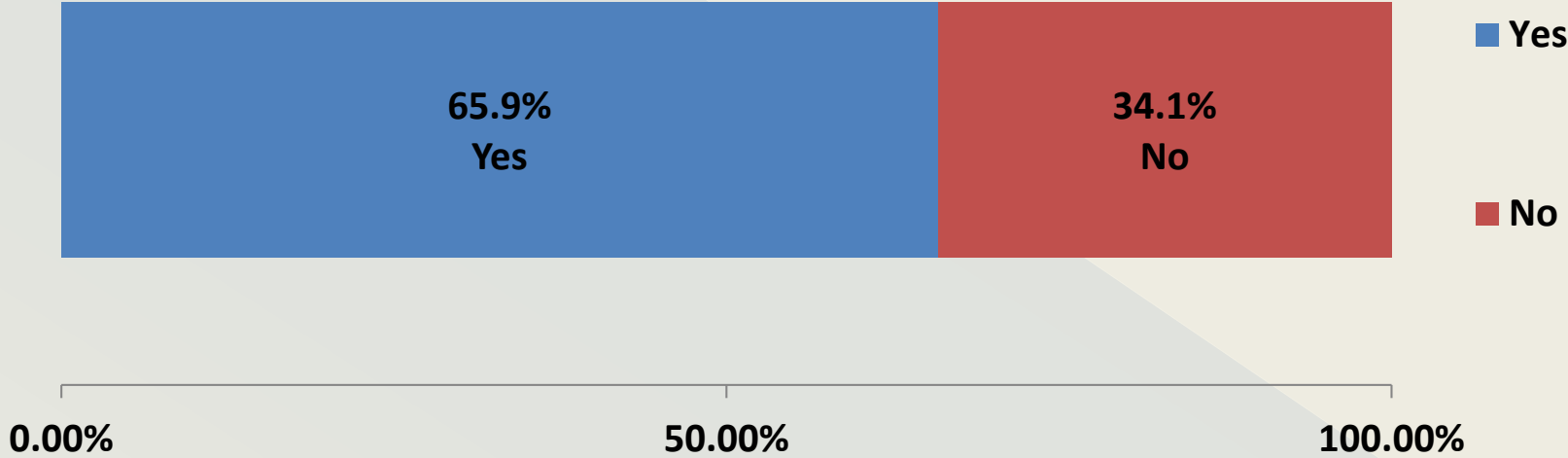
The table below indicates the number of unfilled positions that currently exist among employers completing the survey.

Given the raw data, 47% of these employers have a total of over 100 unfilled positions.

Unfilled Positions	Response Count
0	42
1	19
2-3	8
4-5	7
6-7	1
12+	2

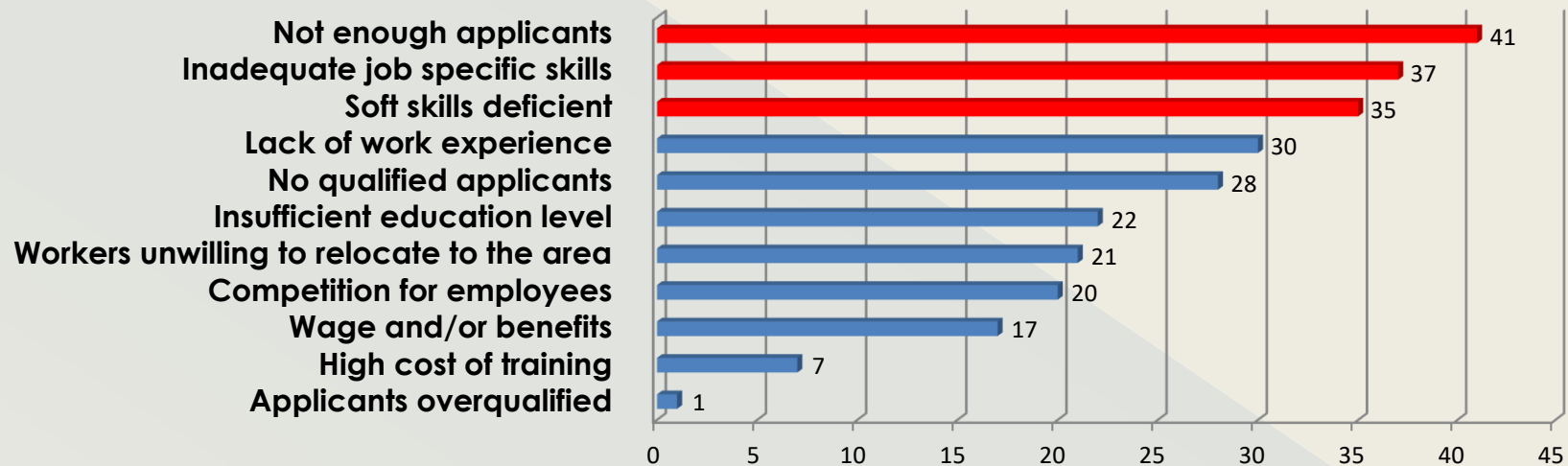
21. In the past 12 months, have you experienced difficulty in recruiting candidates?

Percentage of Responses



22. If you indicated recruiting difficulties, please check the items below which best describe the nature of recruiting problem.

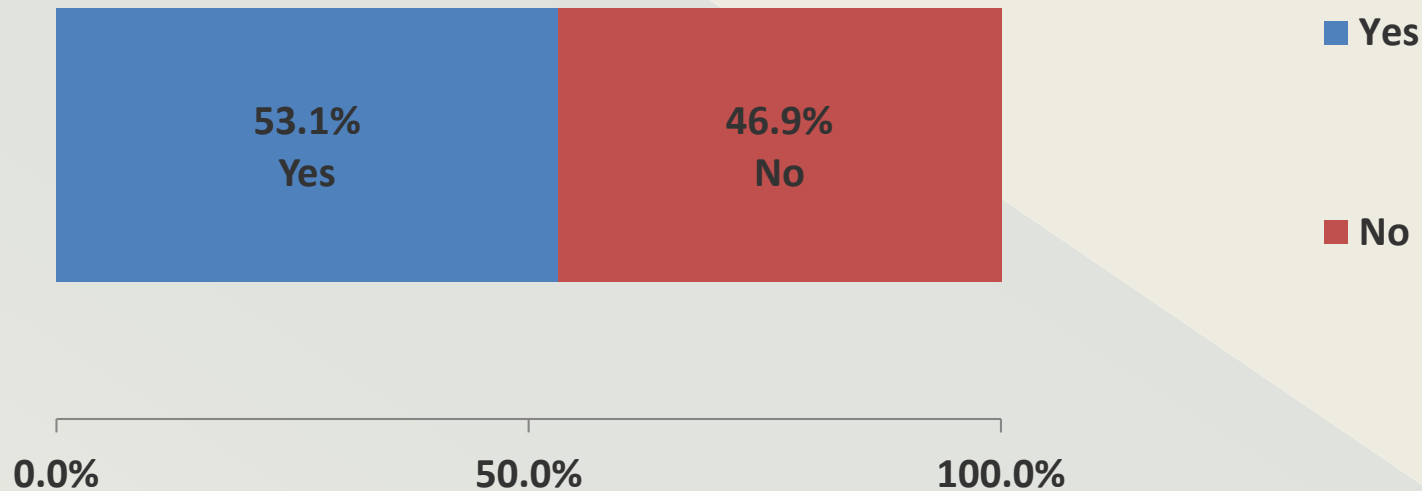
Nature of Recruiting Problems as Indicated by Respondents



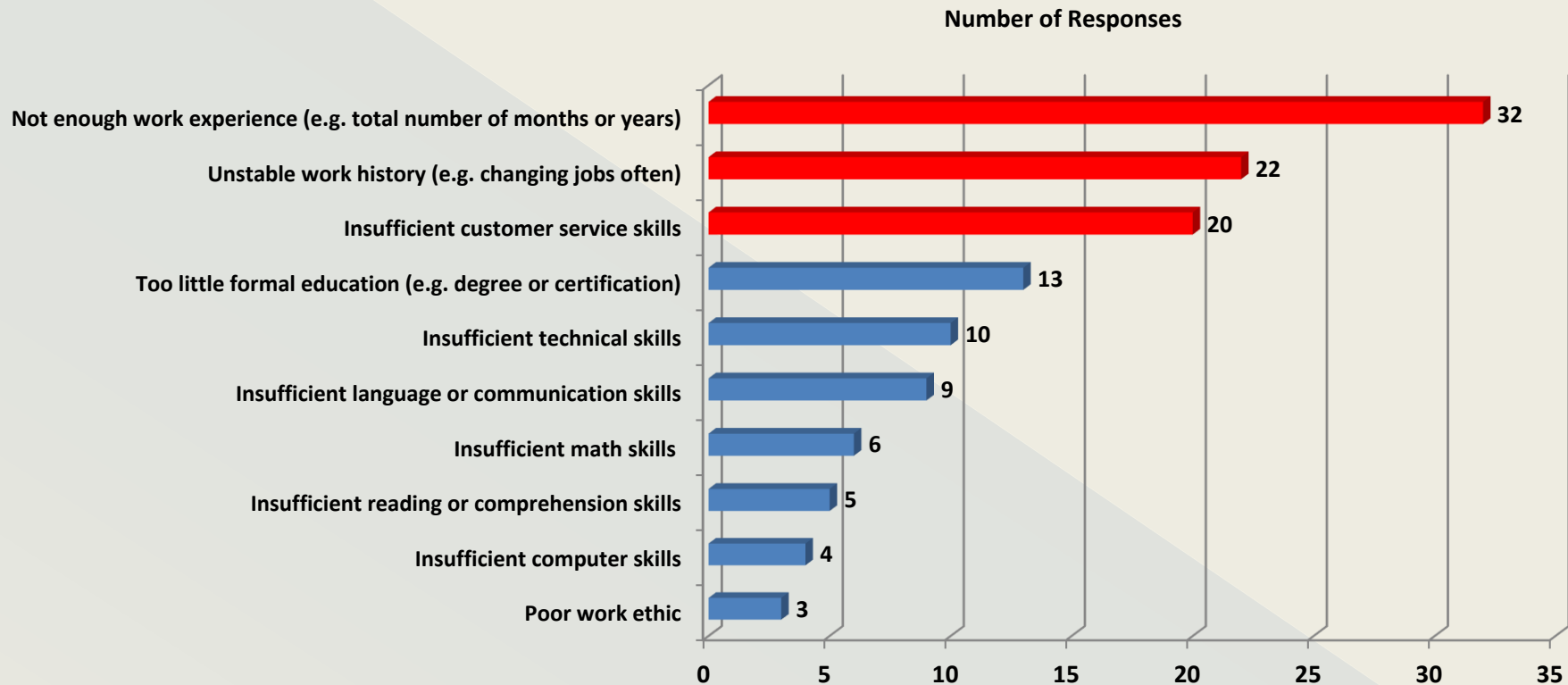
Of the businesses indicating recruiting difficulties, not having enough applicants ranked as the largest problem, followed by inadequate job specific skills and deficient soft skills.

23. Have you hired applicants who were under-qualified due to an inability to find qualified applicants?

Percentage of Responses



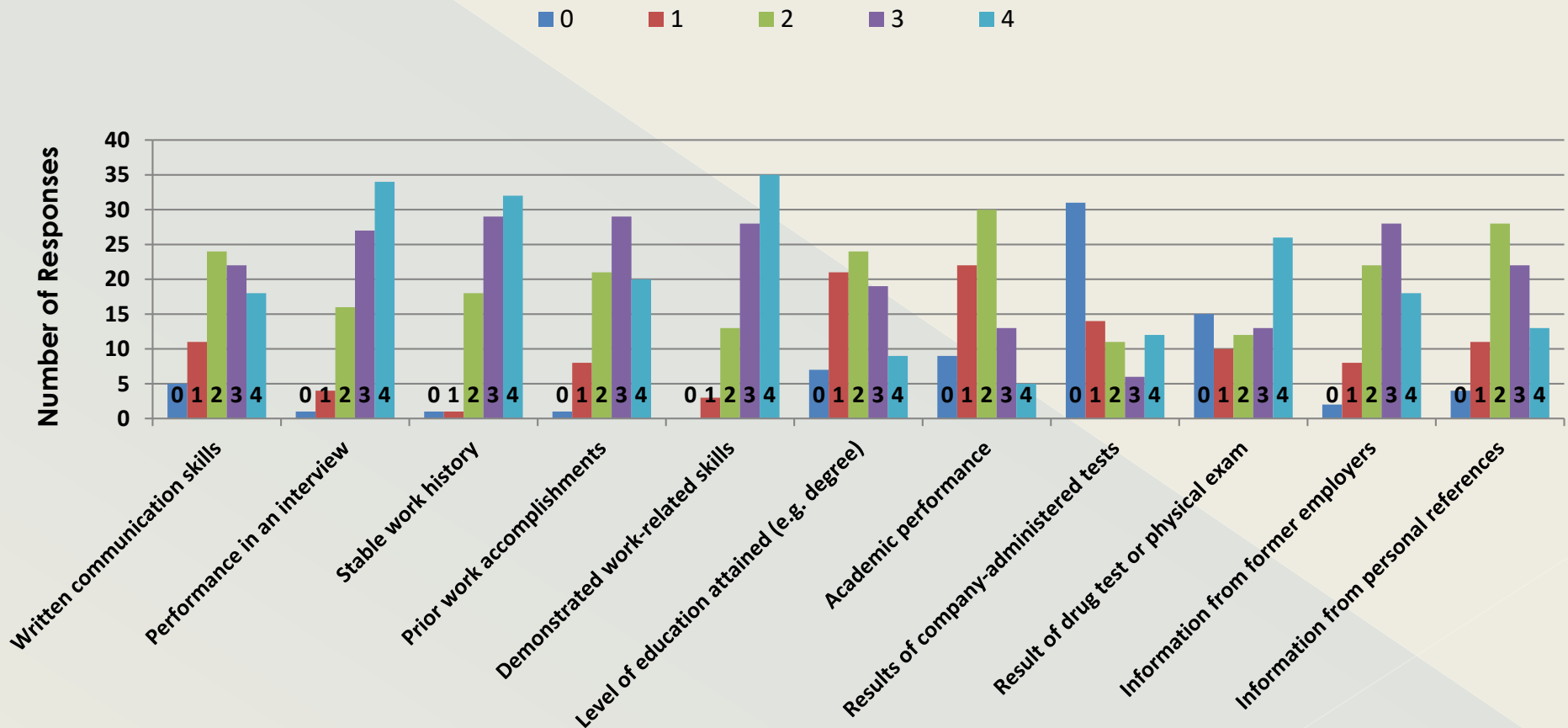
24. If you indicated you hired under-qualified applicants, how would you describe their deficiencies?



Respondents that signified they hired under-qualified applicants indicated not enough work experience, unstable work history, and insufficient customer service skills as the top three deficiencies.

25. Which of the following characteristics are most important in making your HIRING decisions?

Characteristics ranked 0-4 with 0 being not important and 4 being most important.



Other: Four respondents indicated a "strong work ethic".

26. List the top three positions your company has difficulty recruiting. Responses are grouped by occupations.

Architecture/Engineering Occupations

Engineers

Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media

Journalist

Graphic Designers

Building & Grounds Cleaning Maintenance

Cleaning staff

Custodian

Business Financial Operations

Estimator

Lending

Tax Preparer

Community/Social Service Occupations

Caregiver Consultant/Dementia Support Specialist

Job Coaches

Phone Advocate - Crisis Line (Part-time)

Supervised Visitation Worker

Youth Services Programmer

Computer Occupations

Computer Technician

Construction and Extraction Occupations

Electricians

Heavy equipment operator (listed 2 times)

Pipefitters

Education/Training/Library Occupations

Cataloger

Classroom Assistants

Faculty, Instructors, Teachers (listed 4 times)

Substitute Teachers

Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations

Logging

Food Preparation/Serving Occupations

General Manager

Manager Trainee

Office Manager

Bartender (listed 2 times)

Cook

Healthcare Practitioners/Technical Occupations

Veterinary Technicians

Doctors of Veterinary Medicine

Licensed Practical Nurse (listed 4 times)

Medical Lab Scientist (listed 2 times)

Paramedic

Personal Trainers (listed 3 times)

Pharmacist

Pharmacy Technician

Physicians (listed 4 times)

Radiology Technologist (listed 2 times)

Registered Nurses (listed 4 times)

Ultrasound Technician (listed 2 times)

Healthcare Support Occupations

Certified Nursing Assistants (listed 3 times)

Dental Technical Assistant

Home Health Aide (listed 2 times)

Veterinary Assistant

Installation, Maintenance & Repair Occupations

Auto Technicians

Garage Mechanic

Mechanic (listed 2 times)

Millwright (listed 2 times)

Service Technician

Life, Physical and Social Science Occupations

Biological Techs in Vegetation

Management Occupations

Administration

City Administrator

Executive Director

Finance Officer

Office and Administrative Support Occupations

Accounting

Claim Processors

Customer Service (listed 2 times)

Office Assistant (listed 4 times)

Office Administration/Timber Accounting

Reception

Secretary

Shipping

Teller

Personal Care & Service Occupations

Personal Care Attendant

Universal Workers

Visitor Services-temp

Production Laborer Occupations

Assembly

Boiler Operator

Dry Ice Cutter

Entry Level Labor (listed 2 times)

Licensed Water/Wastewater Operator

Press Brake / Laser Operator

Press Operator (listed 2 times)

Production Positions

Seasonal workers

Shop Hand

Shop Labor

Vehicle Painters

Protective Service Occupations

Law Enforcement-temporary

Sales & Related Occupations

Border Crossing Flyer Distributer

Clerks

Insurance Agent

Real Estate Agent

Sales Associate (listed 8 times)

Transportation & Material Moving

Bus drivers

Cement Truck Drivers

Class A Driver

Delivery & Maintenance

Delivery Driver

Detailer

Driver helper

School Bus Driver

Truck Drivers (listed 3 times)

27. What recruitment methods do you use to find job candidates?

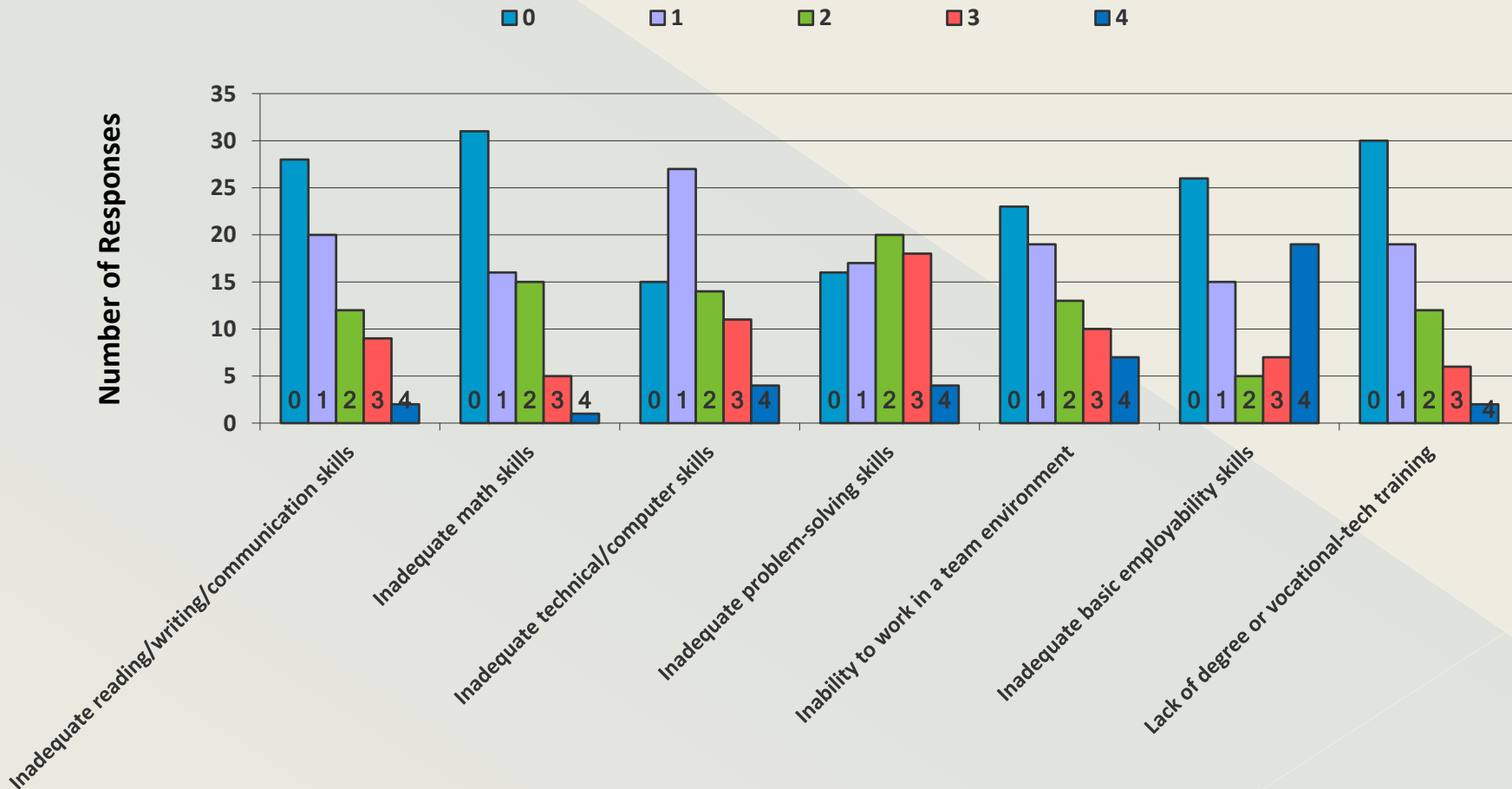
Recruitment Methods	Response Count
Word of mouth/referrals	72
Online job postings	56
Newspaper ads	55
Employment centers / Job Service	42
Company's own website	35
Unsolicited resumes	34
Trade or professional association publications/websites	15
On-site job posters	13
On-site recruitment at educational institutions	9
Job fairs	9
Unions or trade associations	6
Private search firms or temporary agencies	5

Word of mouth/referrals, online job postings, and newspaper ads were the top three recruitment methods.

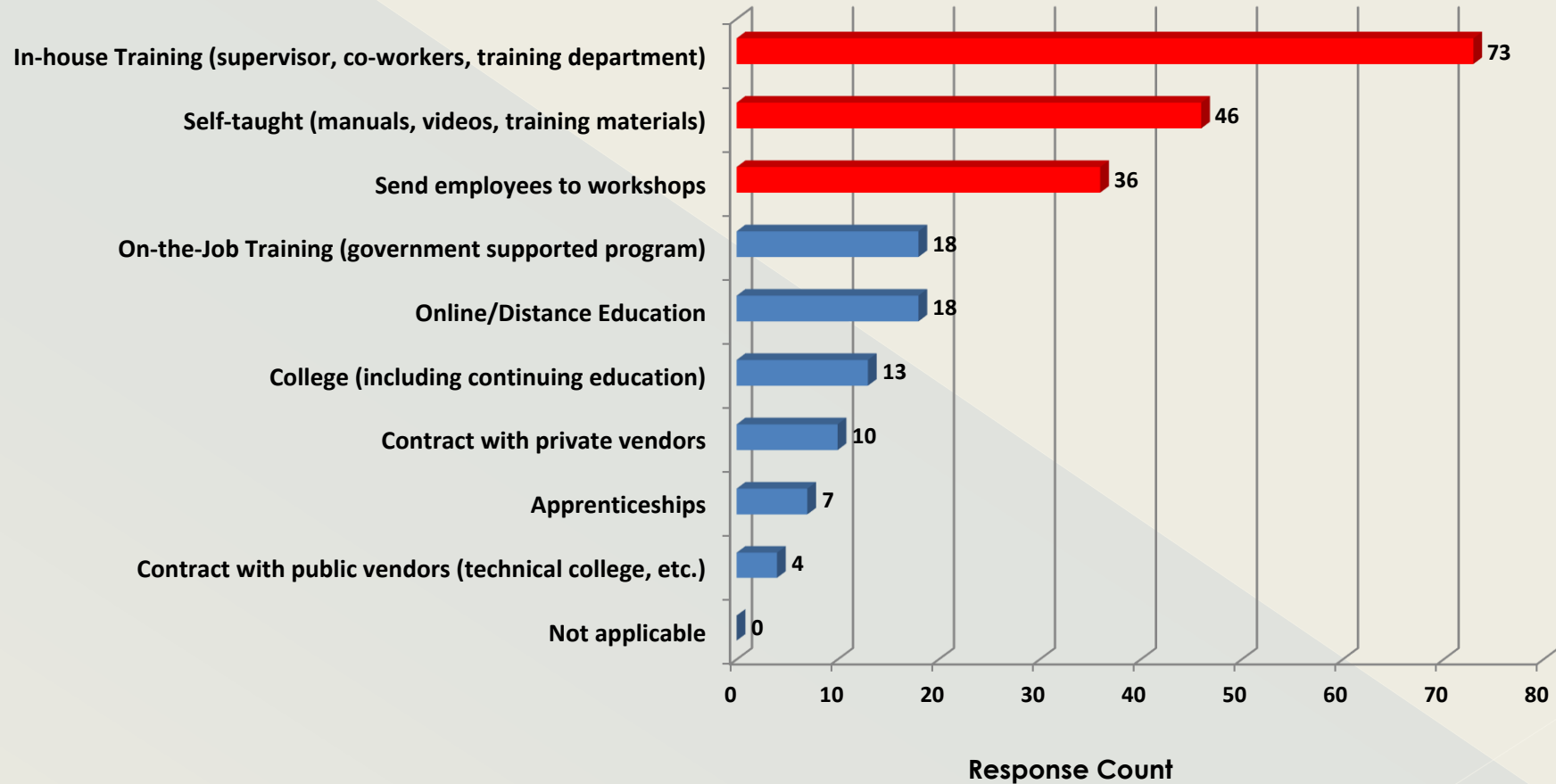
Comments: Respondents also mentioned use of social media, online job banks, and corporate offices as other methods of recruitment.

28. What are the most serious SKILL DEFICIENCIES among your CURRENT employees?

Skill deficiencies ranked 0-4 with 0 being not serious and 4 being the most serious.



29. How do you currently train your employees?



In-house training, self taught, and sending employees to workshops were the 3 highest responses.

30. Select up to three preferred training formats from outside providers:

<u>Training Format</u>	<u>Response Count</u>
Customized on-site training	38
Web-based training	30
Customized off-site training	22
Partial-day workshop	17
One-day seminar	17
Self-study printed material	15
Multi-day conference	12
Series of daily classes	6
Series of weekly classes	3

31. What type of GENERAL skills training do your employees need?

Answer Options

Response Count

Soft Skills (Work ethic, attitude, attendance, problem solving, teamwork, etc.)	56
Interpersonal Communications	50
Safety	31
Reading and Writing	30
Basic Math	28
Specialized Equipment Operations	20
Basic Accounting	6
None	5
English as a Second Language	3

Additional Comments: Self directed, professional general customer service, supervisory, computer - typing, search engines, programs.
Lifting, heavy-duty equipment, electrical, general building safety.
Varies based on groups of employees, decision making skills.
Training to allow current staff to achieve the next level in their career.
LPN, RN, Laboratory Technician, MRI certification, Ultra sonographer.

32. What type of MANAGERIAL skills training do your employees need?

<u>Answer Options</u>	<u>Response Count</u>
Employee Management	28
Recordkeeping	27
None	26
Inventory Control	20
Project Management	18
Financial Management	15
Business Planning	10

Additional Comments: If anything, they need opportunities for us to expand.
Varies based on groups of employees.
Most skills listed only apply to our managers.

33. What type of PROFESSIONAL skills training do your employees need?

Answer Options

Response count

Customer Service	45
Leadership	25
Sales	21
Marketing	16
None	13
Lean Six Sigma/Process Improvement	10
Other (please specify):	

In our area, besides the school, it is all on-the-job.

34. What type of COMPUTER skills training do your employees need?

Answer Options

Response Count

Spreadsheets	27
Word Processing	24
None	22
Social Media Management	19
Web Site Management	17
Database Management	15
Graphic Design and Layout	6
Computer-aided Design	4
Computer Installation and Repair	3
Computer Programming	2
Other (please specify):	

Learning specific software programs for our computers.

Sometimes just basic skills on how to use a computer, then we provide specific training on how to use our programs.

Running current computer software.

Please just look to spend money when a business shows interest.

Outlook/E-mail.

Cash register.

Specific company data base and GIS training handled in house.

35. What type of MANUFACTURING/INDUSTRIAL skills training do your employees need?

Answer Options

Response Count

None	41
Mechanical/Equipment Maintenance	13
Forklift Operation	10
Quality Control	9
Electrical	7
Welding	7
Diagnostics	5
Blueprint Reading	4
Production Processes	2
Machining	1
Other (please specify):	

Industry specific training-bike repair and skate sharpening.

36. Please list specialized MEDICAL skills your employees need? If none, please leave blank.

Bloodborne Pathogens

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation CPR (listed 6 times)

Care Planning

Certified Nursing Assistant (listed 2 times)

Computerized Tomography CT

Emergency Medical Technician

First Aid (listed 6 times)

First Responder

Home Health Aide

Licensed Practical Nurse

Magnetic Resonance Imaging MRI

Medical Equipment

Medical Laboratory Technician MLT

Medications Administration (listed 2 times)

Nurse Practitioner

Phlebotomist

Physical Assessment

Physician

Physician Assistant

Radiology Technician

Registered Nurse (listed 2 times)

Ultrasound

Work Ethic

*One response unless otherwise noted.

37. Please list other SPECIALIZED skills or EQUIPMENT skills training your employees need? If none, please leave blank.

25/50 ton vessel training
Aviation maintenance training
Boiler training
Child Development
Class A truck drivers
Communication
DOT Qualified
Electrical, pump maintenance
Emergency response training
Equipment operation
FLETC accredited law enforcement academy
Heavy equipment operation
Instructor certification
Lab work
Maintenance staff could use specialized training on equipment and systems

Mechanic
Medical terminology and coding
Motorboat training
Painting, frame straightening, welding, bodywork
Personal and group training
Piloting
Press operation and maintenance
School bus driving
Skilled equipment operators
Skilled foremen
Soft skills and basic equipment maintenance
Training on the software that we use
Trainings are available already
Use of mechanical lift equipment
Wastewater operator training

* Single response for each skill noted.

38. Please list training topics that would benefit your workforce needs. If none, please leave blank.

Basic job/life skills that help people be successful at work and home

Boiler test training

Care that the company is successful

Commercial Trucking Driving

Communication

Conflict resolution

CPR/1st Aid

Customer service (listed 6 times)

Dementia

Good work habits

Graphic design

How to be a supervisor

Infection Control

Interpersonal communication skills

Leadership/Mentorship

Managing/leading staff - delegating

Motivating employees

Positive teaching/feedback methods

Resources for children (day care)

Safety

Sales

Social Media

Soft Skills, and basic equipment maintenance

Structuring life and work so they can come to work, have good attendance, and focus on their jobs

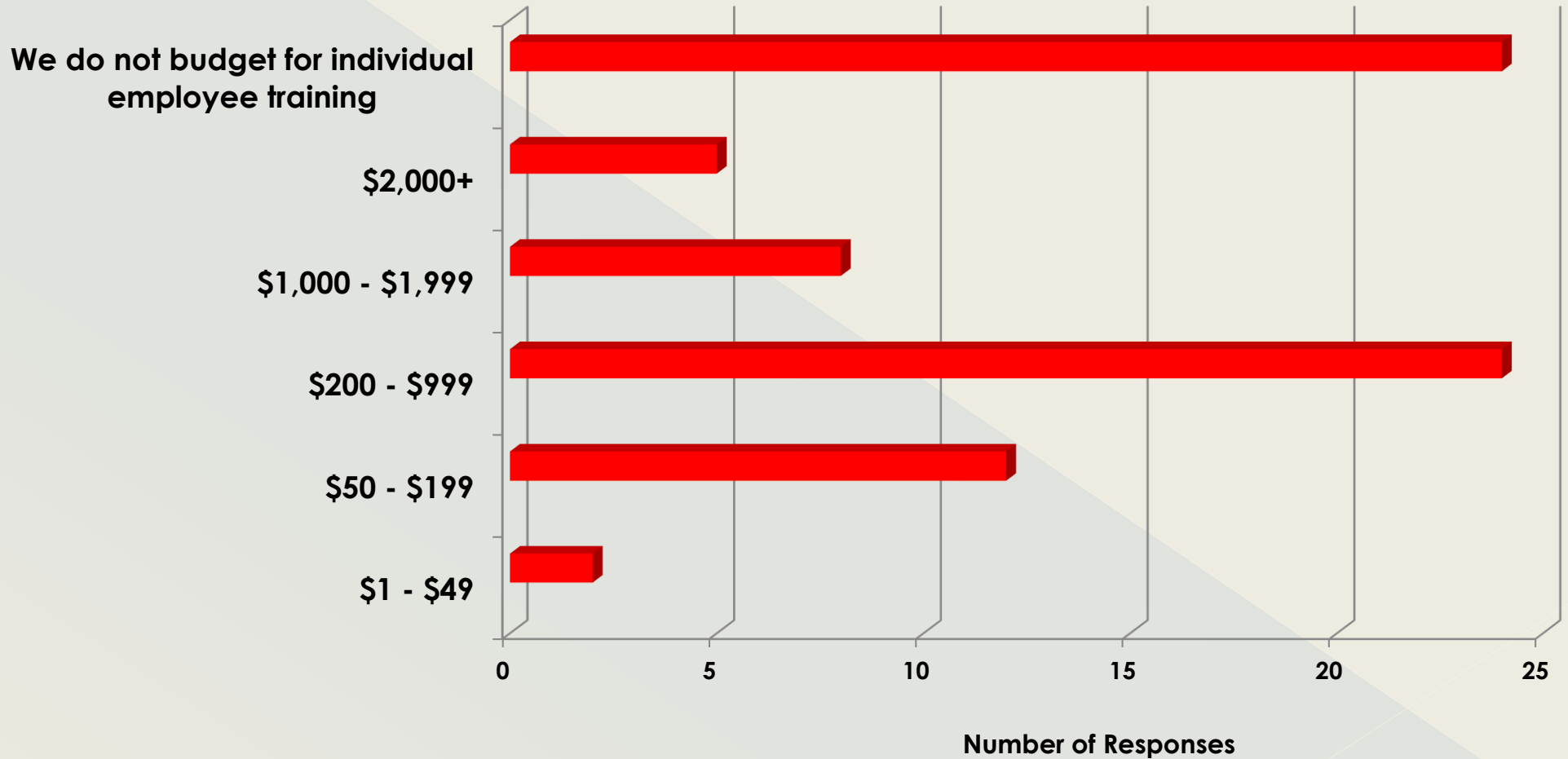
Work ethics

One response unless otherwise noted.

39. Please list license(s) or certificate(s) your company requires? If none, please leave blank.

25/50 Ton Vessel License
40 hour training in Domestic Violence and
40 hour training on Sexual Assault - after hire
Activity Professional
Advanced Critical Life Support
American Power Conversion
Associate Professional Counselor-APC
Bartender
Biosolids
Boiler Operator (listed 4 times)
Bus driver license
Commercial Driver's License/Class A (listed 5 times)
Class B Driver's License (listed 2 times)
Class D Driver's License
Certified Nursing Assistant (listed 3 times)
Child Development Credential
Certified Management Accountant
CPR-Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (listed 2 times)
Computerized Tomography
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
Electrical
Electrical Lineworker Journeyman
Forklift
Health Information Management
High school diploma
Infection control preventionist
Instructor certification
Insurance producer
Licensed Nursing Home Administrator
Life & Health, Property & Casualty Insurance licenses
Locomotive engineers conductor certification
Medical Gas
Medical Coding ICD-10 Coding
Medical Doctor (listed 2 times)
Medical Lab Technician (listed 2 times)
Motorboat Operator Certificate
Magnetic Resonance Imaging
Mine Safety and Health Administration
Neonatal Resuscitation Program
Nursing Assistant Registered
Nurse Practitioner (listed 6 times)
Occupational Therapy
OSHA 10 Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Passport/Nexus
Personal Care Assistant (listed 2 times)
Pesticide Applicators
Pharmacist (listed 2 times)
Pharmacy Technician
Physical therapy
Plumbing
POST for Police Officers
Radiology Technician certified in Mammography (listed 2 times)
Real Estate Salesperson (Agent)
Registered Nurse (listed 5 times)
Senior Living Manager Certificate
Social Work License (listed 2 times)
Speech Therapy
Steam
Teaching license/Content Area
Ultrasound (listed 2 times)
Water and Wastewater (listed 5 times)

40. Please select which of the following best describes your company's training budget per employee/per year.



41 a. Please provide any additional comments you would like to share regarding workforce issues facing your business.

Response Regarding Lack of Unified Economic Development Plan

- It gets to the point of just having meetings is just that, meetings, and then more meetings about the meetings. I have not heard of plans for business and when we had an employer interested and needed backing, they were sent down the road instead of asking the community in our area to see if it would be interested in supporting. You get a chance like that once every 20 years.

Responses Relative to Qualified Applicants

- There is a lack of labor pool in the area and continues to get worse.
- Very few qualified applicants for job openings. We usually select a good candidate – but not many to choose from.
- In the education realm, specialized instructors in certain fields at the high school level and special education seem to be toughest to find qualified employees.
- Part-time bus drivers are a challenge as well.
- Licensed boiler men have been difficult when we have had to replace.
- Severe shortage of people willing to go through CDL training for potential very low income.
- We have been very fortunate to find the staff we currently have. The only problems that really face our company as far as workforce has been the amount of applicants applying for specialized positions and losing workforce to Boise. We do a lot of on the job training.
- This response is not specific to "your business," but all Minnesota communities need to be aware of the recent demographic changes occurring with "Baby Boomer" retirements, the population growth needed to fill job vacancies and fill the new jobs to be created, and the need for employees with the appropriate skill sets to fill the job vacancies. Twin Cities projections are that there will be 100,000 more jobs than people to fill them in 2020. We cannot promote business retention, expansion, and recruitment in Koochiching County without skilled labor to meet the demand.

41b. Please provide any additional comments you would like to share regarding workforce issues facing your business.

Responses Relative to Employee Retention

- My biggest hurdle is being able to pay employees enough to retain them.
- Health insurance - insurance of all types is way too high.
- Small nonprofits in rural communities have difficulty attracting skilled workers who are also able to work without high wages and benefits - a small pool.
- One large concern/issue we have is lack of availability of day cares with flexible schedules!!!!
- Young adult employees need daycare opportunities for their young children if we expect them to be available to work early morning or evening hours.
- I prefer to hire high school students. I would like to see a business program they can join in the area. There are no opportunities in town to earn an associates degree in business or marketing.
- Often times our biggest competitor to get and keep people in the workforce is government aide - either people don't need to work or the more they work the less benefits they receive.

Responses Relative to Employee Soft Skills and Work Ethic

- We don't have a large workforce so not many issues. Issues arise with seasonal worker positions which are normally high-school age.
- Work ethic is almost non-existent.
- It is getting harder to find people who want to work.
- Everyone wants to show up but nobody cares if the job gets done or is on budget.
- It's hard to find people that actually care about the finished product. Too many feel that it's a case of good enough, its done. We want quality, not quantity.
- As an employer and a customer of other businesses in our area, I feel that soft skills and customer service are really lacking in our area in general. I believe that focusing on getting our workforce to have better work ethic, attention to detail, and customer service skills would go a long way in boosting tourism in our area as well as creating a more productive workforce. These are the skills that go a long way in any position in any industry.
- Our company has been very fortunate to have a great crew of employees for the past several years. Often the employees who we have the most trouble with do not make the effort to be on time or be sure that their equipment is having its regular maintenance.

41 c. Please provide any additional comments you would like to share regarding workforce issues facing your business.

Responses Relative to Employer Needs

- Rightsizing the institution based upon financial constraints.
- Volunteer recruiting
- Our employees need to pass a state background check. Some applicants cannot pass.
- Auto Technicians are in high demand with no pool of applicants even with training available. At least 3 local business are actively searching for tech's. We offer through our franchise free college courses to full and part-time employees. In advertising positions, we are surprised of the lack of interest in that program. The program is designed for working people and is very flexible and is completely on-line. Somehow, I feel that speaks to a lack of vision in the job pool or at least a lack of understanding on how to build skills that will lead to better jobs and increased income. We have also seen that the younger workforce has more demands such as flexible hours and more time off. The younger workforce seems to expect more from the business. Often those expectations are unrealistic. Those expectations include the rate of advancements (pay) without necessarily putting in the training or time to justify the increases.
- We have many resources and programs available to help people gain employment and the ability for people to move up (be promoted) in our organization. Would like help from area agencies to help get the word out for people to take advantage of these opportunities and to help support people to be successful employees.
- My need for employees is very specific. They need to be licensed by the State of MN. Many people say they are interested in the career, but they fail to see it as running their own business. And, they don't have the resources to wait the several months that it may take to receive their first paycheck.

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Voyage Forward Workforce Development Destiny Driver

Develop a skilled, trained and educated workforce that meets the needs of the area.

Co-Champions: Tammy Riley and Sheila Demenge
Committee Stewards: Nancy Rognerud, Tammy Cook, Jean Evens, Todd Coulombe,
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