

employerone  
SURVEY



Northern Ontario

# employerone Survey Results and Analysis 2014

**EMPLOYMENT  
ONTARIO**





# employerone

SURVEY



**EMPLOYMENT  
ONTARIO**

*This Employment Ontario project is  
funded by the Ontario government*

## Executive Summary

---

---

## Introduction

---

---

4 |

Economic development, education, training and employment supports all rely on sound labour market information. While some of this information comes from various sources such as Statistics Canada, labour market research and key stakeholder discussions, as a local workforce planning board, Northern Ontario workforce planning boards are often asked: where are the jobs? Which industries are hiring and in what occupations? And what diploma or degree will lead to a job? Answering these and other workforce-related questions is very complex, and requires a much deeper look at industry itself.

While northern Ontario workforce planning boards engage employers through various partnership projects and other activities, it is somewhat challenging to get information directly from industry employers about their workforce needs. To help supplement available information, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities provided northern Ontario workforce planning boards with funding to survey local employers using the online employerone survey. Employers indicated they preferred a paper format survey for two reasons: some were uncomfortable using the internet and others said a paper survey reminded them to complete it.

Even though the number of respondents is small, survey responses do provide some valuable insights into the workforce needs and challenges faced by employers today. In some cases, employer responses verified what we have already heard and in other cases, enhanced our knowledge.

As we move forward with future surveys, education/training, planning and economic development, it will be important to continue to keep the perspectives, practices and recruitment challenges of employers in mind to help shape our efforts to cultivate our current and future workforce.

Good labour market information is critical to understanding current and projected labour market demands/needs of local employers. This information is also helpful to: Employment Ontario service providers who try to match local job seekers with available jobs; postsecondary institutions that provide education and specialized training for various highly professional occupations and the skilled trades; and others interested in labour market trends and economic development opportunities.

In 2014, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) asked local workforce planning boards in northern Ontario to conduct an online employer survey using the pre-existing employerone survey instrument which was pilot-tested in several local boards across Ontario the previous year. MTCU provided funding to each northern board to hire a project coordinator to promote and implement the survey.

The employerone survey asked employers to answer questions related to: the demographics of their workforce; current and projected human resource vacancies; recruitment strategies and challenges; their perspective on candidate skills, education and training; top competencies required in their business; and any ongoing workforce concerns.

The survey was implemented June 2014 and ended December 2014. This report summarizes information provided by over 100 small and medium-sized businesses in northern Ontario.

# Survey Methodology

---

**LIMITATIONS:** While conducting a survey to better understand the needs of local employers is important, various limitations may have impacted on completion rates and research findings. These were observed by northern Ontario workforce planning boards, those who assisted with implementation and employers themselves and are as follows:

**Cumbersome and long survey instrument:**

Anywhere from 15 minutes to 1.5 hours was required to complete the survey depending on size of workforce and who was completing the survey. Some employers said this was far too long and others skipped questions, or did not complete the survey.

**Quality of questions:** The wording/intent of questions, definitions used and lack of logical flow created some challenges. While northern boards adapted the survey instrument to make it easier to read, efforts were made to remain consistent as alterations to content were not allowed.

**Survey fatigue:** Local boards in the north already conduct employer surveys and most recently, conducted a survey/study to identify forecasted recruitment needs in the mining and mining supply services sectors and several local boards also engaged in a workforce survey of the tourism sector. Local boards have found that employers are fatigued as they are repeatedly being surveyed.

**Employer profile:** The majority of businesses in northern Ontario are small businesses (under 100 employees). However, regardless of size, some employers did express concern about their capacity to complete a survey of this nature given the level of HR detail required. In the case of the retail industry, various store managers said that they could not complete the survey without approval of their head office.

**Online vs. traditional paper survey:** An online survey format was developed using Fluid Survey. However, some employers were uncomfortable navigating the internet and preferred a paper format which did present some reformatting challenges. Several also mentioned that having the paper survey on their desk reminded them to complete the survey. Once the completed paper surveys were received, the Project Coordinator transferred the information into the online format. Although the integrity of the questions was paramount, it is possible that slight word changes, employer response interpretation and data transfer may have impacted on some findings.

**Implementation cost and time:** The northern Ontario workforce planning boards' catchment area has several small and medium sized businesses and many self-employed individuals that span over a very large geographic region. Despite the cost and time dedicated to encourage employers to complete the survey, only just over one hundred (100) employers took the time to do so.

**OUTREACH STRATEGIES:** Various outreach strategies were used including: the development of common branding (employeronelogo, banner, posters and post cards) and survey implementation timelines across the north; use of local media; personal employer visits; presentations; emailing employer databases (limited by the new anti-spam legislation); posting the survey on various websites employers might visit; reaching out to organizations that connect with employers; attending employer-related events; and mailing surveys with return self-addressed stamped envelopes.

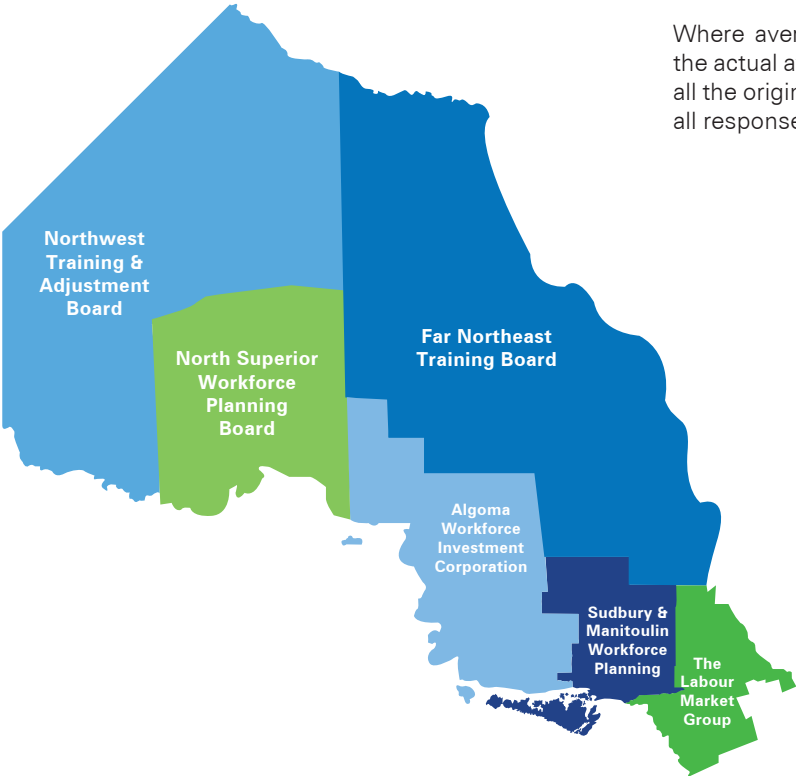
**EMPLOYER/SECTOR SELECTION PROCESS:** Initially local boards in the north planned to target the top ten industry sectors (according to recent Statistics Canada data) in each census area. It became apparent that limiting industry responses could result in an even lower response rate. As such, local boards accepted responses from any industry sector to increase responses. Additionally, those employers who are self-employed were excluded as it was quickly determined that many, if not most, were not planning to hire anyone which would skew the results.

# Presentation of Results

There is much value in presenting the results of the six Northern workforce planning boards, for it allows not only a comparison of the responses and but also highlights common perceptions among employers across the region.

6 | In presenting the results, it helps if there is a consistency in the order in which the data is presented in a table or in a chart. The sequence will always be as follows (either left to right or top to bottom):

LABEL	WORKFORCE PLANNING BOARD	CATCHMENT AREA
AWIC	Algoma Workforce Investment Corporation	Algoma District
FNETB	Far Northeast Training Board	Cochrane & Timiskaming Districts and Small Portions of Algoma & Sudbury Districts
LMG	The Labour Market Group	Nipissing & Parry Sound Districts
NSWPB	North Superior Workforce Planning Board	Thunder Bay District
NTAB	Northwest Training & Adjustment Board	Rainy River & Kenora Districts
WPSM	Workforce Planning for Sudbury & Manitoulin	Sudbury & Manitoulin Districts
TOTAL or AVG	The last line or column will present the total figure for the north, or an average figure. (For Example, where percentages are displayed)	



Where average results are provided, they represent the actual average figure for the North, that is, totaling all the original responses and providing an average for all responses.

## Analysis & Results

---

### Number of employers participating in survey

The number of survey respondents varied by area. The numbers are represented by two figures: the total number who started the survey, and the total number who completed the survey.

7

**TABLE 1: NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS PARTICIPATING IN SURVEY**

BOARD	STARTS	COMPLETIONS
AWIC	168	130
FNETB	114	88
LMG	212	165
NSWPB	88	70
NTAB	45	23
WPSM	98	72
<b>TOTAL</b>	725	548


When the figures are totaled, they represent a significant number. In most instances, over 70% of employers who started the survey finished it.


### Distribution of respondents by industry

There are variations in the distribution of establishments by industry across the North. To compare the responses across all workforce boards, those entries which were 3 percentage points higher or lower than the actual distribution of establishments (with at least one employee) in that area were highlighted, green where it was higher in the survey and blue where it was lower.

**TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYERS BY INDUSTRY**

INDUSTRY	AWIC	FNETB	LMG	NSWPB	NTAB	WPSM
Accommodation & Food Services	7.7%	7.0%	9.6%	6.9%	13.6%	5.2%
Administration and Support	1.4%	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting	0.7%	3.5%	1.0%	3.4%	11.4%	0.0%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	2.8%	3.5%	1.9%	1.1%	2.3%	1.0%
Construction	7.7%	6.1%	7.2%	23.0%	11.4%	13.4%
Educational services		4.4%	1.0%	1.1%	6.8%	
Finance & Insurance	6.3%	2.6%	5.3%	10.3%	2.3%	6.2%
Healthcare & Social Assistance		12.3%	14.0%	10.3%	4.5%	
Healthcare & Educational Services	11.3%					15.5%
Information & Cultural Industries	0.7%	0.9%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%
Manufacturing	7.7%	8.8%	6.3%	1.1%	6.8%	6.2%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas	2.1%	7.9%	1.0%	4.6%	2.3%	6.2%
Other services (Except Public Administration)	13.4%	21.9%	7.2%	10.3%	13.6%	13.4%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	9.2%	6.1%	10.1%	9.2%	0.0%	7.2%
Public administration	2.8%	3.5%	0.0%	1.1%	6.8%	3.1%
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	2.8%	0.0%	3.8%	2.3%	0.0%	2.1%
Retail Trade	21.8%	10.5%	15.4%	4.6%	11.4%	14.4%
Transportation & Warehousing	1.4%	0.0%	7.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.1%
Wholesale Trade	0.0%	0.9%	2.4%	5.7%	2.3%	2.1%
<b>TOTAL NUMBER</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>97</b>

 **3% lower** than distribution of establishments

 **3% higher** than distribution of establishments

Not all surveys used the same format for this question. The most notable variation combined Educational Services and Health Care and Social Assistance, and thus for two columns these two industries are combined.

In a number of cases, the same industries were either over- or under-represented. For example, Administration & Support were often under-represented in the survey, while Manufacturing; Mining, Quarrying and Oil & Gas Extraction; and Other Services were often over-represented. In part, this reflects with which industry sectors each board may or may not have more interaction and hence better connections.

## Head office or branch

Roughly two-thirds of respondents identified their establishment as a head office, the other third being branches of the business. There was a remarkable consistency in the responses across all boards. Even in the case of the Labour Market Group, where another answer option was provided (“Not applicable”), among those that did choose between head office or branch, 63% chose head office, very much in line with the responses from the other areas.

**TABLE 3: HEAD OFFICE OR BRANCH**

LIFE-CYCLE STAGE	AWIC	FNETB	LMG	NSWPB	NTAB	WPSM
Head Office	69%	67%	40%*	68%	67%	68%
Branch	31%	33%	23%*	32%	33%	32%

\* For this survey, another answer option was provided, and 37% chose “Not applicable.”

## Current life-cycle stage of the business

The vast majority of the businesses surveyed are established firms (70-80%), with roughly 1-10% being start-ups and 10-20% being in their growth phase.

**TABLE 4: CURRENT LIFE-CYCLE STAGE OF THE BUSINESS**

LIFE-CYCLE STAGE	AWIC	FNETB	LMG	NSWPB	NTAB	WPSM
Start-up	6%	3%	1%	5%	11%	4%
Growth	14%	17%	19%	24%	9%	19%
Established	80%	80%	79%	71%	80%	77%

## Size of establishment

There was a broad degree of similarity in the profile of respondents by the number of employees. Overall, in comparison to the distribution of all establishments by size (counting only firms with one employee or more), the survey tended to have a higher proportion of establishments with 20-99 and 100 or more employees.

**TABLE 5: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES**

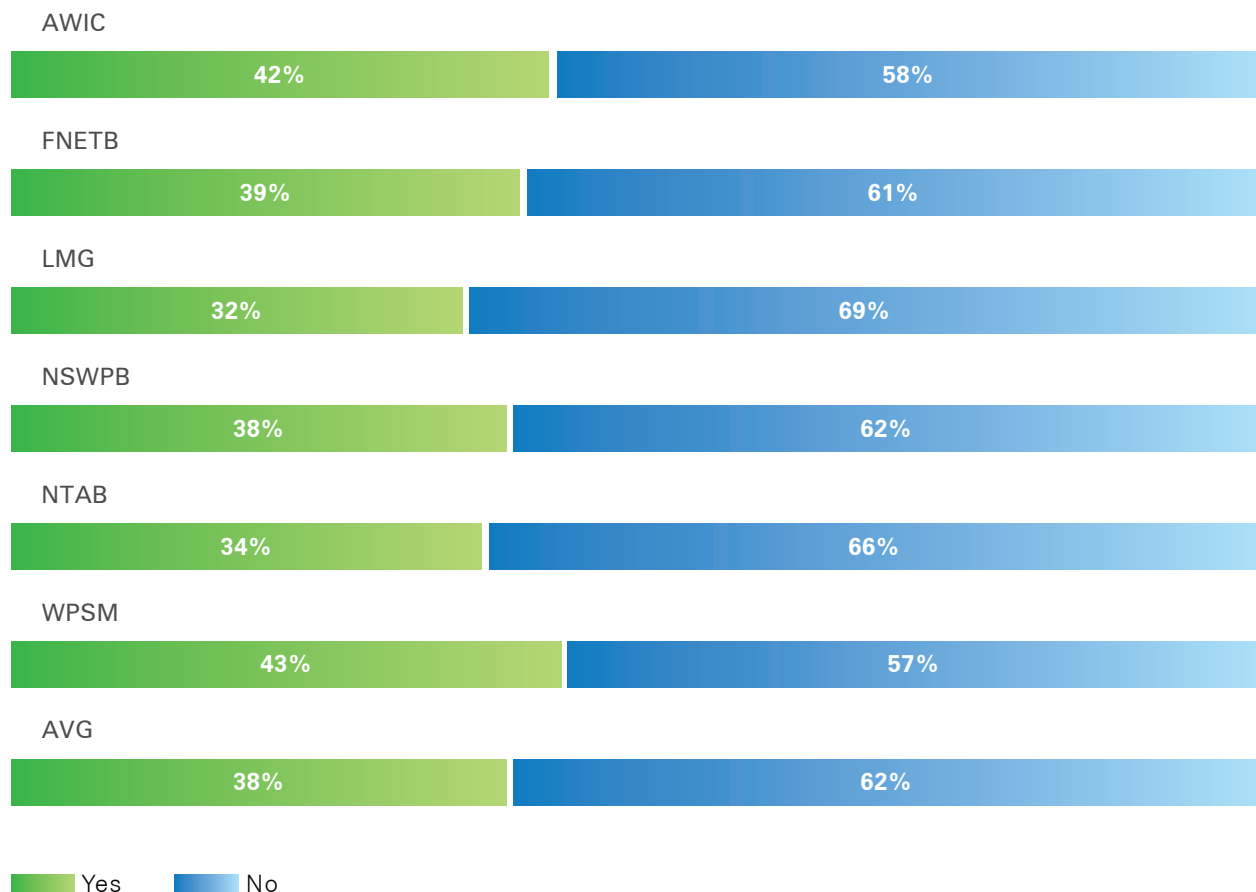
BOARD	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES			
	1-4	5-19	20-99	100+
AWIC	24%	41%	27%	8%
FNETB	17%	41%	23%	18%
LMG	31%	38%	24%	7%
NSWPB	15%	42%	28%	15%
NTAB	24%	34%	26%	16%
WPSM	14%	35%	37%	10%

10 |

## Does your company participate in Workplace Wellness Programs?

On average, roughly four out of ten employers participate in a Workplace Wellness Program, with the responses clustering between 32% and 43%, a relatively high level of consistency around the average.

**TABLE 6: PARTICIPATION IN WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAMS (N=203)**



## Type of employment of employees

Respondents were asked to provide numbers regarding their current workforces, firstly by type of employment. Table 7 compares the percentage responses by type of employment. Two of the boards had an extra category of employment, namely seasonal workers.

**TABLE 7: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKFORCE BY TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT**

BOARD	PERMANENT		TEMPORARY		Independent Contractor	Seasonal
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time		
AWIC	30%	10%	2%	10%	19%	29%
FNETB	86%	7%	5%	1%	1%	—
LMG	60%	25%	4%	5%	2%	5%
NSWPB	67%	17%	5%	8%	2%	—
NTAB	75%	15%	2%	8%	0%	—
WPSM	75%	13%	3%	9%	1%	—
<b>AVG Minus AWIC</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>

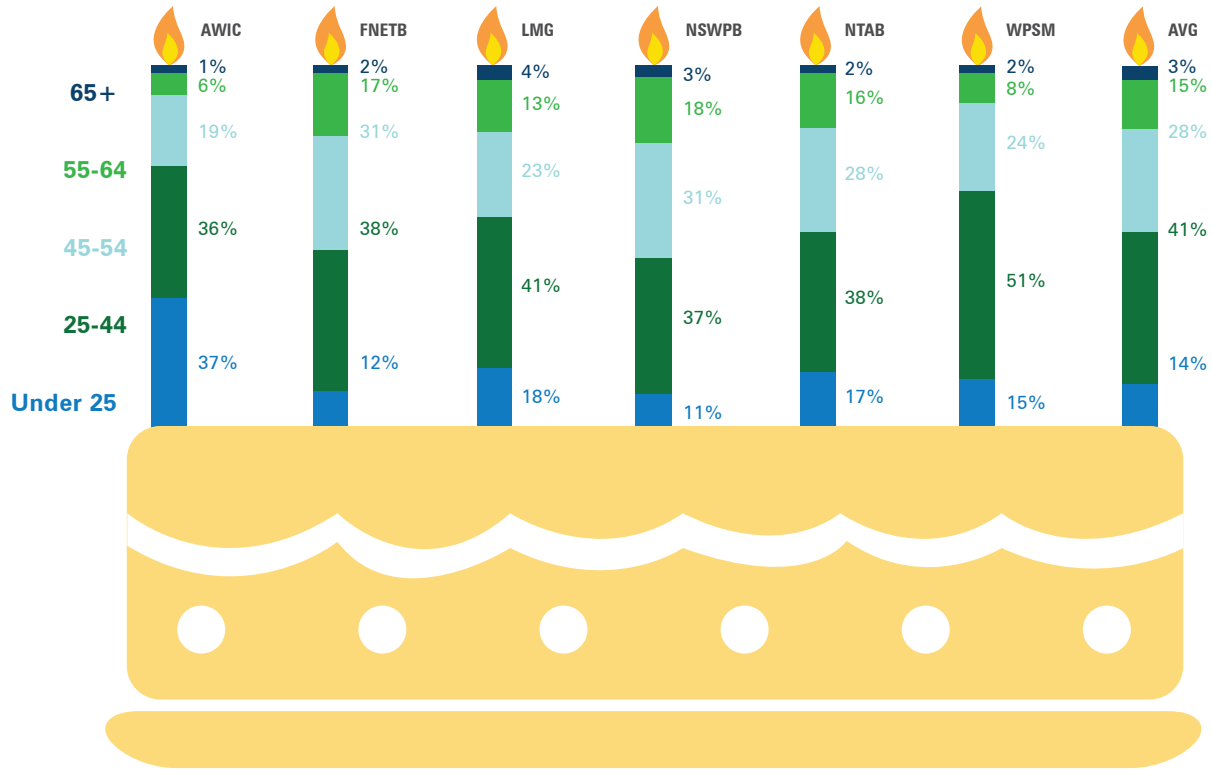
The first thing to point out is the out-of-synch responses from AWIC. Further probing reveals that the high number of independent contractors and seasonal workers in its data is largely attributable to the responses of a single employer, which would appear to be the reason why these proportions are so skewed. Putting aside the AWIC data, the rest of the responses fall within an acceptance range, with only LMG appearing as an outlier with a notably higher proportion of permanent part-timers and fewer permanent full-timers.

The calculation of the average result excludes AWIC. On the basis of the survey, it would appear that 73% present among these Northern employers are full-time, permanent positions.

## Age of Employees

Employers were also asked to indicate the age ranges of their workforce.

**TABLE 8: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WORKFORCE BY AGE**



12 |

Once again, the earlier skewed result from the one employer in the AWIC results distorts the numbers. The calculation of the average thus excluded AWIC. As a result, the only real outlier are two entries for Sudbury & Manitoulin, where there appears to be a disproportionate number of 25-44 year olds (51% compared to the average of 41%), with a correspondingly low number of 55-64 year olds (8% compared to the Northern average of 15%).

### Did your organization hire anyone over the last 12 months?

Respondents were first asked to indicate if they experienced a separation in the last twelve months and, further, to identify the number of separations by occupational category and type of separation. These responses are compared below.

**TABLE 9: EXPERIENCED A WORKFORCE SEPARATION IN LAST 12 MONTHS**



LMG



NSWPB



NTAB



WPSM



Yes No

Six to seven out of ten employers experienced a workforce separation in the last 12 months.

The responses regarding the type of separation varied because there were variations in the answer options provided to survey respondents. Nevertheless, there are some apparent patterns:

- It would appear that quits are the most common form of workplace separations, accounting for anywhere from 35-60% of all separations;
- Where the option of dismissal is provided, it only accounts for 6-19% of all separations;
- Retirements represent a relatively small number of separations, although in NSWPB they account for as much as 15% of the separations;
- Lay-offs typically account for around 30-40% of separations and, where the information is available, the figures are more or less equally divided between temporary and permanent layoffs.

**TABLE 10: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION BY REASON FOR SEPARATION**

BOARD	QUITS	RETIREMENTS	TEMPORARY LAYOFFS	PERMANENT LAYOFFS	DISMISSALS	OTHER
AWIC	35%	8%	19%	23%	7%	8%
FNETB	44%	9%	29%	29%	—	18%
LMG	—	10%	21%	17%	19%	34%
NSWPB	47%	15%	21%	—	—	17%
NTAB	56%	1%	30%	—	—	14%
WPSM	60%	3%	17%	13%	6%	2%

The distribution of separations by occupational category is presented in Table 11. Once again, there are variations by area, but some patterns are evident:

- By far, most separations occur among production workers, closely followed by service workers;
- There are notable outliers, such as the 13% of separations among Professionals in NSWPB and the 10% of separations among Technicals in LMG;
- The one unusual result is the high proportion of separations among Trades and Apprentices in WPSM.

**TABLE 11: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SEPARATIONS BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY**

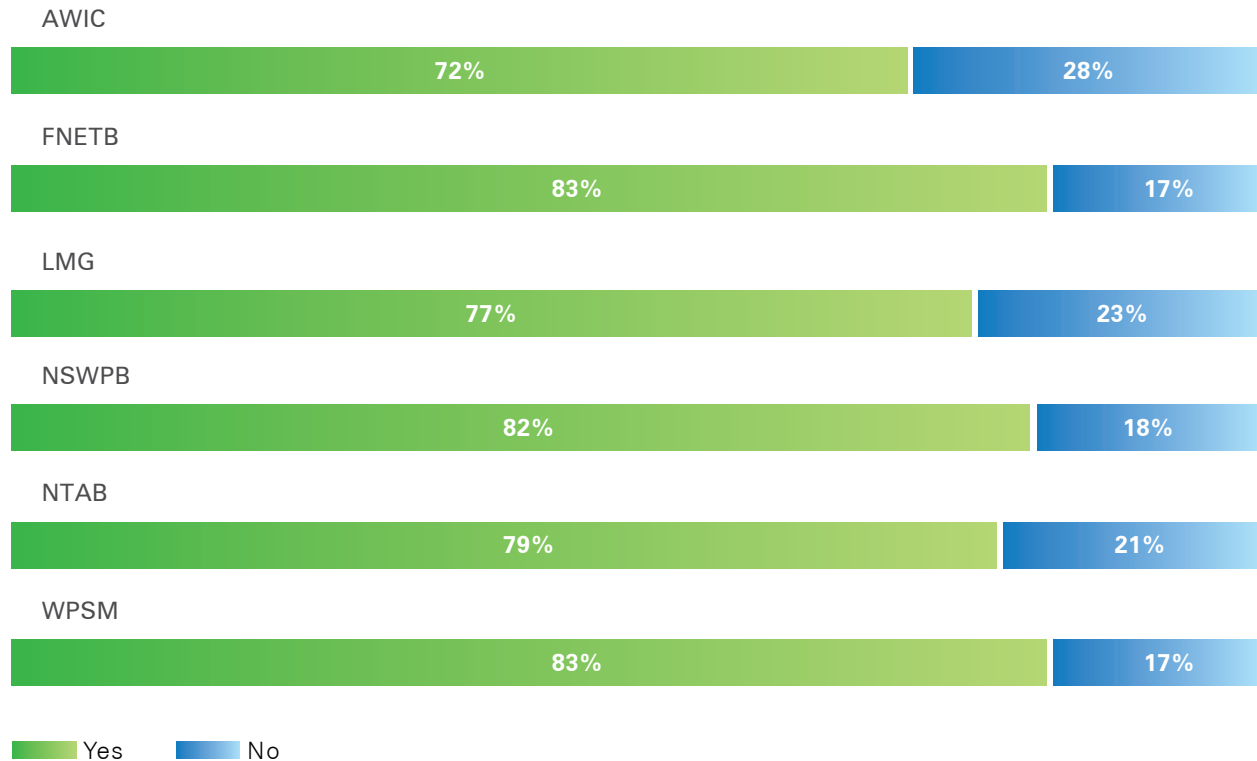
BOARD	AWIC	FNETB	LMG	NSWPB	NTAB	WPSM
Managers & Executives	6%	2%	6%	3%	2%	4%
Professionals	8%	2%	2%	13%	2%	6%
Technical	2%	1%	10%	2%	1%	5%
Trades	9%	11%	7%	6%	4%	33%
Apprentices	4%	1%	2%	1%	0%	10%
Sales & Marketing	8%	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Admin & Clerical	4%	4%	8%	6%	1%	6%
Production Workers	18%	53%	9%	45%	46%	14%
Service Workers	30%	9%	35%	17%	36%	13%
Other	10%	15%	19%	4%	8%	6%

14 |

### Did your organization hire anyone over the last 12 months?

Respondents were first asked to indicate if they had hired anyone in the last 12 months and, further, to identify the number of hirings by occupational category and type of employment. These responses are compared below.

**TABLE 12: HIRED SOMEONE IN LAST 12 MONTHS**



There appear to be two clusters when it comes to characterizing the results relating to hirings over the last 12 months based on employment type: one set of responses indicating slightly over 50% of the hirings being permanent full-time, and another set of such hirings at slightly less than a third (33%). Perhaps the more significant point is that either way, the proportion of new hires that are permanent full-time is considerably below the figure of 73% of the workforce being full-time permanent employees.

In most other respects, apart from a few outliers, the proportions are relatively similar: approximately 20-30% of the recent hires were permanent part-time, 20-30% were temporary full-time (although there was considerable variation in the responses for this category), approximately 5-15% were temporary part-time, and only a handful were independent contractors.

**TABLE 13: DISTRIBUTION OF HIRINGS BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE**

BOARD	PERMANENT FULL-TIME	PERMANENT PART-TIME	TEMPORARY FULL-TIME	TEMPORARY PART-TIME	INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR	SEASONAL
AWIC	32%	26%	31%	4%	2%	7%
FNETB	53%	8%	36%	3%	0%	—
LMG	28%	32%	13%	13%	1%	13%
NSWPB	54%	20%	4%	19%	3%	—
NTAB	32%	32%	23%	13%	0%	—
WPSM	55%	30%	7%	7%	1%	—

When the hiring results are analyzed by occupational groups (Table 14), service workers are the largest single category, followed closely by production workers. At the individual board level, there were a number of results that were outliers:

- Considerably higher proportion of hires among:
  - Managers and executives in FNETB;
  - Professionals in AWIC and NSWPB;
  - Trades and Apprentices in WPSM;
  - Sales and Marketing in AWIC
- Considerably lower proportion of hires among production workers in LMG.

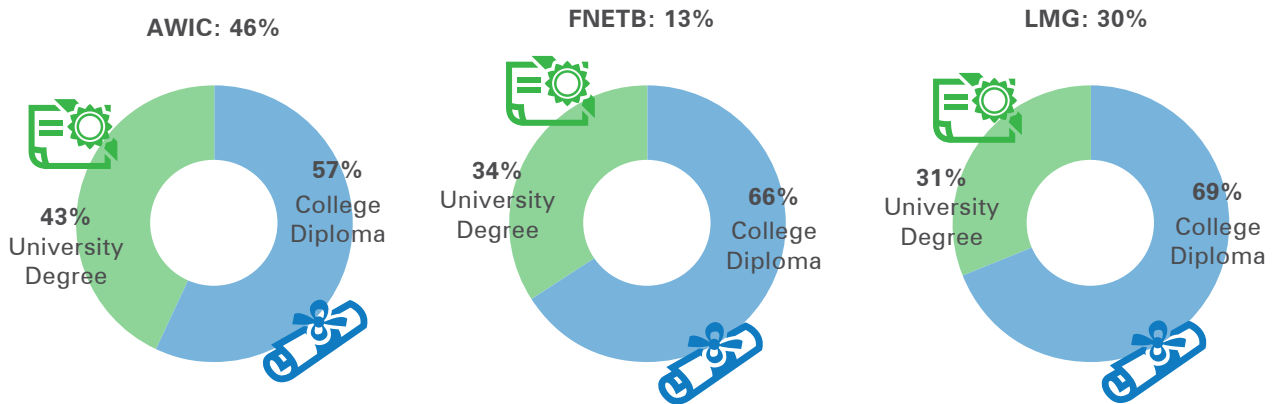
**TABLE 14: DISTRIBUTION OF HIRINGS BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY**

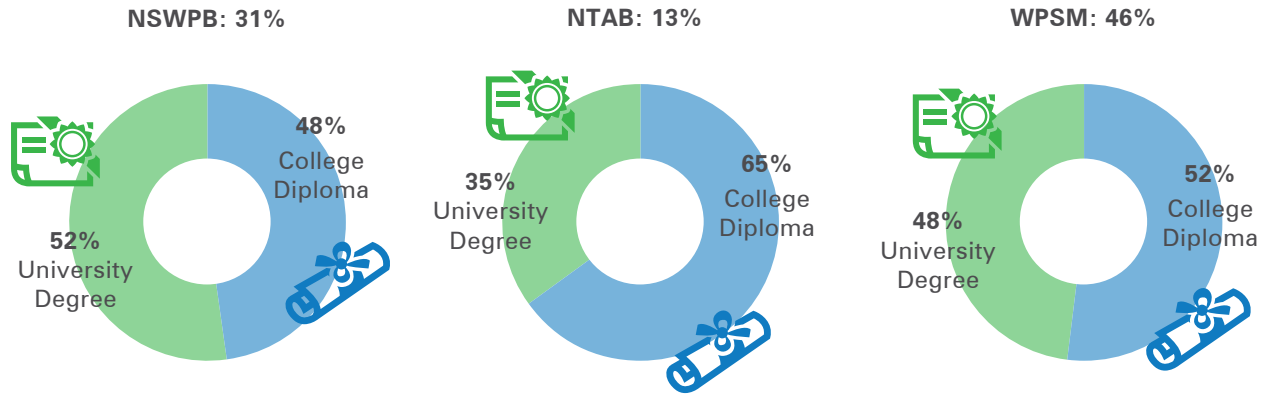
BOARD	AWIC	FNETB	LMG	NSWPB	NTAB	WPSM
Managers & Executives	4%	11%	5%	4%	4%	6%
Professionals	18%	3%	2%	12%	2%	7%
Technical	6%	4%	7%	3%	0%	4%
Trades	7%	7%	7%	4%	5%	19%
Apprentices	4%	2%	2%	2%	1%	6%
Sales & Marketing	10%	1%	4%	3%	1%	4%
Admin & Clerical	11%	5%	6%	5%	3%	10%
Production Workers	9%	30%	7%	45%	41%	3%
Service Workers	24%	10%	44%	19%	29%	33%
Other	9%	27%	18%	4%	16%	19%

**How many hires with post-secondary degrees, and what type of post-secondary degree?**

Diagram 1 lists the results for the proportion of new hires who had a post-secondary degree. The percentage after each board's name lists the total percentage of new hires with post-secondary degrees (for example, in the case of AWIC, the percentage of all new hires with a post-secondary degree was 46%). The split in the colours represents the share of new hires with post-secondary degrees by type of degree: either college (blue) or university (green).

**DIAGRAM 1: PROPORTION OF NEW HIRES BY POST-SECONDARY DEGREES; PROPORTION BY COLLEGE DIPLOMAS (BLUE) AND BY UNIVERSITY DEGREES (GREEN)**





The overall share of new hires with post-secondary degrees varies considerably, with a low of 13% in FNETB and NTAB and a high of 46% in AWIC and WPSM. In between come LMG and NSWPB at 30% and 31%.

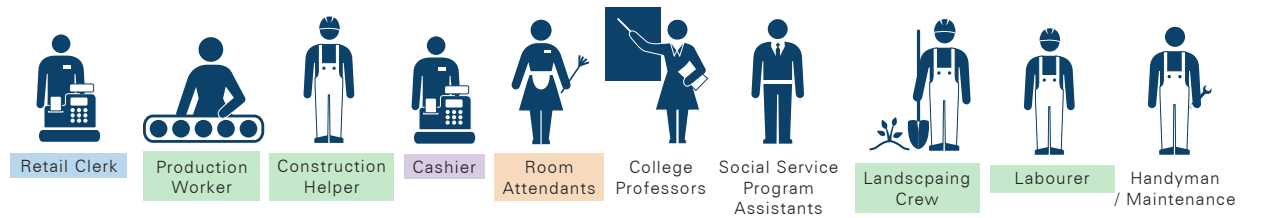
In almost all instances, the majority of post-secondary degree holders have a college diploma, except in the case of NSWPB, with university grads having a slight edge (52% to 48%).

### In the last 12 months, please list the occupations (up to 3) for which you hired the most employees

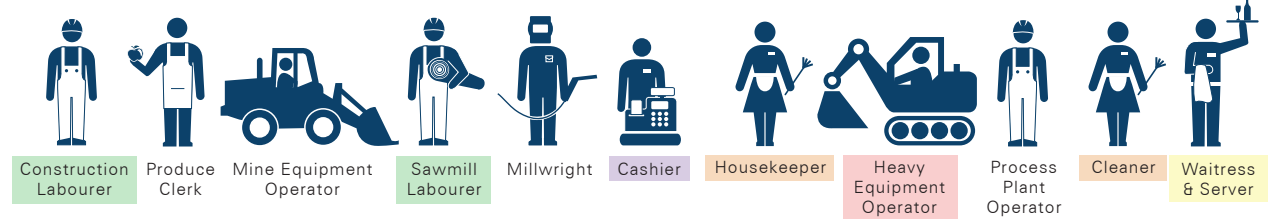
Employers were asked to list the most frequently hired occupations. Table 15 lists the top ten responses from each area (there are sometimes eleven because of a tie for the number ten spot). The diagram has been colour-coded to show the same occupations, or similar occupations (for example, general labourers, construction labourers, production workers were lumped into one category).

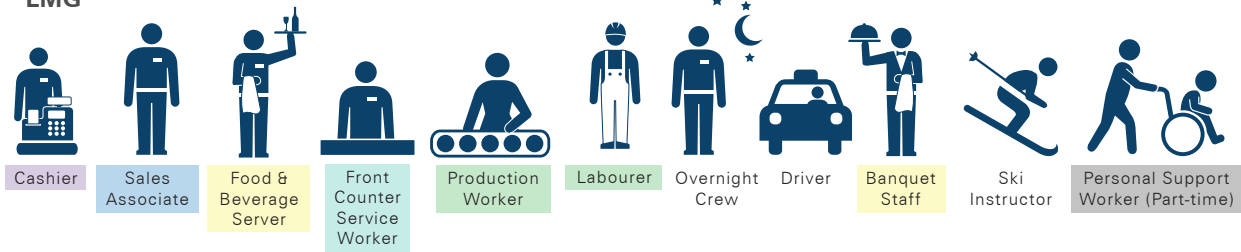
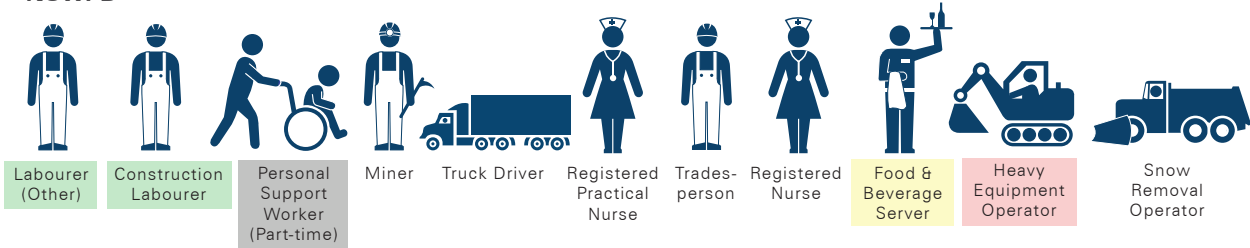
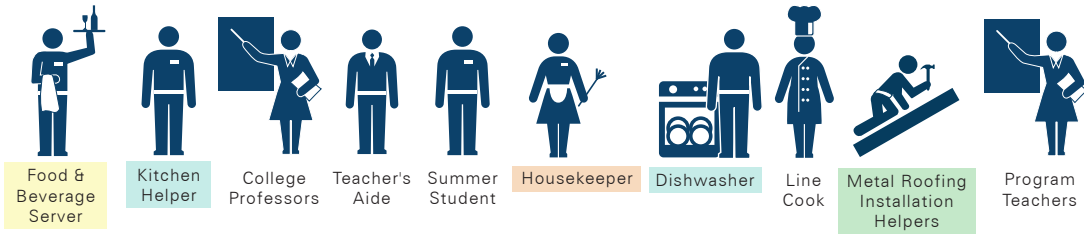
**DIAGRAM 2: TOP TEN MOST FREQUENTLY HIRED OCCUPATIONS**

#### AWIC



#### FNETB



**LMG****NSWPB****NTAB****WPSM**

There is a fair degree of similarity in the most frequent hires for most areas. This should not be surprising, given the larger number of hires among service workers and production workers, which are largely entry-level and/or low-skilled positions.

There are also a fair number of occupations requiring high skills and/or college or university education, such as:

- Registered nurses
- Registered practical nurses
- College instructors

As well, a number of positions also involve a trades certificate, such as millwrights, machinists and tradespersons generally.

## What recruitment methods were used to find job candidates?

Employers were asked to indicate what mechanisms they used to recruit job candidates for these high frequency hirings. The options as presented in the survey are listed below, together with the shortened version used in Table 16 to illustrate the results:

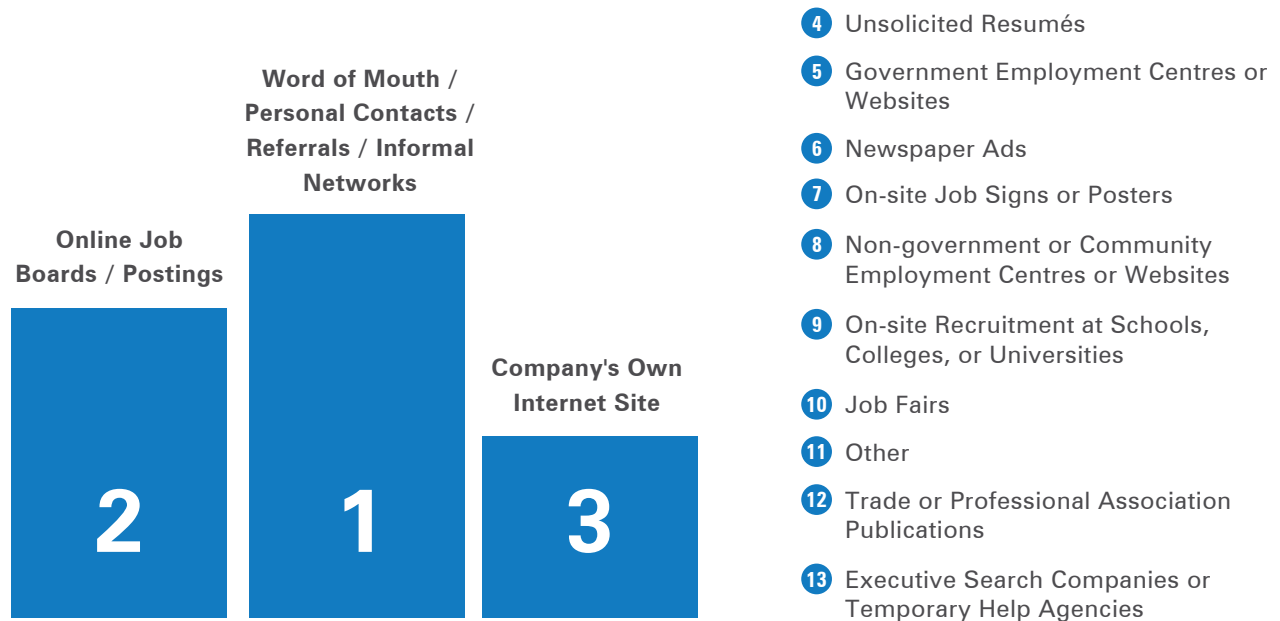
SHORT VERSION	OPTION IN SURVEY
Informal	Word of Mouth / Personal Contacts / Referrals / Informal Networks
On-Site Signs	On-site Job Signs or Posters
Resumés	Unsolicited Resumés
Own Website	Company's Own Internet Site
Online Boards	Online Job Boards / Postings
On-site Recruit	On-site Recruitment at Schools, Colleges, or Universities
Job Fairs	Job Fairs
Trade Papers	Trade or Professional Association Publications
Government	Government Employment Centres or Websites
Non-Governmnt	Non-Government or Community Employment Centres or Websites
Exec Search	Executive Search Companies or Temporary Help Agencies
Newspapers	Newspaper Ads
Other	Other

**TABLE 16: MOST FREQUENTLY USED RECRUITMENT METHODS FOR HIGH FREQUENCY OCCUPATION HIRINGS**

	AWIC	FNETB	LMG	NSWPB	NTAB	WPSM
1	Informal	Informal	Informal	Informal	Informal	Informal
2	Online Boards	Online Boards	Own Website	Online Boards	Online Boards	Online Boards
3	Resumés	Newspapers	Resumés	Own Website	Own Website	Own Website
4	Government	Resumés	Government	Resumés	Government	Government
5	Own Website	Own Website	On-site Signs	Newspapers	Newspapers	Resumés
6	Newspapers	Government	Online Boards	Government	On-site Signs	Newspapers
7	On-site Signs	On-site Signs	Non-governmnt	On-site Signs	Non-governmnt	On-site Recruit
8	On-site Recruit	Job Fairs	Newspapers	On-site Recruit	Resumés	On-site Signs
9	Other	Other	Job Fairs	Non-governmnt	Other	Job Fairs
10	Non-governmnt	Non-governmnt	On-site Recruit	Job Fairs	Job Fairs	Others
11	Job Fairs	Trade Papers	Other	Trade Papers	On-site Recruit	Trade Papers
12	Trade Papers	Exec Search	Trade Papers	Other	Trade Papers	Exec Search
13	Exec Search	On-site Recruit	Exec Search	Exec Search	Exec Search	Non-Governmnt

The cumulative ranking for all six areas would be as follows:

20 |



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

For the high frequency hiring jobs, respondents were given the opportunity to indicate the areas their recruitment efforts targeted.

Diagram 3 lists the responses, based on the percentage distribution of all the jobs associated with the recruitment activity.

**DIAGRAM 3: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF GEOGRAPHIC TARGETING OF RECRUITMENT FOR HIGH FREQUENCY HIRINGS**

#### AWIC



#### FNETB



#### LMG



Local Area    Ontario    Canada    International

**NSWPB**



**NTAB**



**WPSM**



Local Area    Ontario    Canada    International

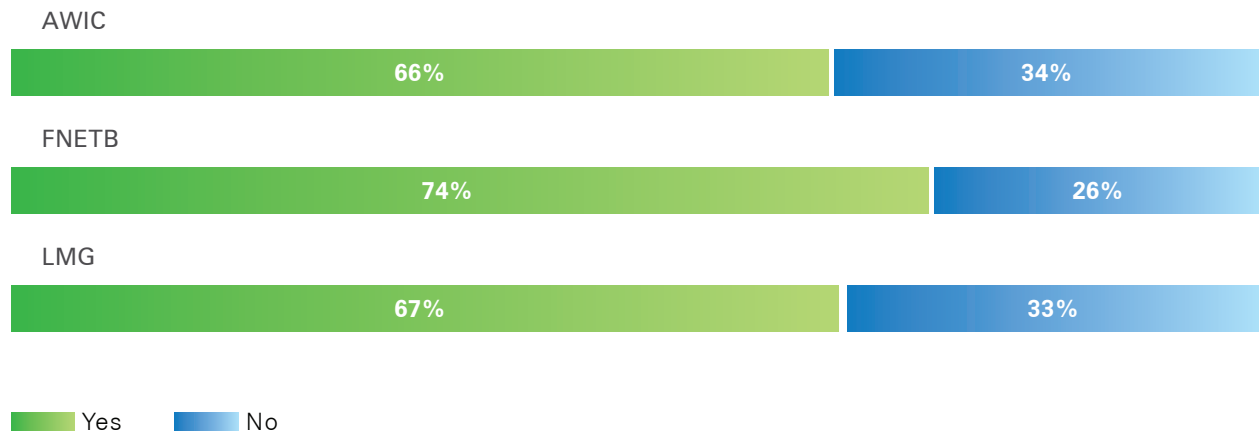
By far, most of the job recruitment effort targets the local area, usually close to three-quarters of the time (71-74%). In the case of NSWPB and NTAB, that local targeting is somewhat less, counter-balanced by somewhat more targeting aimed across Canada.

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

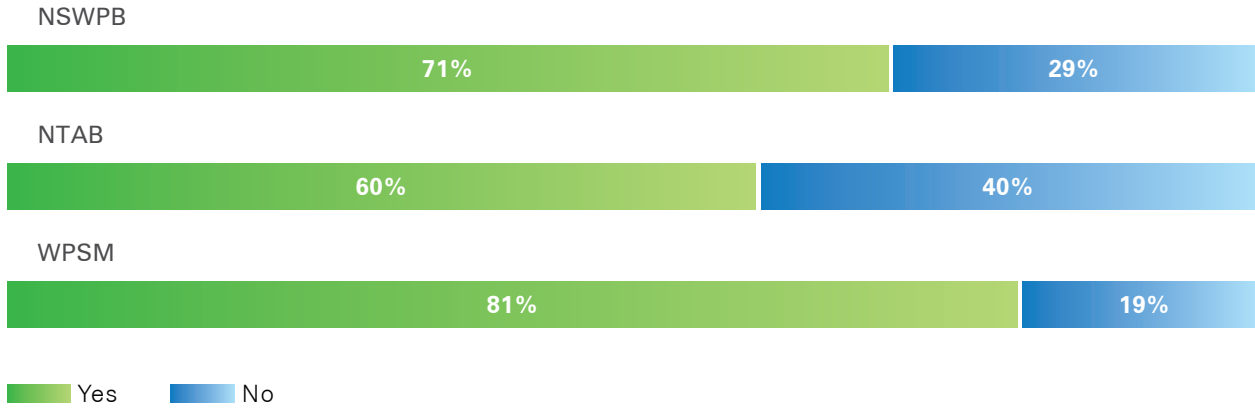
Employers were less likely to receive employment services from an agency providing assistance on behalf of a particular demographic group.

Table 17 illustrates the percentage of times when recruiting for high frequency hirings that employers did not receive any such assistance.

**DIAGRAM 4: PERCENTAGE OF JOB HIRINGS WHERE EMPLOYERS DID NOT RECEIVING EMPLOYMENT SERVICES ASSISTANCE IN RELATION TO A PARTICULAR DEMOGRAPHIC CATEGORY**



Yes    No



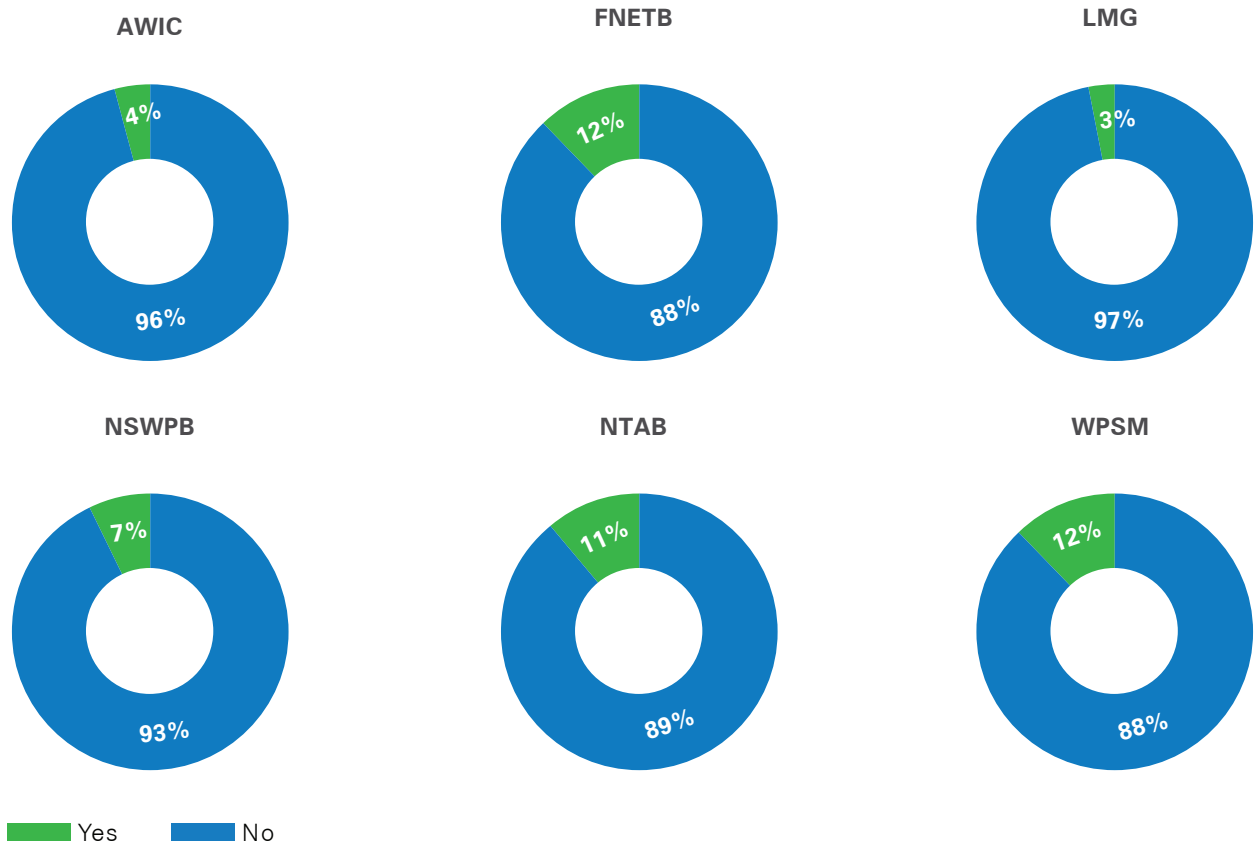
In those instances when assistance is received, the most likely group being assisted is youth.

### Did you use a paid recruitment agency?

In few instances did employers make use of a paid recruitment agency.

Diagram 5 lists the percentage of employers who indicated that they had used a paid recruitment service.

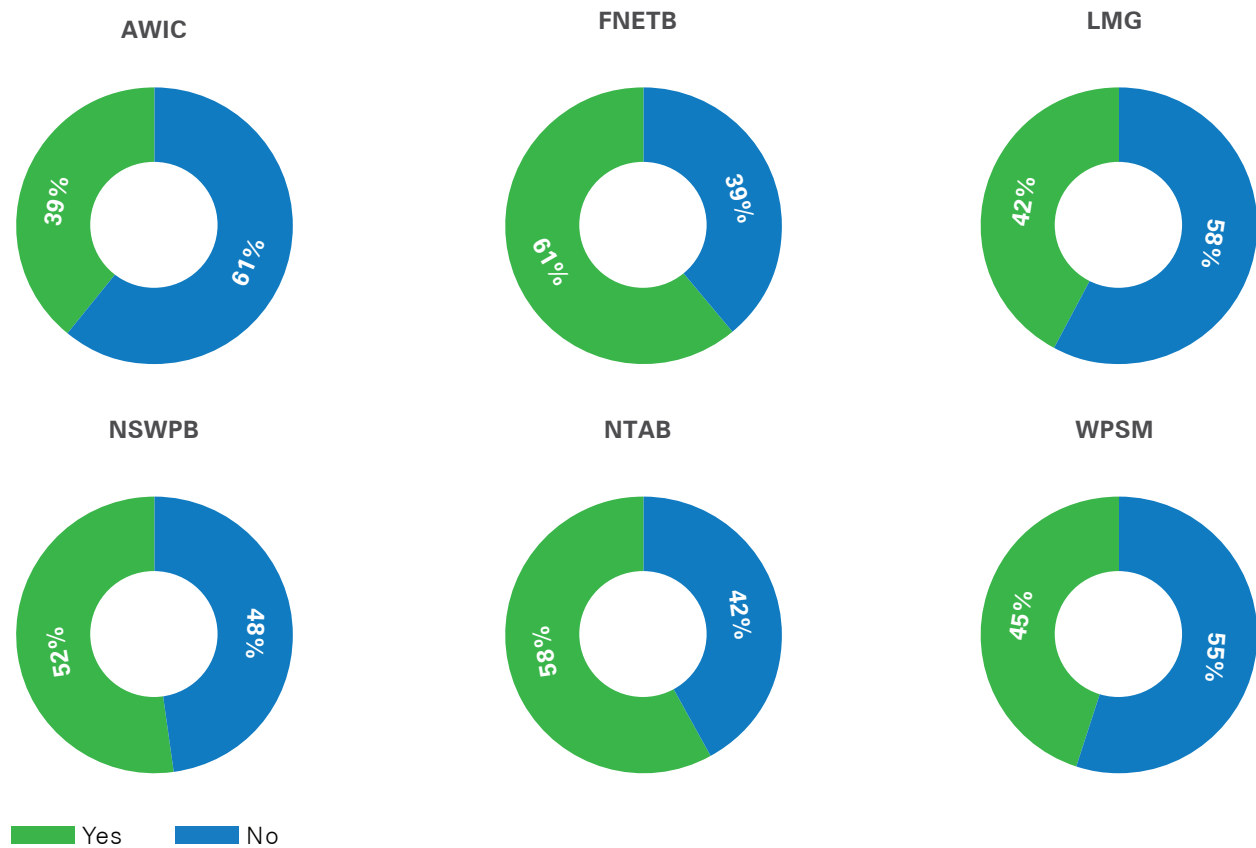
**DIAGRAM 5: PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS MAKING USE OF A PAID RECRUITMENT AGENCY**



## Were any of these high frequency hiring positions hard-to-fill, and for what reasons?

The extent to which employers in different areas found their high frequency hiring positions difficult to fill varied, but within a defined band: anywhere from 39% (four in ten) to 61% (six in ten) experienced difficulty.

**DIAGRAM 6:** PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY FILLING HIGH FREQUENCY HIRING POSITIONS



Employers were further asked to elaborate on the reasons for the difficulty in hiring. The options as presented in the survey are listed below, together with the shortened version used in Table 20 to illustrate the results:

SHORT VERSION	OPTION IN SURVEY
No Applicants	No Applicants At All
Few Applicants	Not Enough Applicants
Education	Applicants Not Meeting Qualification Requirements (Education Level / Credentials)
Skills	Applicants Not Meeting Skills Requirements
Experience	Applicants Not Meeting Work Experience Requirements
Motivation	Applicants Not Meeting Motivation, Attitude, or Interpersonal Skills Requirements
Language	Applicants Not Meeting Language Requirements
Foreign Qual	Inability to Assess a Foreign Educational Qualification or Credential
Pay	Inability to Compete With Other Employers Due to Pay & Benefits
Promotion	Inability to Compete With Other Employers Due to Lack of Promotion Opportunities
Nature of Work	Inability to Compete With Other Employers Due to Nature of Work (Seasonal, Shift Work, Irregular Hours, Job Content)
Travel	Inability to Compete With Other Employers Due to Remote Location / Poor Public Transit
No Local Qual	No Local Qualified Applicants

Table 17 shows the rank that each of these possible reasons received, in terms of the number of jobs which encountered that difficulty. The results are colour-coded so that it is easy to pick out the higher and lower ranking items. The colour-coding is explained by the legend.

**TABLE 17: MOST FREQUENTLY USED RECRUITMENT METHODS FOR HIGH FREQUENCY OCCUPATION HIRINGS**

BOARD	AWIC	FNETB	LMG	NSWPB	NTAB	WPSM
Education	2	2	3	1	7	2
Experience	5	5	7	2	6	3
Few Applicants	1	1	2	4	3	1
Foreign Qual	13	13	13	13	10	13
Language	11	11	12	12	13	11
Motivation	4	4	1	5	1	6
Nature of Work	8	8	4	8	12	9
No Applicants	6	9	8	10	11	12
No Local Qual	7	6	11	9	5	8
Pay	9	7	5	6	4	5
Promotion	12	12	10	11	8	10
Skills	3	3	6	3	2	4
Travel	10	10	9	7	9	7

Rank 1-4
  Rank 5-7
  Rank 8-10
  Rank 11-13

The reasons in Table 20 are listed in order of the cumulative score for the number of times that reason was cited for each of the areas. “Not enough applicants” was the top reason, followed by a series of shortcomings related to the applicants:

- Not meeting education requirements
- Not meeting motivation or attitude requirements
- Not meeting skills requirements
- Not meeting experience requirements
- 

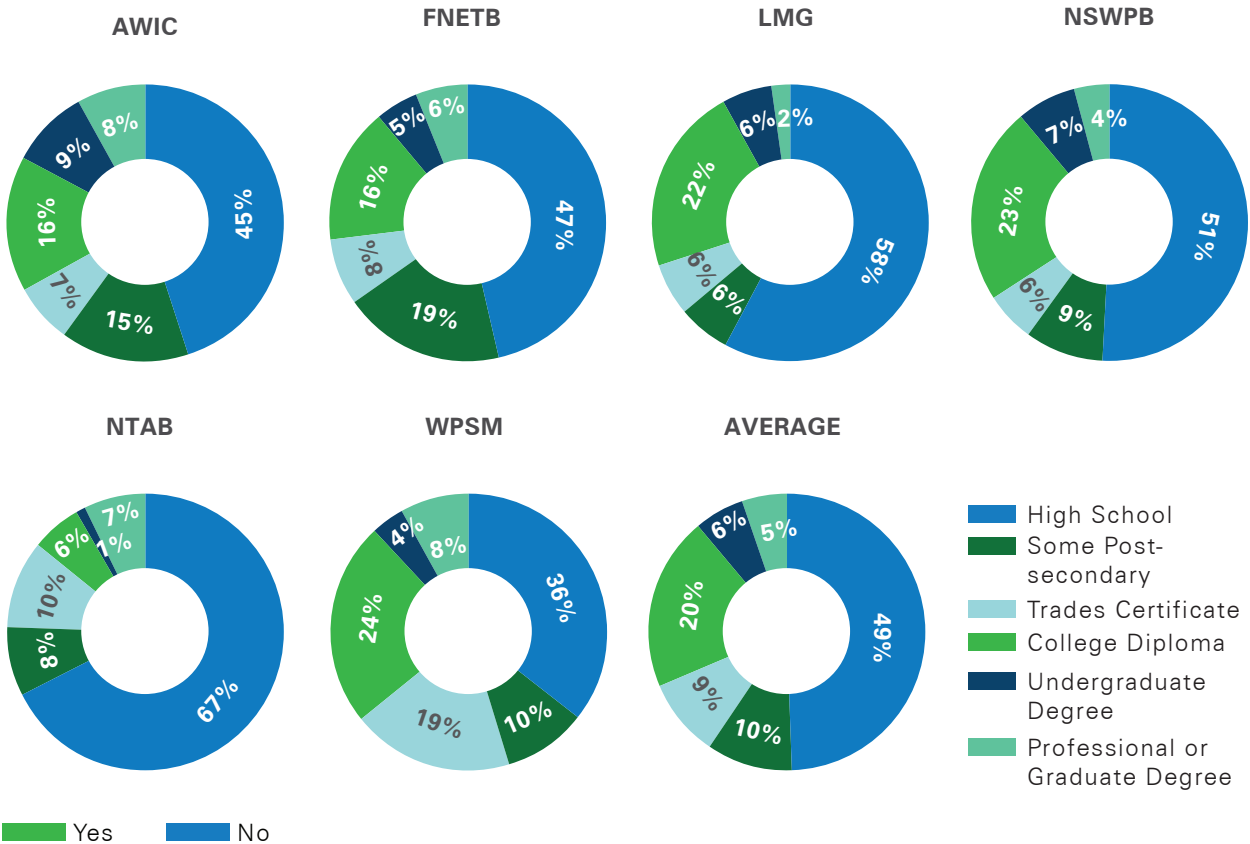
At the bottom of the list (that is, reasons least cited) were:

- Inability to assess a foreign qualification
- Not meeting language requirements
- Inability to compete with other employers due to lack of promotion opportunities

### What is the minimum level of education required for the high frequency hiring occupations of the last year?

Diagram 7 presents the minimum educational requirements for all the hirings under the category of high frequency hirings in the last 12 months (that is, the top three occupations for which an employer hired the most employees). The average results is a weighted score, that is, the total number of responses for each category was calculated, so that areas with a larger number of responses had a greater impact on the average result.

**DIAGRAM 7: MINIMUM LEVEL OF EDUCATION REQUIRED FOR ALL HIGH FREQUENCY HIRINGS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS**



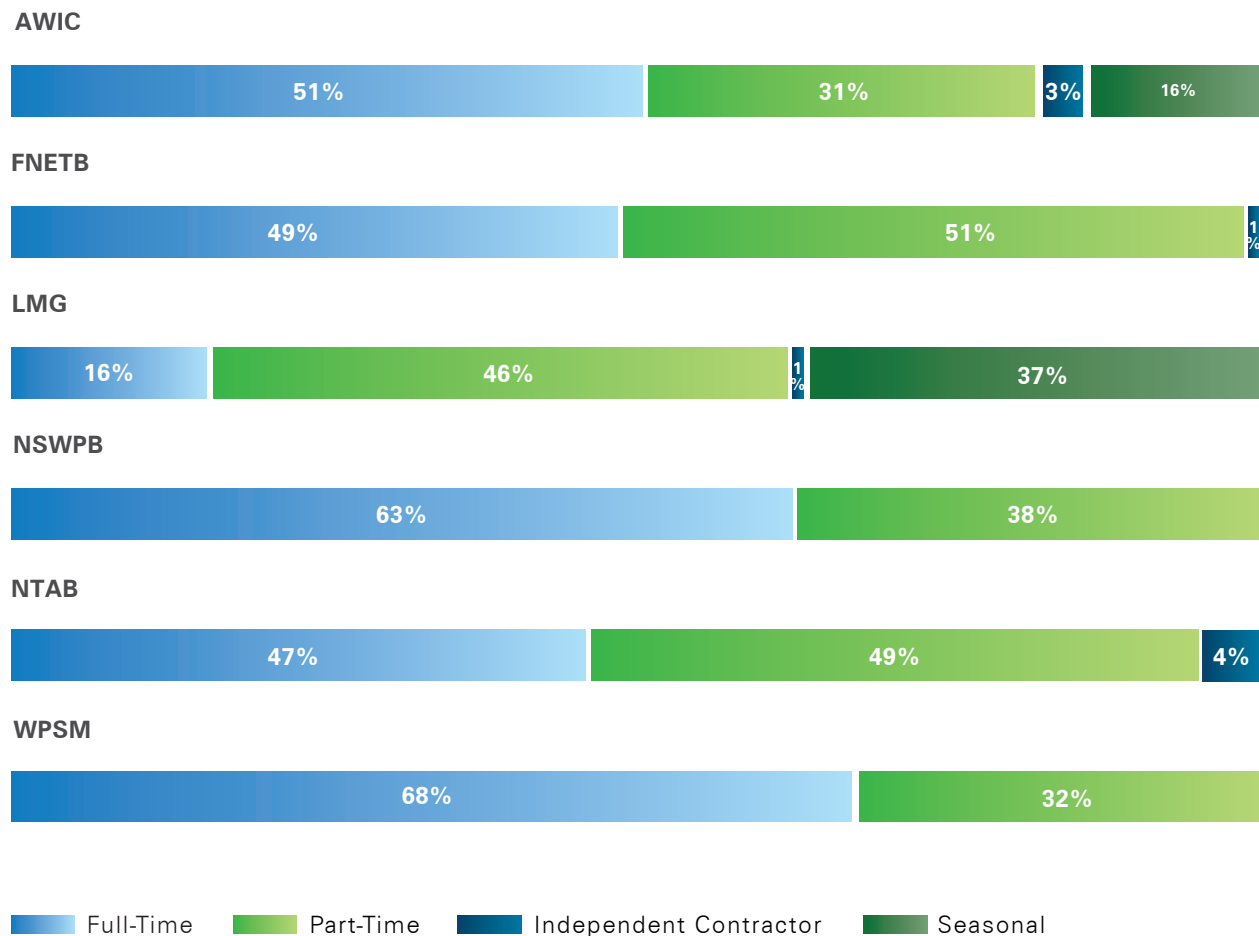
Almost half of all these high frequency hirings only require a high school diploma, and most of the areas had a similar result, except for NTAB (67%) and WPSM (36%). Otherwise, in most instances, the second more frequent educational attainment requirement was a college diploma (on average, 20%), which only NTAB being an outlier to this result.

## Do you plan on hiring anyone over the next 12 months? In what occupational categories? What is the reason for the job opening?

26 |

When it comes to prospective hiring in the upcoming year, a larger proportion of those hirings are expected to be part-time (Table 18). While the proportion of expected part-time hires is larger than the share of part-timers in the existing workforce, it is not much different from the part-time share of all hires which took place last year. It may well be that there are more hires in this category because there is greater turnover among this category of workers.

**DIAGRAM 8: DISTRIBUTION OF EXPECTED HIRINGS BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE**



**TABLE 18: DISTRIBUTION OF EXPECTED HIRINGS BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY**

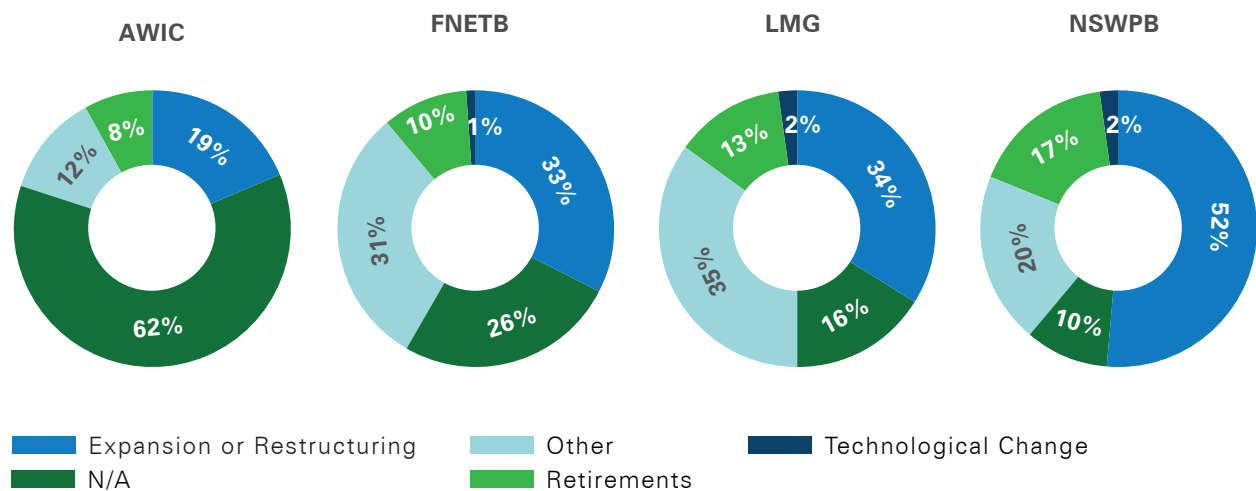
BOARD	AWIC	FNETB	LMG	NSWPB	NTAB	WPSM
Managers & Executives	5%	11%	3%	2%	13%	3%
Professionals	5%	2%	2%	11%	1%	5%
Technical	4%	2%	18%	3%	2%	3%
Trades	5%	13%	5%	7%	5%	27%
Apprentices	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%	12%
Sales & Marketing	11%	2%	6%	4%	5%	9%
Admin & Clerical	6%	3%	4%	3%	2%	5%
Production Workers	10%	46%	6%	33%	19%	3%
Service Workers	38%	16%	38%	34%	41%	22%
Other	13%	3%	19%	4%	10%	11%

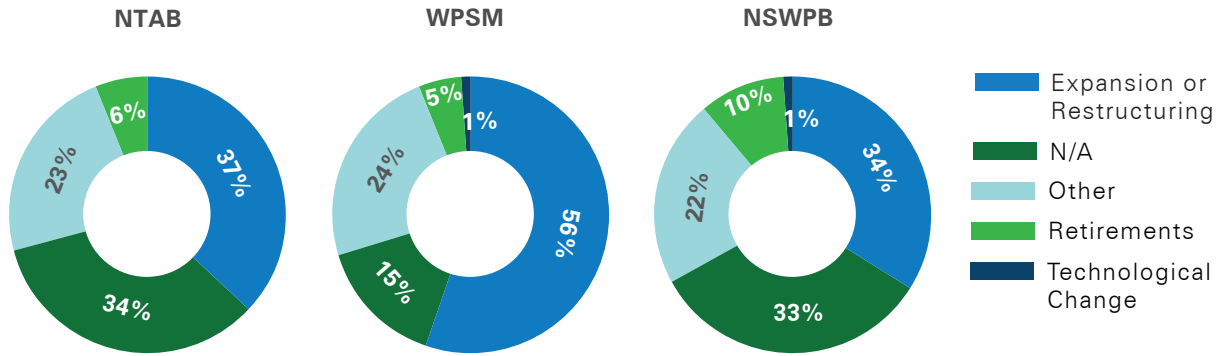
As in the case of new hires in the last year, the high volume occupational category among prospective hires is service worker, followed by production worker. A number of the outliers that were present in the previous year’s hiring also show up in the prospective hiring for next year:

- Managers and executives in FNETB;
- Professionals in NSWPB;
- Trades and Apprentices in WPSM;
- Sales and Marketing in AWIC.

The most common reason cited for the hiring was expansion or restructuring (Table 19), although that was followed very closely by N/A. In the case of AWIC, N/A was by far the most prominent reason. Retirements were only infrequently the reason for an expected hire, and technological change was almost never the reason.

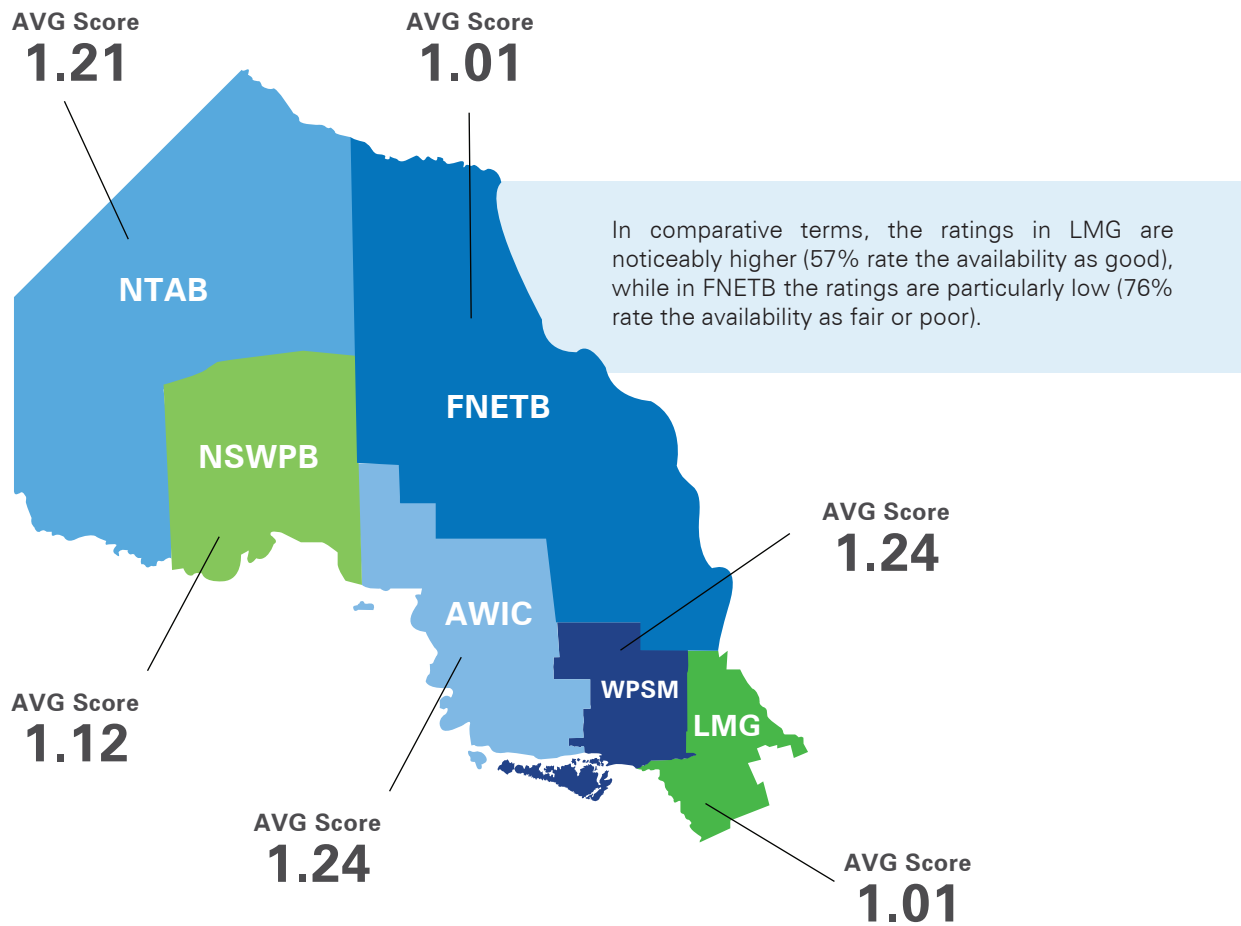
**DIAGRAM 8: DISTRIBUTION OF EXPECTED HIRINGS BY EMPLOYMENT TYPE**





### How do you rate the availability of qualified workers in your local area?

Employers have at best a lukewarm assessment of the availability of qualified workers in their local area. Respondents were asked to assess the availability of qualified workers as excellent, good, fair or poor. The results are presented in Chart 2. In four of the localities, over 60% of employers rated that availability as either poor or fair. If one assigned a numerical value to each choice, where “3” = Excellent, “2” = Good, “1” = Fair, and “0” = Poor, and totaled the score and divided by the total number of responses, the average rating would be 1.31, much closer to Fair (1.0) than to Good (2.0). The results for each area are listed in Table 25.

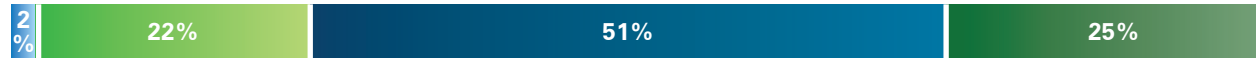


**DIAGRAM 9: SCORING THE AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED WORKERS**

**AWIC**



**FNETB**



**LMG**



**NSWPB**



**NTAB**



**WPSM**



**AVG**

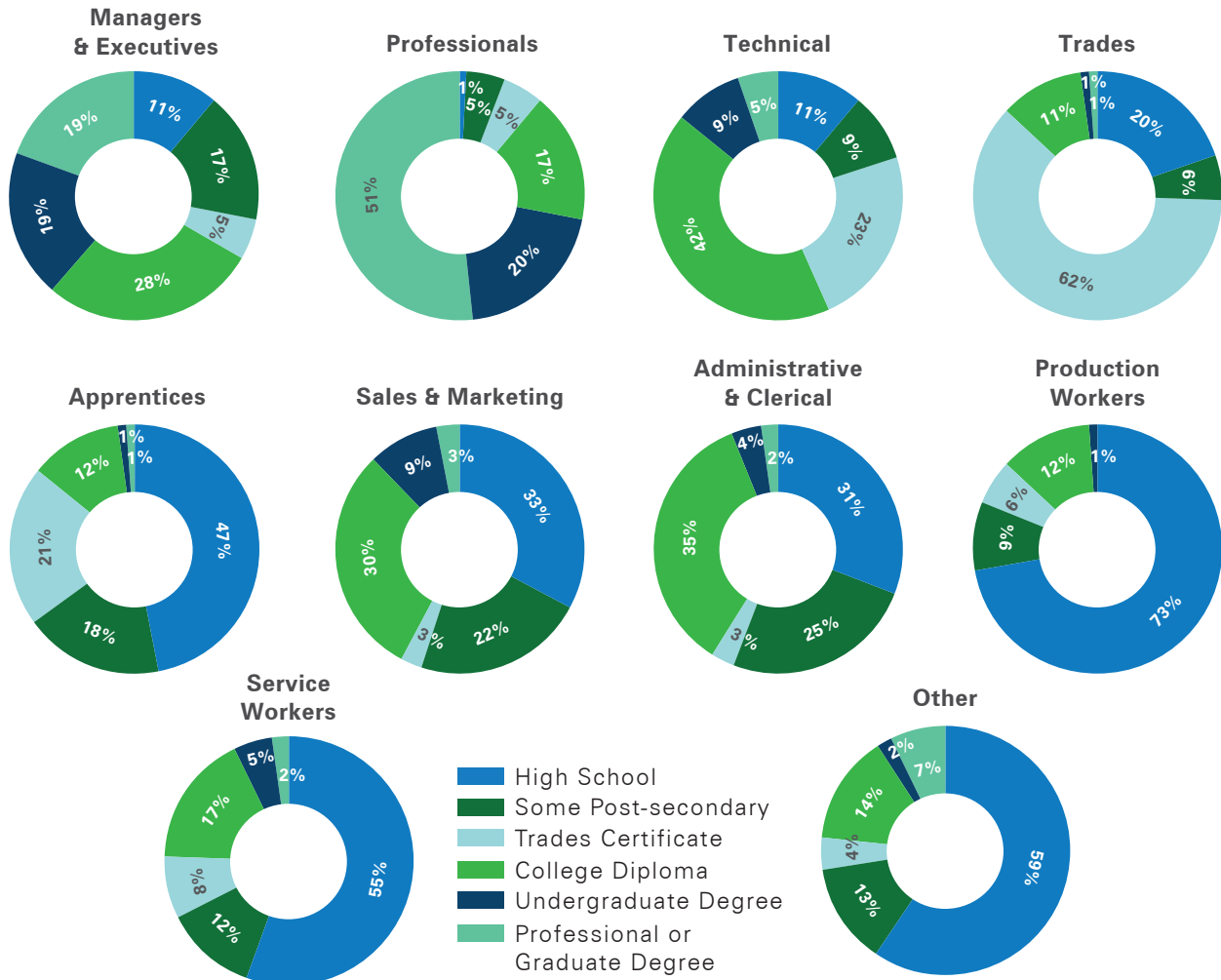


Excellent    Good    Fair    Poor

**What is the minimum level of education required for new hires in the various occupational categories?**

Employers were asked to list the minimum educational attainment requirements for the broad occupational categories. Table 26 lists the percentage distribution of all the responses for all areas by each occupational category. To highlight the concentration of responses, the light-shaded cells indicate values of over 15%, and the darker shaded cells indicate values of 50% or more.

**DIAGRAM 10: MINIMUM EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES**



A few observations arising from Diagram 10:

There are a number of instances where there is a clear preference:

- 51% of employers seek a professional or graduate degree for Professional occupations;
- 62% of employers desire a trades certificate for Trades positions;
- 73% expect only a high school diploma for Production Workers;
- 55% expect only a high school diploma for Service Workers;
- 59% expect only a high school diploma for Other occupations;
- In the category of “close to 50%”, 47% of employers expect a high school diploma for an Apprentice, and 42% of employers expect a college diploma for a Technical occupation;
- The range of education levels that would be a prerequisite for a manager’s position is rather striking;
- Apart from a Manager or Professional position, a university degree does not serve as the minimum qualification for any position – that is not to say that it is not relevant, only that it is not the minimum requirement.

## Please select the top 3 necessary competencies that most of your employees need to possess

Employers were asked to identify the three top necessary competencies that most of their employees needed to possess. This question was asked in relation to all jobs, as well as only hard-to-fill jobs, and it was also asked in relation to their current as well as future workforces. The responses for these four categories have been totaled for each area, and an average has been produced for the entire North, all of which is presented in Table 27.

The options as presented in the survey are listed below, together with the shortened version used in Table 27 to illustrate the results:

SHORT VERSION	OPTION IN SURVEY
Work Ethic	Work Ethic, Dedication, & Dependability
Customer Service	Customer Service Skills
Self-motivation	Self-mitivation / Ability to Work With Little Or No Supervision
Communication	Communication Skills (Both Oral & Written)
Teamwork	Teamwork / Interpersonal Skills
Technical	Technical Skills
Problem Solving	Problem Solving, Reasoning, & Creativity
Professionalism	Professionalism
Learning	Willingness to Learn
Time Manage	Time Management or Organizational Skills
Computer	Computer Literacy Skills
Analytical	Analytical / Research Skills

The results are colour-coded so that it is easy to pick out the higher and lower ranking items. The colour coding is explained by the legend.

The first thing to note from Table 19 is the high level of consistency in the scoring: there are only a few scores which depart from the colour bands that provide a near unbroken series of stripes across the table. This is particularly the case for the top three items (light blue) and the bottom three items (grey).

**TABLE 19: PRIORITY RANKING OF NECESSARY COMPETENCIES, COMBINED TOTALS FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE WORKFORCES, ALL JOBS AND HARD-TO-FILL JOBS**

BOARD	AWIC	FNETB	LMG	NSWPB	NTAB	WPSM	AVG
Work Ethic	165	133	186	139	47	110	780
Customer Service	176	79	138	103	37	84	617
Self-motivation	142	127	103	101	34	83	590
Communication	168	89	111	84	22	64	538
Teamwork	100	96	104	55	13	72	440
Technical	112	30	87	62	14	99	404
Problem Solving	111	92	77	47	15	59	401
Professionalism	69	69	62	52	19	72	343
Learning	86	59	33	66	13	67	324
Time Mangement	75	60	30	45	12	48	270
Computer	75	47	40	45	12	28	247
Analytical	40	23	16	20	2	21	122

Rank 1-3
  Rank 4-6
  Rank 7-9
  Rank 10-12

To highlight the results, the three most important competencies are:

- Work Ethic, dedication, and dependability
- Customer service skills
- Self-motivation / ability to work with little supervision

The three competencies receiving the lowest ranking out of this list of twelve were:

- Analytical / research skills
- Computer literacy skills
- Time management or organizational skills

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

Some employers do provide opportunities for students or for unemployed individuals to acquire some workplace experience, either through a co-op or internship or through mentorships. The actual proportion of respondents offered these opportunities is harder to assess, because it is not known from the data how many employers would have answered “No,” that is, in not answering the question, one cannot say whether or not they provide such opportunities or not. As a result,

Table 20 shows the cumulative score from all areas of those employers who actually do provide such opportunities, according to three possibilities: unpaid co-op or internship placements, paid co-op or internship placements, or mentoring.

**TABLE 20: PROVISION OF WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES**

STUDENTS & FUTURE WORKERS	UNPAID CO-OP OR INTERNSHIP	PAID CO-OP OR INTERNSHIP	MENTORING	TOTAL
High School Students	150	55	74	279
College Students	88	80	63	231
University Students	60	67	54	181
Job Seekers	23	32	56	111

From Table 28, one can see that high school students have access to the greatest number of workplace experience opportunities compared to the other groups, although the difference in the numbers between high school students (279) and college students (231) is not all that large.

There are noticeable differences between what kinds of opportunities are more likely to be provided – this is more easily apparent when the employers’ responses are presented as a percentage of the total (Table 21). For high school students, slightly over half of the employers offer unpaid co-op or internship positions. For college students and university students, the split is almost even, a third in paid co-op or internship, a third in unpaid co-op or internship, and a third in mentoring. When a co-op or internship opportunity is present, there is roughly a 50-50 chance that it will be paid in the case of a college or university student, but less than a 30% chance in the case of a high school student.

Meanwhile, in the case of job seekers, roughly half of the employers offer mentorships as the workplace experience opportunity. Where a co-op or internship opportunity is offered, roughly 60% of the time it is a paid opportunity.

**TABLE 21: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROVISION OF WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES**

STUDENTS & FUTURE WORKERS	UNPAID CO-OP OR INTERNSHIP	PAID CO-OP OR INTERNSHIP	MENTORING
High School Students	54%	20%	27%
College Students	38%	35%	27%
University Students	33%	37%	30%
Job Seekers	21%	29%	51%

## Summary

---

---

34 |

Implementation of the employeronerone survey was met with some challenges in this first year and as noted, various limitations likely contributed to lower response rates. Nevertheless, the information that employers (who responded and completed the survey) did provide, yielded some valuable nuggets of insight into current and projected hiring, hiring practices, occupations in demand and employee competencies expected.

**Employer responses and demographics:** Although outreach and promotional efforts attempted to contact as many employers in northern Ontario and across the various sectors as possible, the majority of responses came from employers serviced by The Labour Market Group from the following industry sectors: healthcare; construction; retail trade; and mining/manufacturing combined. As a result, it is not surprising that the majority of current hires and projected hires are occupations within these industries.

While it was difficult to recruit employers to respond to a lengthy survey, it is hoped that once they see the value of their input, that current respondents will continue to provide their thoughts on future surveys and that this may encourage other employers to do the same.

**Recruitment:** Employers were asked a number of questions related to recruitment including: how they recruit; challenges with recruiting; and top three competencies they are looking for. Word of mouth/personal contacts/referrals and informal networks are the more frequently used recruitment methods followed by online job boards/postings and a company's own internet site. About one half of the employers surveyed said that they had difficulty filling their high frequency jobs. From the applicants that they received, these employers stated that there were not enough to choose from and/or they did not meet educational qualifications, experience or skills requirements. This is consistent with what we are hearing from other consultations. Employers are looking for potential employees who are both educated and have experience in the field.

**Top 3 competencies:** Employer respondents identified work ethic, dedication and dependability as the top competency for all current and future employees. This was followed by technical skills, customer service skills and self-motivation. Lowest on the list were computer literacy skills and analytical/research skills. This was the case for all jobs including

hard-to-fill jobs. These three top competencies all fall into what is known as basic and essential skills, and are often cited by employers as one of their greatest concerns with those applying for jobs in their organization.

**Workplace training:** Overall employers tend to provide more assistance to high school students and these drop off as one goes from college students, to university students and then job seekers. This is a significant concern as employers on the other hand report that they want to recruit employees with experience. It stands to reason that if an employer does not provide experiential learning opportunities, where are students, graduates and job seekers supposed to obtain that experience? And whose job is it to provide training?

## Final Comments

---

---

Although the number of employers who responded to this survey was lower than expected, the employeronerone survey for 2014 yielded some interesting insights into the needs of local employers in several specific sectors. Future surveys of this nature will require the implementation of an even greater outreach strategy and it may be important to form partnerships with specific sector or business organizations to increase response rates. As well, while the ideal is to utilize the exact same survey instrument, it may be necessary to review the current instrument to make it more end-user friendly.

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



# employerone

SURVEY



**EMPLOYMENT  
ONTARIO**

This *Employment Ontario* project is  
funded by the Ontario government