



EmployerOne Survey Observations MARCH 2016



Bruce County • Grey County • Huron County • Perth County

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Four County Labour Market Planning Board (FCLMPB) is a community-directed, not-for-profit corporation assisting Bruce, Grey, Huron and Perth counties in its approach to workforce development and labour market planning. Our mission is to plan and promote local labour market strategies to meet the challenges of a changing economy.

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The views of this document do not necessarily reflect those of Employment Ontario.



The Four County Labour Market Planning Board is a member of:



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HIGHLIGHT OBSERVATIONS

The general conditions of the local labour market set the stage for survey responses. According to Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey, between 2014 and 2015, the Four County labour market changed significantly: the number of people in the labour force declined by 5,000; the number of people employed declined by 6,100; and the number of people unemployed increased by only 1,100. In addition, the 2015 unemployment rate in the region was 5.7 percent and Ontario's was 6.8 percent, suggesting a tighter supply of local labour.

LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS

68% Respondents felt the availability of qualified workers was fair or poor

 No improvement from the previous year



Agriculture and Construction

80% Sector respondents reported the availability of qualified workers was fair or poor



Accommodation and Food Services and Manufacturing

75% Sector respondents reported the availability of qualified workers was fair or poor

3,084

New Jobs Created



1,458

Were full-time

352 of 425 surveyed businesses created at least one job in 2015

6%

Workers who quit their job or retired in 2015

HIRING



Jobs were created in a wide range of occupations; however the majority of jobs were created in occupations requiring less formal skills

Aa



Business geographic area of recruitment mainly focuses on the four county area

202 of 352 businesses surveyed found some positions hard to fill

Top reasons positions were hard to fill:

- ✗ not enough applicants
- ✗ lack of qualifications
- ✗ lack of motivation, attitude or interpersonal abilities

TRAINING

74%

or 326 of surveyed businesses provided ongoing training and education opportunities for their employees

Main barriers to provide training

Cost



Loss of productivity



Relevant training is not offered locally



LOW RISK

The risk of losing employees after training them is low, only 4.3 percent of employees quit their job in 2015

TOP COMPETENCIES REQUIRED

Top employee competencies identified by respondents:



- ✓ work ethic
- ✓ self-motivation/ability to work with little or no supervision
- ✓ teamwork/interpersonal
- ✓ customer service

BACKGROUND

The EmployerOne Survey was conducted for the second time in January 2016 for the four county area, which includes the counties of Bruce, Grey, Huron and Perth. In total, 488 businesses responded to the survey; 425 businesses completed the survey (all questions); and 63 businesses completed most of the questions in the survey. Collectively, respondents represented 23,751 employees. These business respondents provided valuable insights regarding their labour market perspectives.

While businesses face many obstacles, the goal of the survey is to understand their labour market challenges in order to provide direction on activities and initiatives that will minimize labour issues.

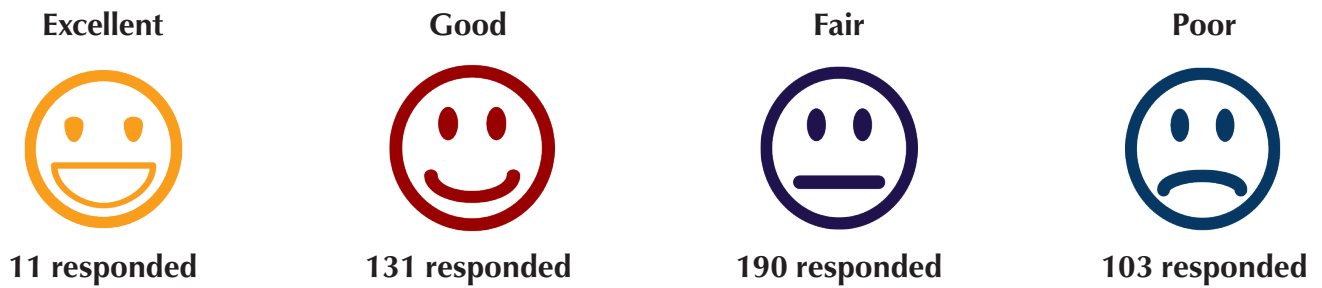
GENERAL LABOUR MARKET CONDITIONS

The general conditions of the local labour market set the stage for survey responses. According to Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey, between 2014 and 2015 the four county area labour market changed significantly, with 6,100 less people employed. The number of unemployed persons increased by 1,100. Even with more people unemployed in 2015, the decline of 5,000 people in the labour force suggests fewer people are either working or available to work.

As one would expect, the unemployment rate rose between 2014 and 2015 but only from 4.8 percent to 5.7 percent, as 4,600 people dropped out of the labour force (were no longer working or looking for work). In addition, the fact that the four county area still has a lower unemployment rate than Ontario, 5.7 percent versus 6.8 percent, suggests a tighter supply of local labour.

AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED WORKERS

When business respondents were asked how they rate the availability of qualified workers in the Four County Area:



Between 2015 and 2016, there was no change with how respondents rated the availability of qualified workers.

	January 2015	January 2016
Responded Excellent	2.7%	2.5%
Responded Good	29.7%	30.1%
Responded Fair	43.8%	43.7%
Responded Poor	23.7%	23.7%

AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED WORKERS BY COUNTY

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Bruce County	2.9%	39.7%	39.7%	17.6%
Grey County	1.5%	28.7%	43.4%	26.5%
Huron County	1.5%	23.3%	50.4%	24.8%
Perth County	5.1%	34.7%	37.8%	22.4%

AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED WORKERS BY SECTOR

	No. of Companies	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing Hunting Sector	32	2	4	17	9
Mining, Quarrying Sector	2	1	0	0	1
Utilities Sector	6	0	3	2	1
Construction Sector	28	0	5	12	11
Manufacturing Sector	64	0	14	27	23
Wholesale Trade	4	0	1	1	2
Retail Trade Sector	60	1	22	28	9
Transportation and Warehousing Sector	6	0	1	3	2
Information and Cultural Sector	7	0	2	5	0
Finance and Insurance Sector	18	0	5	8	5
Real Estate & Rental and Leasing Sector	5	0	3	2	0
Professional, Scientific, Technical Sector	35	1	11	12	11
Management of Companies Sector	3	1	0	1	1
Administrative Support, Waste Management Sector	1	0	0	1	0
Educational Services	12	0	7	4	1
Health Care and Social Assistance Sector	46	1	16	17	12
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation Sector	17	0	8	8	1
Accommodation and Food Services Sector	24	0	6	11	7
Other services (except public admin) Sector	32	2	4	17	9
Public Administration	24	2	8	14	0

Sectors* where at least 75 percent of employers identify worker availability as Fair or Poor:

- Agriculture (81%)
- Construction (82%)
- Manufacturing (75%)
- Accommodation and Food Services (75%)
- Other Services (81%)

*Only includes sectors with 10 or more companies responding

TOP EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED

When asked to identify the top employee competencies, survey respondents reiterated the importance of:

- Work ethic, dedication, dependability
- Customer service
- Self-motivated/ability to work with little or no supervision
- Teamwork/interpersonal
- Communication (both oral and written)

When asked to identify the top employee competencies for hard to fill positions, survey respondents reiterated the importance of:

- Work ethic, dedication, dependability
- Self-motivated/ability to work with little or no supervision
- Technical
- Teamwork/interpersonal
- Customer service

Employees and those seeking employment need to understand that employers require soft skills. The absence of soft skills negatively affects the quality of worker regardless of occupation.

EMPLOYMENT DYNAMICS



HIRING

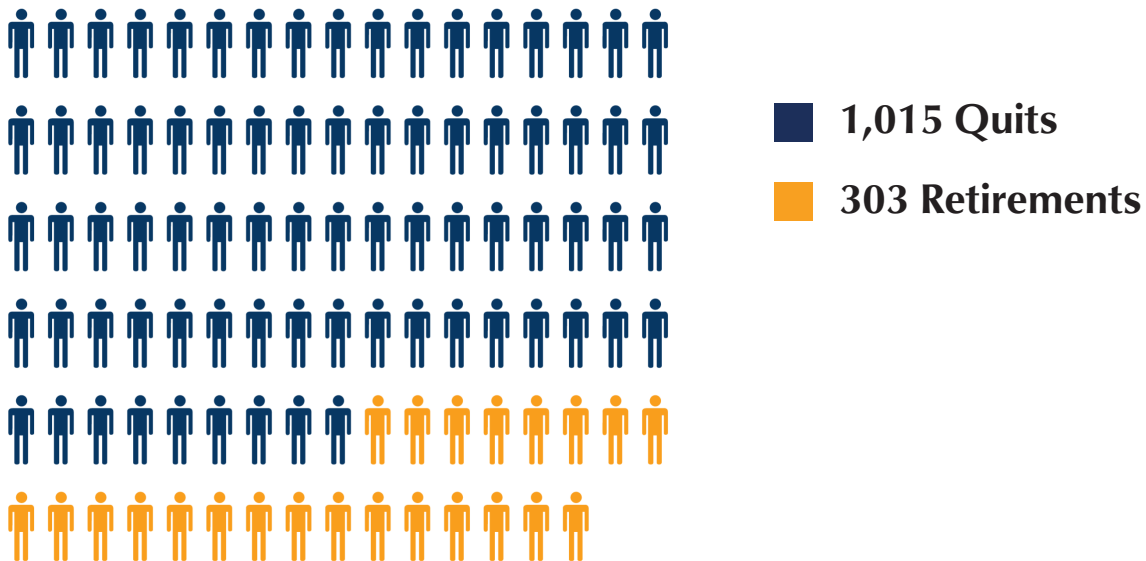
Businesses are constantly asked about their hiring activity because the well-being of the community and its residents depend on the access to quality jobs.

352 survey respondents hired at least one person in 2015, collectively accounting for 3,084 jobs. The jobs by tenure include:



Hiring is a function of business expansion, shifting skill needs and a direct result of people leaving their jobs, as vacated positions may need to be refilled. Efforts to keep the number of job leavers to a minimum are critical as there are costs associated with this, particularly in a tight labour market where it's more difficult to find qualified workers.

Survey respondents reported the following job leavers:



Workers who quit their jobs or retired jointly accounted for just 5.5 percent of total employees in 2015 (of those surveyed).

Workers who quit their jobs accounted for 4.3 percent of total employees in 2015 (of those surveyed).

OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

Business ratings on the availability of qualified workers would partially stem from their hiring experiences in 2015.

3,084 jobs were created in a wide range of occupations, from programmers to food service workers, to lab technologists and farm labourers.

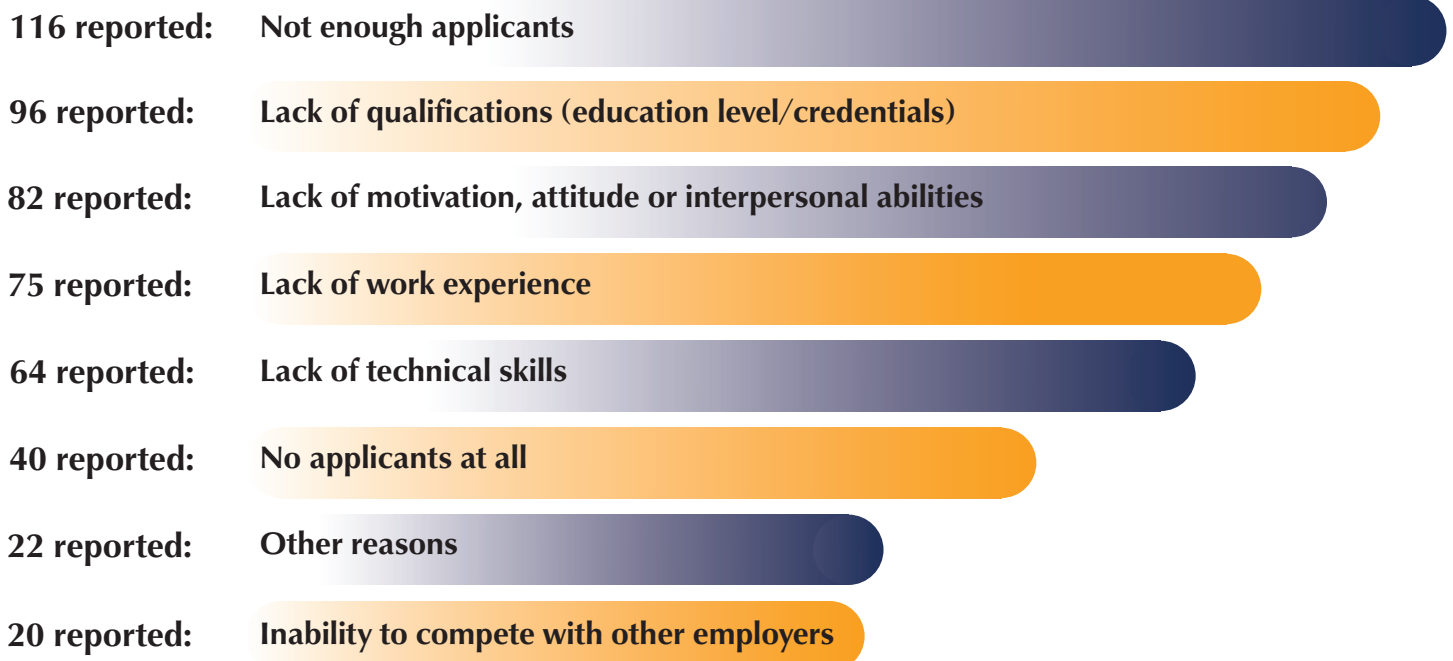
Most jobs were created in the following occupational areas:

- Customer service representative
- Factory/line worker
- Machine operator/assembler
- Labourer
- Food preparation and service
- Personal support worker/assistant
- Registered nurse
- Engineer

HIRING CHALLENGES

Of the 352 surveyed businesses that hired in 2015, 202 companies had trouble filling a new position(s).

Top reasons positions were hard to fill include:



It is critical to note that hard to fill positions included a wide range of occupations. Some required post-secondary education, such as an accountant, but many did not, including general labourers.

HARD TO FILL POSITIONS BY SIZE OF BUSINESS

When survey respondents are examined by different employee size ranges, it appears that as the size of the business increases, the difficulty in filling positions also increased. Survey respondents with 100 or more employees reported the most difficulty filling positions.

Employee Size Ranges	Survey Respondents	Survey Respondents With Hard To Fill Positions	Hard to Fill as a Percentage of Total Respondents
1 to 4 employees	128	25	19.5
5 to 9 employees	116	41	35.3
10 to 19 employees	78	35	44.9
20 to 49 employees	70	33	47.1
50 to 99 employees	47	23	48.9
100+ employees	49	37	75.5

Source: Four County, EmployerOne survey responses

METHOD OF RECRUITMENT

Of the surveyed businesses, the majority identified Word of Mouth as the most often used method to find workers; second were Newspaper Ads followed by Online Job Boards/Postings; Unsolicited Resumes and a company's own internet site round out the top five methods used to find workers. The most popular job search method reported by Ontario's unemployed (2015 Labour Force Survey) was to look at job ads. A disconnect between how survey respondents recruit employees and how unemployed people search for jobs may be an issue affecting employee recruitment success.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA OF RECRUITMENT

The majority (more than 70 percent) of survey respondents reported that workforce recruitment focussed within the four county area. Approximately 21 percent of survey respondents recruited from other regions within Ontario. Businesses in the four county region may want to consider expanding their employee search area within Ontario.

The communities from which the four county area draws the most people include: Waterloo Region, Wellington County, Middlesex County, Toronto Region and Simcoe County. Between 2009 and 2014, a combined 21,199 people have moved to the four county area from these communities.

FREE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE AGENCY RECRUITMENT

With regards to their 2015 hiring, surveyed businesses were asked if they received any assistance from free employment service agencies which include Employment Ontario providers. The majority reported they had not. Free employment service agencies that focussed on General Employment were used by survey respondents the most.

No Assistance	342
Received Assistance	91
General Employment	76
Youth	22
Persons with Disabilities	5
Older Workers	5

BUSINESS INVESTMENT IN TRAINING

When survey respondents were asked if they were able to provide or support ongoing training and education opportunities in 2015:



326 survey respondents reported **YES**



111 survey respondents reported **NO**

The fact that 74 percent of surveyed businesses provided ongoing training and educational opportunities for their employees suggests businesses are responding to the identified shortage of qualified workers.

Business investment in training is also, no doubt, a response to competitive pressures which require constant employee skills upgrading.

Businesses that reported yes to providing training cited the following top five barriers that made it difficult:

- Cost
- Loss of productivity during training time
- Relevant training is not offered locally
- Distance to travel to facility
- Awareness of existing training programs

BROADER IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

SMALL BUSINESS TRAINING

The 111 businesses that reported they were unable to support ongoing training and education tended to be small (83 businesses had fewer than 10 employees). Given that there are more than 8,000 of these small businesses in the four county area, the potential number of businesses unable to support training and education could be quite large.

HARD TO FILL POSITIONS

Even though the survey is not a representative sample of four county businesses (small businesses and some industries are underrepresented), the extent to which the entire business community may be affected can be estimated.

For example, 19.5 percent of survey respondents employing between 1 to 4 employees found it difficult to fill some positions. Over 75 percent of survey respondents with 100 or more employees reported some positions were hard to fill. If similar percentages are applied to all businesses in the four county area, a considerable number of businesses are finding it difficult to fill some positions. Even half the numbers presented below would be imposing.

**Potential Number of Businesses by Employee Size Range
that may find new positions hard to fill
Four County Area, 2015**


Employee Size Ranges	Total Number of Businesses	Percent of Survey Respondents with Hard to Fill Positions	Potential Number of Businesses with Hard to Fill Positions
1 to 4 employees	5,621	19.5	1,096
5 to 9 employees	2,188	35.3	772
10 to 19 employees	1,376	44.9	617
20 to 49 employees	849	47.1	399
50 to 99 employees	222	48.9	108
100+ employees	183	75.5	138

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Patterns and Four County EmployerOne Survey



We'll be looking for your input once again.




In January 2017, an updated version of the survey will be made available. Join our mailing list to stay informed: email employerone@planningboard.ca



ONLINE SURVEY FOR EMPLOYERS

Your input is vital to shaping our future workforce.
The EmployerOne Survey continues to provide valuable insights on workforce challenges. Your annual feedback helps us to determine how we train the future workforce.

The next EmployerOne Survey will be available from January 1-31, 2017.
To participate, please visit www.planningboard.ca/survey



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