

# Employer Survey 2012

## Results and Analysis

## Peel Halton Workforce Development Group Employer Survey 2013

We would like to make the Employers Survey an annual event, to track trends and provide up-to-date local labour market intelligence. The more employers participate in the survey, the more reliable are the results. Moreover, with a larger number of respondents, comparisons can be made about the workforce practices of different industries and of different size firms.

If your organization would be interested in filling out the 2013 Employer Survey, please e-mail us at [info@peelhaltonworkforce.com](mailto:info@peelhaltonworkforce.com)

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

**EMPLOYMENT  
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## Background

The Peel Halton Workforce Development Group (PHWDG) is a community based, not-for-profit Corporation that serves the Peel and Halton Regions.

The PHWDG functions as a neutral broker of research, disseminator of information and facilitator of collaborative partnership development. The PHWDG works with the community to identify trends and opportunities in the labour market environment which impact our workforce. We then nurture the ideas which emerge from our consultations and seek to develop partnerships to address these issues, to further help our community to thrive in our local economy.

Operating as part of the Local Boards Network of Ontario, PHWDG is one of 25 local planning board areas funded by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to conduct and distribute local labour market research and engage community stakeholders in a planning process that supports local solutions to local issues.

This report was prepared by Tom Zizys, a labour market analyst, and Shalini da Cunha, the Executive Director of the Peel Halton Workforce Development Group.

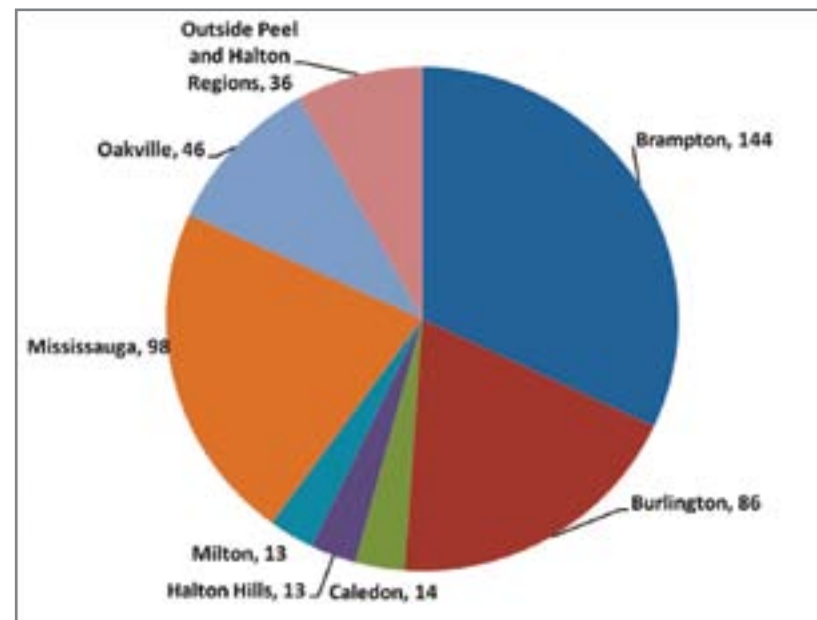
## Findings from Peel Halton Workforce Development Group Employer Survey 2012

### Introduction

Between October 2 and November 6, 2012, PHWDG conducted an on-line survey of employers. The dissemination of the survey was greatly assisted by a large number of PHWDG partners<sup>1</sup>, resulting in over 600 employers visiting the survey site. In the end, 423 workable responses were collected and 320 employers completed the entire survey, with many of them offering comments and personal insights. The employers participating in this survey represented over 40,000 jobs in Peel and Halton Regions.

The respondents represented a good cross-section of employers, by geography, industry and size.

**Chart 1: Distribution of survey respondents by geography**



<sup>1</sup> These partners included: ACCES Employment Services Mississauga; Brampton Economic Development; Burlington Chamber of Commerce; Burlington Economic Development; Caledon Chamber of Commerce; Caledon Economic Development; Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council; Centre for Skills Development and Training; Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre; Employment Halton; Halton Hills Economic Development; Human Resources Professional Association of Peel; Jobs Caledon; Milton Chamber of Commerce; Mississauga Economic Development; Oakville Economic Development; Sheridan Community Employment Services.

Table 1 lists the distribution of survey respondents by industry, showing both the number and the percentage share of all respondents for each of the 20 standard industry classifications. They are grouped into five clusters. Four of these clusters will often form the basis of comparisons in the survey analysis between industries (Manufacturing, Knowledge Sector, Service Sector and Supply Chain). A fifth grouping is the remainder category (Other) and is not sufficiently homogeneous to offer any useful comparison to the other clusters.

**Table 1: Distribution of survey respondents by industry**

Industry Cluster	Number of Respondents	Percentage
<b>MANUFACTURING</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>20.6%</b>
<b>KNOWLEDGE SECTOR</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>25.7%</b>
Educational Services	20	4.7%
Finance and Insurance	15	3.6%
Information and Cultural Industries	7	1.7%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	59	14.0%
Public Administration	7	1.7%
<b>SERVICE SECTOR</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>19.4%</b>
Accommodation and Food Services	27	6.4%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	12	2.8%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	37	8.8%
Retail Trade	30	1.4%
<b>SUPPLY CHAIN</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
Transportation and Warehousing	19	4.5%
Wholesale Trade	21	5.0%
<b>OTHER</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>19.2%</b>
Administrative & Support, Waste Management	13	3.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3	0.7%
Construction	24	5.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	29	6.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3	0.7%
Mining and Oil & Gas Extraction	2	0.5%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	6	1.4%
Utilities	1	0.2%

Table 2 provides the distribution of respondents by number of employees. The survey sample size is skewed, percentage-wise, toward larger establishments, primarily because solo operators and even very small firms would be less motivated or interested to provide their views on employment issues.

**Table 2: Distribution of survey respondents by employee size**

Employee Size	#	%
No full-time employees	18	4%
1-4 full-time employees	83	20%
5-9 full-time employees	62	15%
10-19 full-time employees	66	16%
20-49 full-time employees	56	13%
50-99 full-time employees	50	12%
100-199 full-time employees	42	10%
200-499 full-time employees	22	5%
500 or more full-time employees	22	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Part-time employees**

Part-time employment is largely concentrated among firms with 100 or more employees. Table 3 shows the percentage distribution for part-time employment according to the number of full-time employees.

**Table 3: Proportion of respondents by number of part-time employees, by size of firm**

	Number of full-time employees					
	1-4	5-9	10-19	20-49	50-99	100+
No part-time employees	35.0%	18.3%	23.8%	7.1%	34.7%	26.2%
1-4 part-time employees	50.0%	60.0%	46.0%	48.2%	34.7%	11.9%
5-9 part-time employees	3.8%	5.0%	9.5%	23.2%	14.3%	6.0%
10-19 part-time employees	3.8%	8.3%	7.9%	7.1%	2.0%	8.3%
20-49 part-time employees	5.0%	6.7%	7.9%	8.9%	2.0%	10.7%
50-99 part-time employees	1.3%	1.7%	4.8%	3.6%	4.1%	7.1%
100-199 part-time employees	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	6.1%	10.7%
200-499 part-time employees	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	6.0%
500 or more part-time employees	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	13.1%

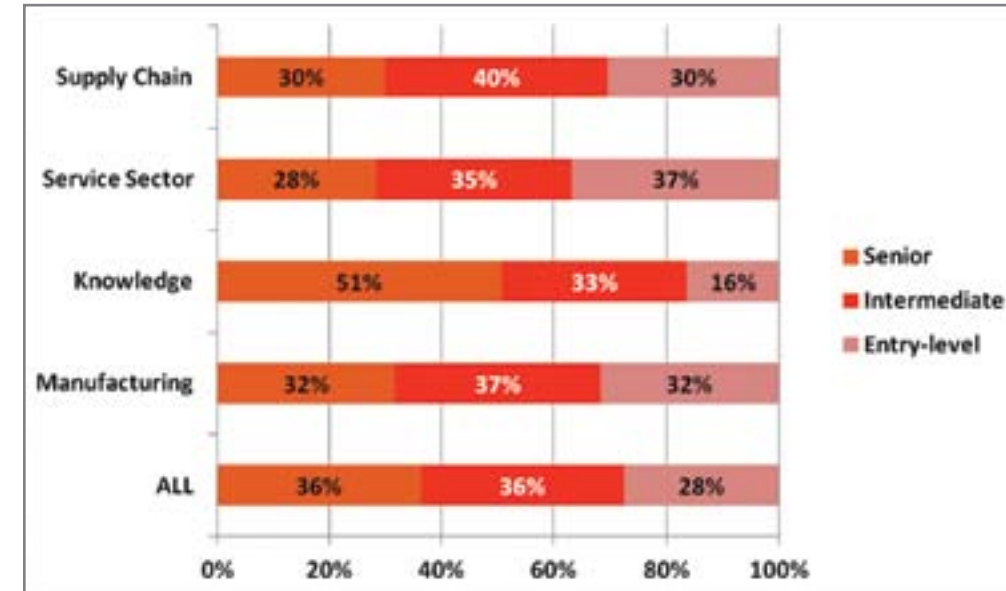
Among small and medium-sized firms, the majority of establishments have either none or just a handful of part-time employees. Even among firms with 50-99 full-time employees, roughly a third had no part-time employees, roughly a third had 1-4 part-time employees, and the other third had more than 5 part-time employees. It was only among firms with more than 100 employees did one start seeing larger proportions with significant numbers of part-time employees.

**Occupations by skill level**

Employers were asked to estimate the proportion of their jobs which could be assigned to three broad skill categories, as follows:

Senior level	Experienced management, professionals, highly specialized skilled worker
Intermediate level	Semi-skilled or skilled, typically filled by employees with 2 years or more job experience, or someone with specific training
Entry level	Jobs that usually require no more than a high school education, could be performed by low skilled and/or inexperienced staff

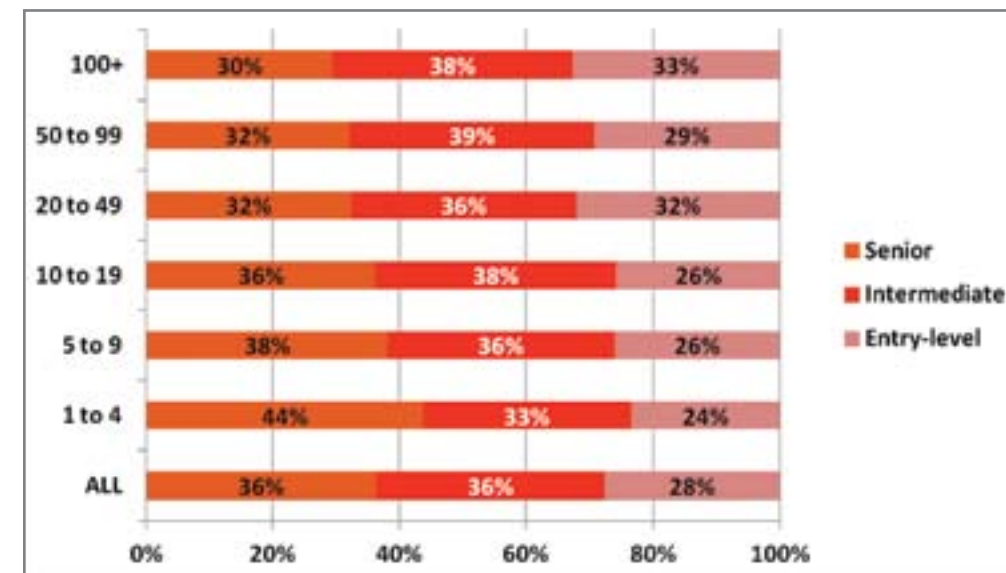
**Chart 2: Distribution of occupations by skill level, by industry clusters**



Not surprisingly, the Knowledge Sector has a very high proportion of Senior level staff, a feature of the large number of jobs which require a high level of skill and a high level of educational attainment. The Service Sector, meanwhile, has the highest proportion of Entry-level jobs, while Manufacturing and the Supply Chain sector each have higher proportions of Intermediate level jobs.

When looked at in terms of the size of the establishment (Chart 3), as the firm size increases, the proportion of Senior level jobs drops (consider that even a three-person firm would have one individual who is the manager—that person will be performing a range of other functions that no doubt include Entry-level tasks, but that individual will be classified as a manager). Intermediate, but particularly Entry-level jobs, make up a higher proportion of all occupations as the firm size increases.

**Chart 3: Distribution of occupations by skill level, by size of firm**

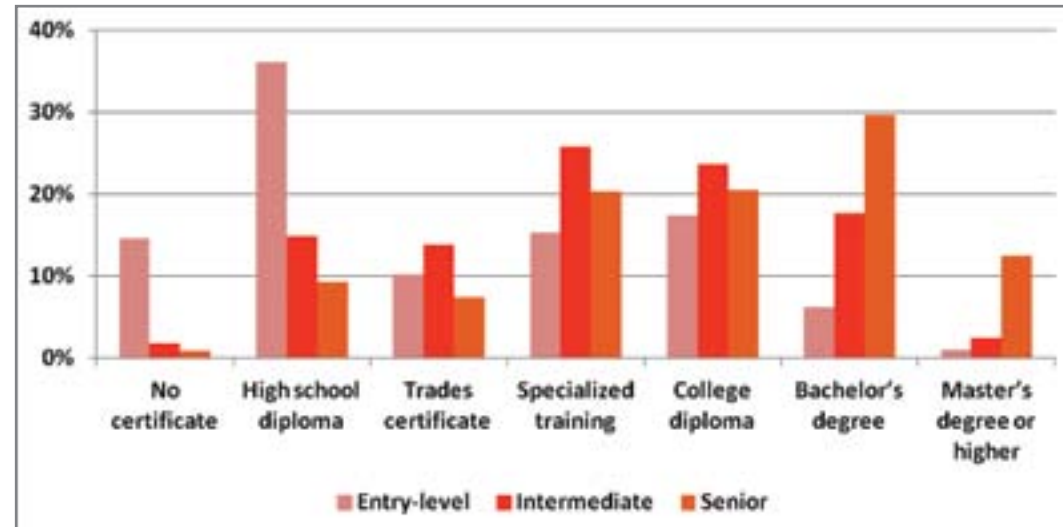




**Educational attainment expectations by skill level**

Employers were asked what were the usual educational credentials expected of job candidates for different categories of work. They could choose more than one response, but for the sake of comparison, the replies have been standardized to a percentage in (Chart 4). There are, not surprisingly, higher credential qualifications the higher up the skill level one goes. What is surprising is that even among Entry-level levels, a significant proportion of employers expected either specialized training (15%) or a college diploma (17%).

**Chart 4: Employer educational credential expectations by skill level**



These expectations of higher credentials are largely driven by the Knowledge Sector—29% of employers expected an Entry-level job candidate to possess a college diploma, and 11% of them expected an Entry-level candidate to hold a Bachelor's degree. Some portion of the Manufacturing sector does seek candidates with College diplomas (14%), just as some portion of the Service Sector (15%) and of the Supply Chain Sector (16%) expect specialized training. On the other hand, almost a quarter (24%) of the Service Sector employers expect no certificate for an Entry-level position, as does a fifth of the Supply Chain employers (Table 4).

**Table 4: Employer educational credential expectations by skill level, by industry cluster**  
Experience expectations by skill level

	Expected level of educational attainment						
	No certificate	High school diploma	Trades certificate	Specialized training	College diploma	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree or higher
Manufacturing	16%	41%	14%	11%	14%	5%	0%
Knowledge Sector	4%	26%	8%	20%	29%	11%	3%
Service Sector	24%	42%	7%	15%	8%	3%	1%
Supply Chain	20%	44%	10%	16%	8%	2%	0%

**Experience expectations by skill level**

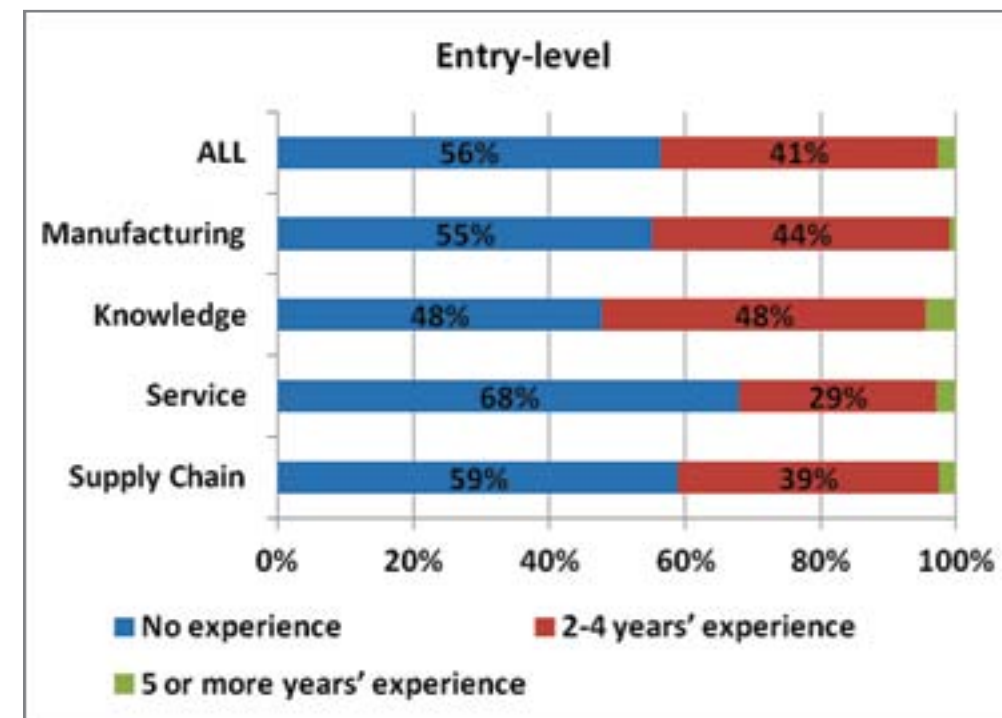
As one moves up the skill ladder, employers have higher expectations regarding previous work experience. What is striking is the high proportion of employers who expect 2-4 years of prior work experience for candidates seeking Entry-level jobs.

**Table 5: Employer experience expectations by skill level**

	No experience	2-4 years' experience	5 or more years' experience
Entry-level	56%	41%	3%
Intermediate	5%	72%	23%
Senior	2%	20%	78%

There are a few variations when these responses are dissected by industry clusters.

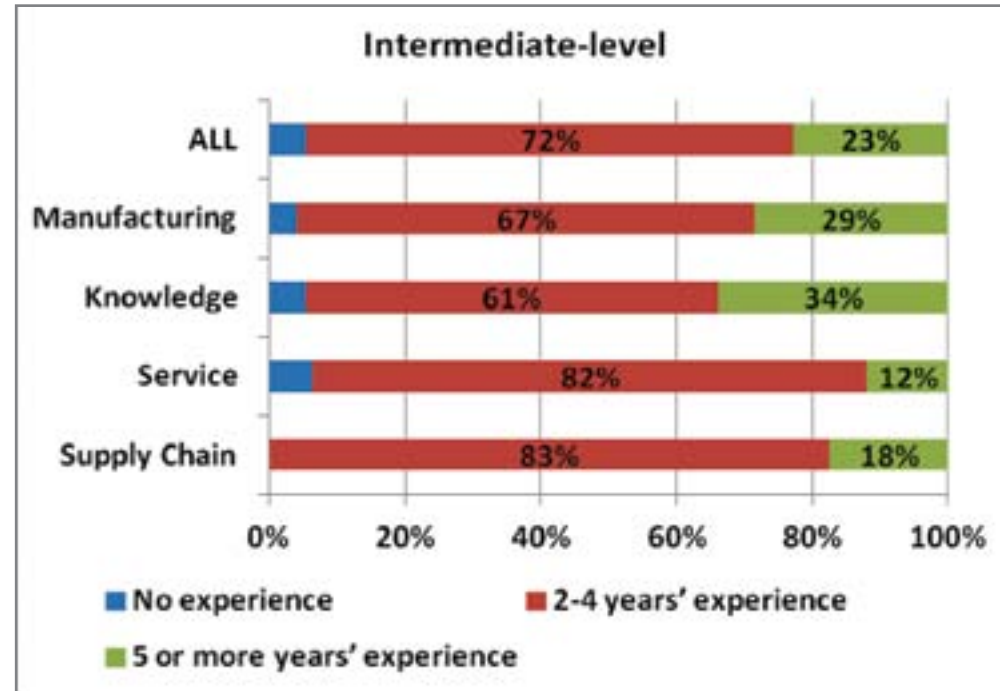
**Chart 5: Employer experience expectations for Entry-level jobs, by industry cluster**



The main variance in responses regarding experience expectations for Entry-level workers is between the Knowledge Sector and the Service Sector in (Chart 5). Knowledge Sector employers are equally split between accepting no experience or two to four years' experience, while two-thirds of Service Sector employers are willing to hire someone with no experience.

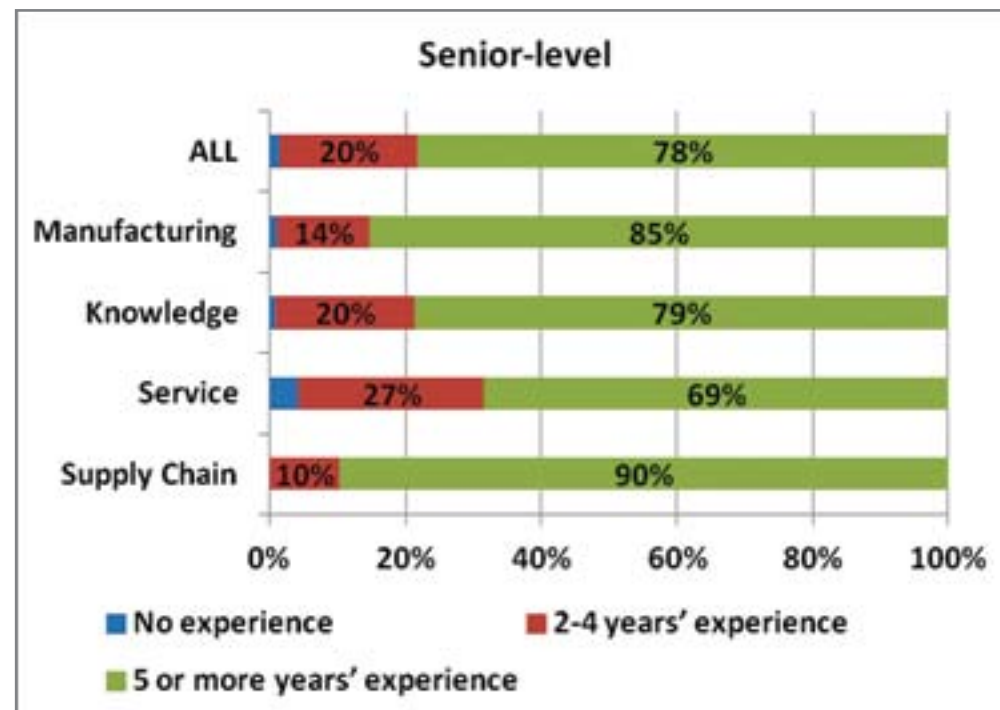
For Intermediate-level jobs (Chart 6), the focus shifts from no experience, but the variance is now between two to four years' experience and five or more years of experience. The Service Sector and the Supply Chain Sector are far more likely to settle for two to four years of experience, but both Manufacturing and the Knowledge Sector have a significant minority of employers (around a third) who seek five or more years' worth.

**Chart 6: Employer experience expectations for Intermediate-level jobs, by industry cluster**



For Senior-level jobs (Chart 7), it is noteworthy that the highest expectations come from the Manufacturing and Supply Chain Sector.

**Chart 7: Employer experience expectations for Senior-level jobs, by industry cluster**



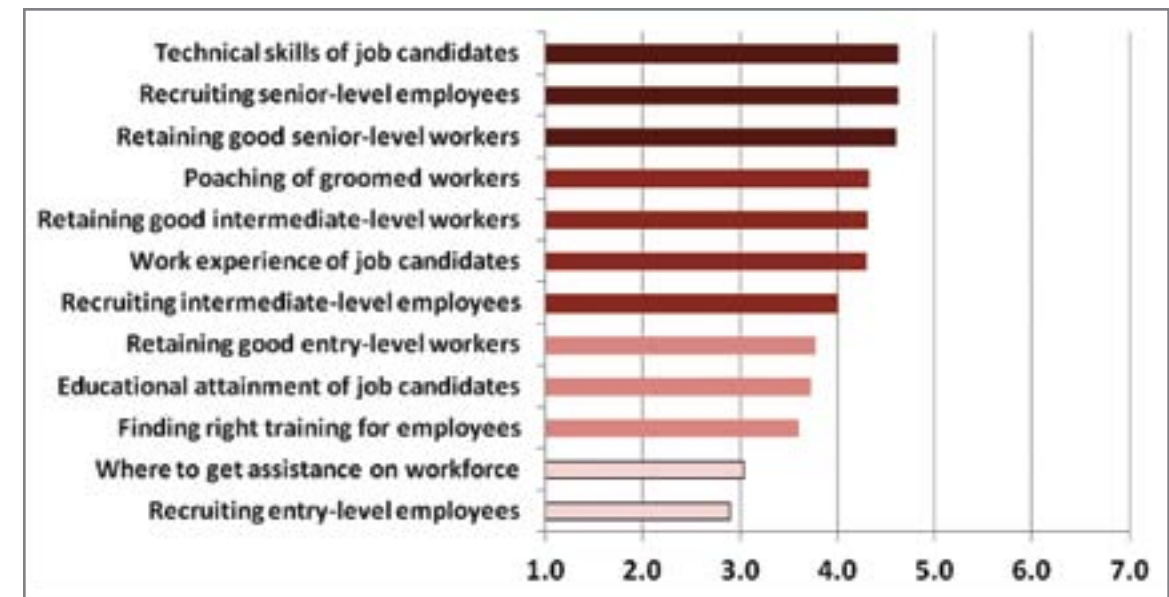
**Workforce challenges or concerns**

Employers were asked to rate a series of possible workforce challenges or concerns, on a scale from 1 to 7, where “1” represented “Not at all a challenge or concern” and “7” represented “Poses a great challenge or concern.” The responses have been averaged to a single, composite score and are presented in Chart 8.

The options presented in the chart are abbreviated versions of what was offered in the survey, as follows:

Technical skills of job candidates	The technical, work-related skills of job candidates
Recruiting senior-level employees	Recruiting senior-level employees
Retaining good senior-level workers	Retaining good senior-level workers
Poaching of groomed workers	Grooming good workers and having them recruited away
Retaining good intermediate-level workers	Retaining good intermediate-level workers
Work experience of job candidates	The level of work experience of job candidates
Recruiting intermediate-level employees	Recruiting intermediate-level employees
Retaining good entry-level workers	Retaining good entry-level workers
Educational attainment of job candidates	The educational attainment levels of job candidates
Finding right training for employees	Finding the right training for my current workforce
Where to get assistance on workforce	Not clear where to get assistance on workforce issues
Recruiting entry-level employees	Recruiting entry-level employees

**Chart 8: Degree to which each workforce issue poses a challenge or concern**



The top concerns of employers were the technical, work-related skills of job candidates, followed closely by both recruiting and retaining senior-level employees. Workforce issues from this list that were of least concern were recruiting entry-level employees and being uncertain about where to get assistance on workforce issues.

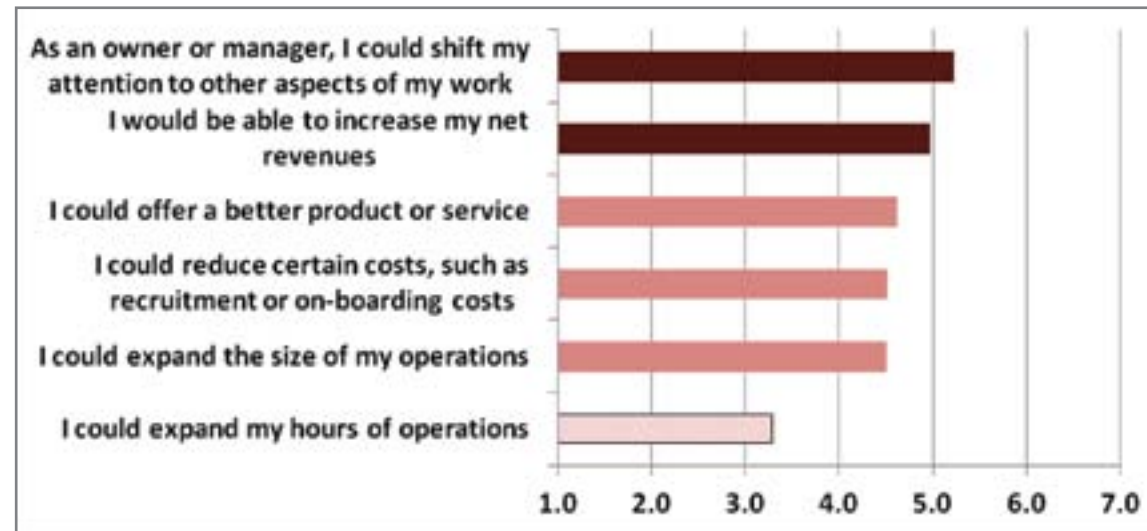
There were some variations by different categories of employers. Overall, firms with over 100 employees expressed lower levels of concern for many of these issues. Employers from the Service Sector were less concerned about technical skills, work experience and educational attainment levels of job candidates, and were less concerned about recruiting senior-level employees. On the other hand, Manufacturing employers had higher levels of concern regarding the technical skills of job candidates and also expressed greater concern regarding where to go to have their workforce issues resolved. Employers

from the Supply Chain Sector had a higher level of concern regarding recruiting intermediate-level staff, and together with very small firms (1-4 and 5-9 employees) expressed higher levels of concern about recruiting entry-level employees.

**Impact of resolving workforce issues**

Employers were asked what would be the impact of having their workforce issues resolved. The two most common consequences were that it would free up time for the owner or manager or it would improve the net revenues of the firm.

**Chart 9: Impact of resolving workforce issues**



The variations by employer categories were most pronounced by size of establishment: employers with 100 or more employees were more likely to provide a lower rating for the impact of having their workforce issues resolved, while conversely smaller firms with 1-4 and 5-9 employees were more likely to provide a higher rating of the impact.

**Table 6: Rating the impact of resolving workforce issues, by size of establishment**

	ALL	1 to 4	5 to 9	10 to 19	20 to 49	50 to 99	100+
As an owner or manager, I could shift my attention to other aspects of my work	5.21	5.88	5.72	5.58	5.02	5.09	4.00
I would be able to increase my net revenues	4.96	5.30	5.39	5.09	5.06	4.63	4.35
I could offer a better product or service	4.61	4.91	5.19	4.48	4.84	4.35	3.92
I could reduce certain costs, such as recruitment or on-boarding costs	4.51	4.43	4.72	4.52	4.69	4.83	4.20
I could expand the size of my operations	4.49	4.99	5.12	4.69	4.39	4.17	3.58
I could expand my hours of operations	3.29	3.91	3.64	3.4	2.78	2.89	2.74

The green-shaded cells highlight values substantially greater than the average rating and the pink-shaded cells highlight cells substantially lower.

**Important factors when hiring for entry-level positions**

Employers were asked to rank the importance of various factors when it came to making hiring decisions for entry-level positions. As in other cases, the wording of the various factors was abbreviated from the survey to the chart display.

Demonstrable work ethic	Demonstrable work ethic, motivated, take the initiative
Strong interpersonal skills	Strong interpersonal skills (teamwork or customer service skills)
Communications skills	Communications skills (oral and/or written)
Personality	Personality
Fit with your organization	Fit with your organization's culture or style
Problem-solving skills	Problem-solving skills
Flexibility regarding schedule	Flexibility regarding time and day of work
Computer skills	Computer skills
Potential for advancement	Potential for advancement within your company
Strong references	Strong references
Previous work experience	Previous work experience
Leadership/management potential	Leadership/management potential
Specific job related training	Specific job related training evidenced by a certificate
Educational credentials	Educational credentials

**Chart 10: Important factors when hiring for entry-level positions**





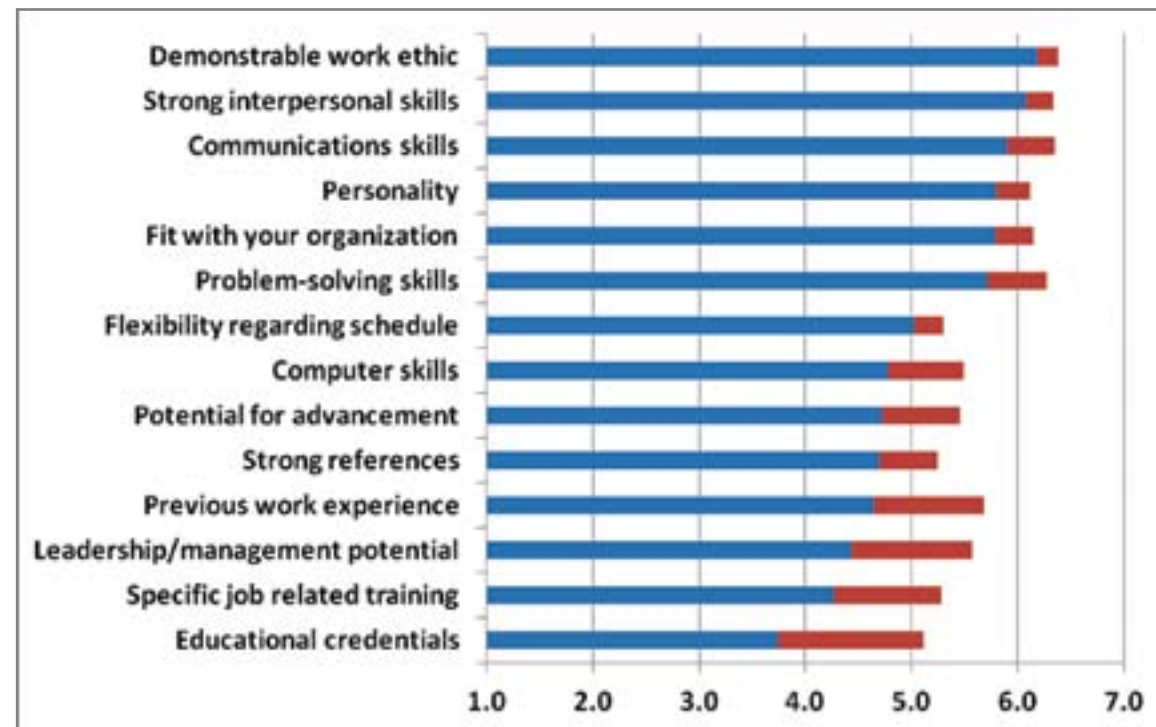
The soft skills top the list as important factors which determine hiring decisions for entry-level positions: demonstrable work ethic, strong interpersonal skills, communications skills, personality and so on. The three factors receiving the lowest ratings were educational credentials, specific job related training and leadership or management potential.

The Manufacturing Sector employers tended to rank several of these factors lower than other employers, namely computer skills, leadership or management potential, and specific job-related training. Service Sector employers ranked educational credentials lower. Conversely, Knowledge Sector employers tended to rank educational credentials and computer skills higher, and Service Sector employers ranked flexibility regarding scheduling higher.

**Important factors when hiring for intermediate or senior-level positions**

The same question was asked regarding hiring for intermediate or senior-level positions. Chart 10 lists the results: the blue bar represents the responses for the entry-level positions, and the red bar indicates how much more important that factor was when applied to an intermediate or senior-level job.

**Chart 11: Important factors when hiring for intermediate or senior-level positions**



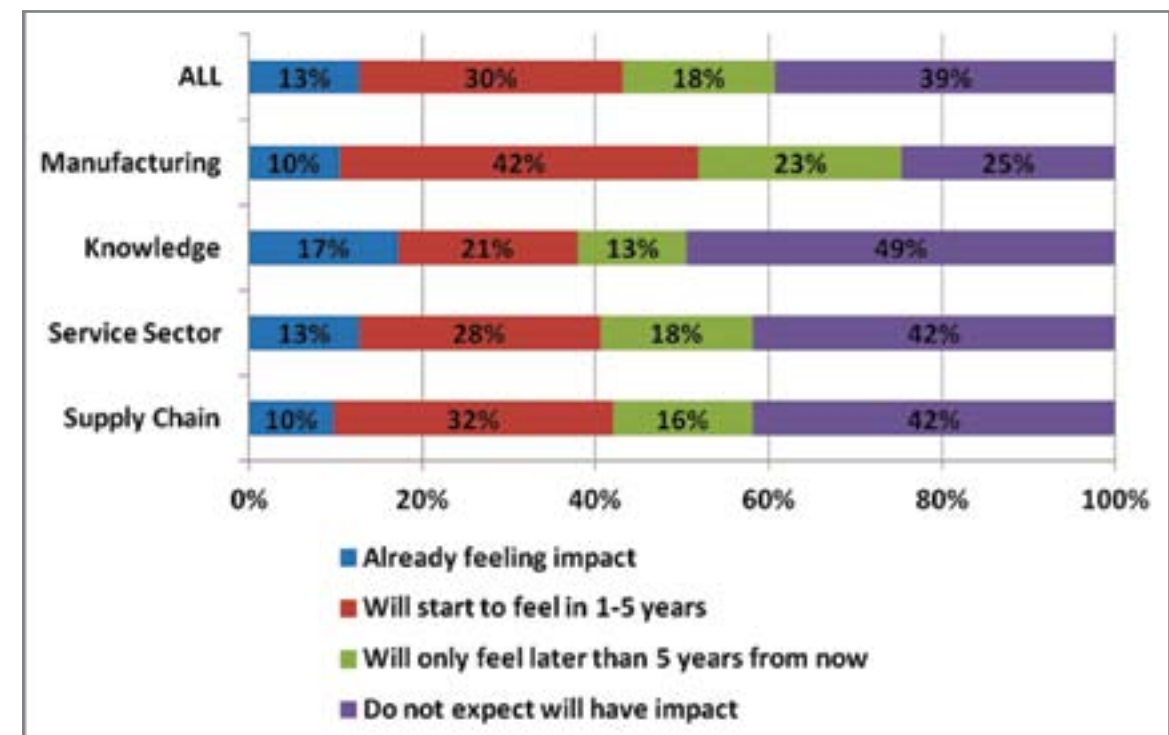
As one can see, the soft skills still remain predominant considerations, but several factors increased more in importance than others. Previous work experience and leader or management potential increased significantly, moving ahead of several other factors. Problem-solving skills also moved up in the total ranking. Educational credentials received the biggest boost when considering the difference between an entry-level or more senior position, however even with that added importance it still remained the lowest ranking factor. (It should be noted that the significance of educational credentials may be in the early screening of job candidates: the first review of resumes may well involve a cut that considers educational attainment, so that actual hiring may involve other factors after this preliminary sorting has taken place.)



**Impact of retirement of baby boom generation**

Employers were offered four assessments of how the retirement of baby boom generation workers might affect their organization. More than half do not expect to feel the impact of these retirements for at least another five years, if at all. Manufacturing Sector employers were more likely to feel that the impact would affect them in the next one to five years (four out of ten expressed this view). Employers in the Knowledge Sector had significantly varying responses: 17% admitted that they were already feeling the impact, while almost half (49%) indicated that they did not expect to feel any impact (by far the highest proportions for each of these options of any sector).

**Chart 12: Impact of retirement of baby boom generation**





**Prioritizing workforce development initiatives**

Employers were asked to prioritize a series of potential workforce development initiatives, providing a score on a scale of “1” to “7,” where “1” equals “not at all a priority” and “7” equals “the highest priority.” The options in the survey have been abbreviated for the sake of the chart as follows:

Cross training your workforce	Cross-training to increase the flexibility of your workforce
Ensuring workforce system is working	Ensuring that the various parts of the workforce system (education, trainers, employment services, government, employers) are working together, developing programs together and sharing information in a timely fashion
Seeking funding for workplace training	Seeking funding to supplement the investment by employers into workplace training
Skills training for current employees	Providing skills training for specific work-related functions to current employees
Recruiting intermediate/senior staff	Recruiting of intermediate or senior level staff
Improving HR skills of managers	Improving supervisory and management skills in HR
Support for career advancement	Designing career pathway maps and providing support for career advancement for employees through career laddering programs
Facilitating employers to share training	Facilitating the ability of groups of employers to share the costs of employee-training, to create economies of scale and of convenience
Basic pre-employment programs	Basic pre-employment programs familiarizing job candidates with the expectations of a workplace (attendance, punctuality, taking direction)
Recruiting and screening of entry-level	Recruiting and screening of entry-level and/or high turnover and/or seasonal staff
Training supervisors to integrate	Training supervisors and managers in effective strategies to integrate new immigrants into the workplace
Literacy and essential skills for current staff	Providing basic literacy, numeracy, computer and related essential skills to current employees

**Chart 13: Prioritizing workforce development initiatives**



A few comments: it should not come as a surprise that cross-training tops the list: this refers to increasing the flexibility of one’s workforce, allowing them to shift from one task or function to another, depending on demand. What was more surprising was the second highest response, the aspiration that the workforce system work in a more coordinated and timely manner. While this option was far less concrete in terms of an obvious outcome, it is noteworthy that employers ranked it so highly, suggesting that something about the workforce system as a whole is not meeting their needs.

It is also striking that the four priorities that ranked lowest (basic pre-employment programs, recruiting and screening entry-level workers, assistance to integrate newcomers into their workforce, and literacy and essential skills training for staff), are among the major services being offered through the current employment services regime.

As far as variations by sub-groupings: employers with more than 100 employees were less likely than the average to rank seeking funding for training highly, and Knowledge Sector employers were less likely to rank highly literacy and essential skills training for current staff (hardly a surprise). On the other hand, Manufacturing employers were particularly keen on cross-training, and Supply Chain employers were keener on pre-employment programs and literacy and essential skills training (the latter also supported more by Service Sector employers).

**Significance of newcomers in hiring**

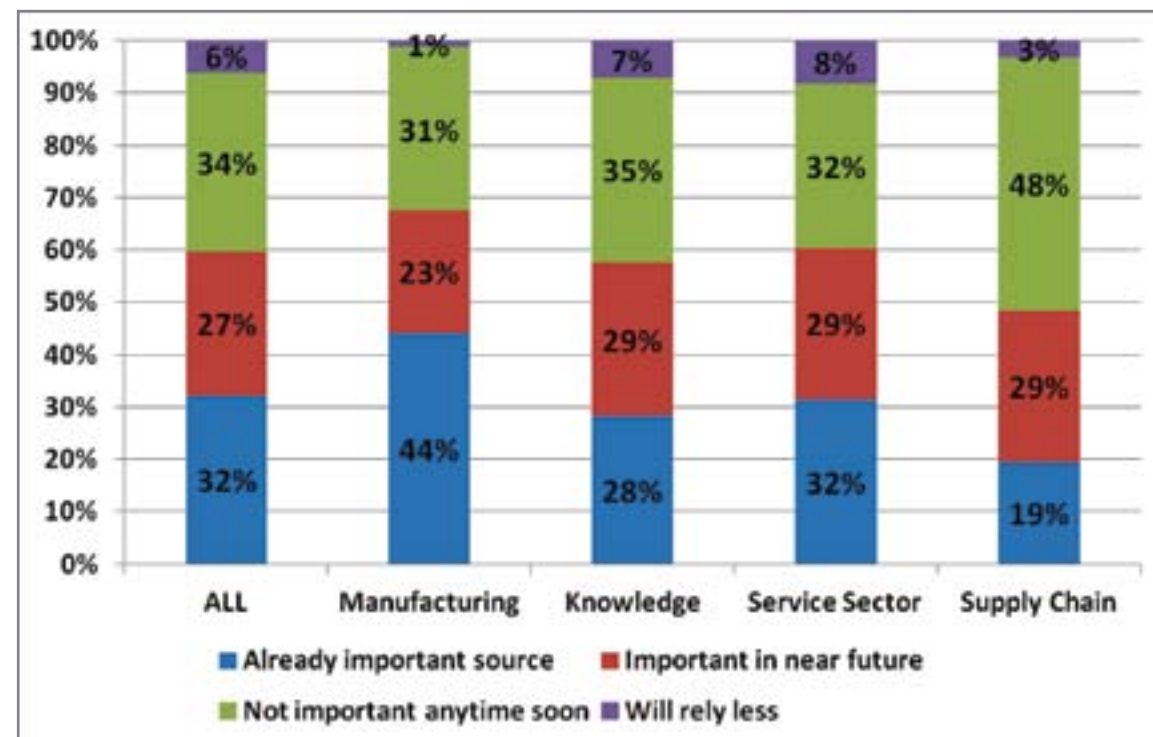
Employers were asked to choose the statement that best reflected the role that newcomers (arrived in last five years) play in their hiring decisions:

- Newcomers have already become an increasingly important source of new hires for our company;
- We foresee that in the near future newcomers will become an increasingly important source of new hires for our company;
- Newcomers are not a particularly significant source of new hires for our company and we do not foresee this changing any time soon;
- We expect that we will be relying less on newcomers as a source of new hires for our company.





Chart 14: Significance of newcomers in hiring, by industry cluster



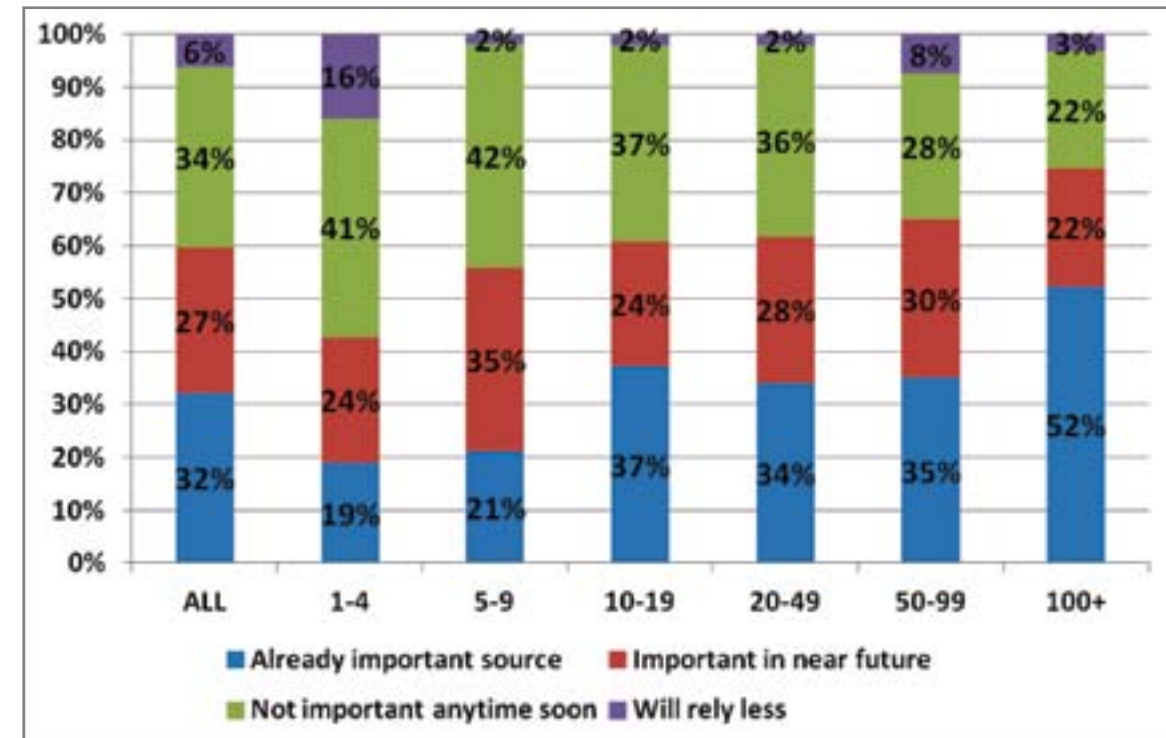
There is a considerable difference between the penetration of newcomers into the workforce by industry clusters, with manufacturing already relying on newcomers at over twice the rate than the supply chain sector (44% to 19%). The supply chain sector was also the most likely not to expect to be drawing on the newcomer labour pool anytime soon.

The incidence of employers they were less likely to rely on newcomers also varied considerably. For the manufacturing sector, not relying on newcomers is hardly an option (1% saying they would rely less on them), while both the Knowledge Sector and the Service Sector had slightly higher numbers for this answer (7% and 8% respectively).

Broken down by size, three patterns emerge (Chart 15):

- The larger the firm, the more likely they already employ newcomers;
- The smaller the firm, the more likely that they do not expect to rely on newcomers in the future;
- The smallest firms are particularly most likely to express the view that they expect to rely less on newcomers in the future.

Chart 15: Significance of newcomers in hiring, by employee size



Employer concerns when hiring newcomers

Employers were asked to rate their concerns when hiring newcomers, compared to other candidates for the same position.

Once again, the options which were presented in the survey were abbreviated for the purpose of the chart, as follows:

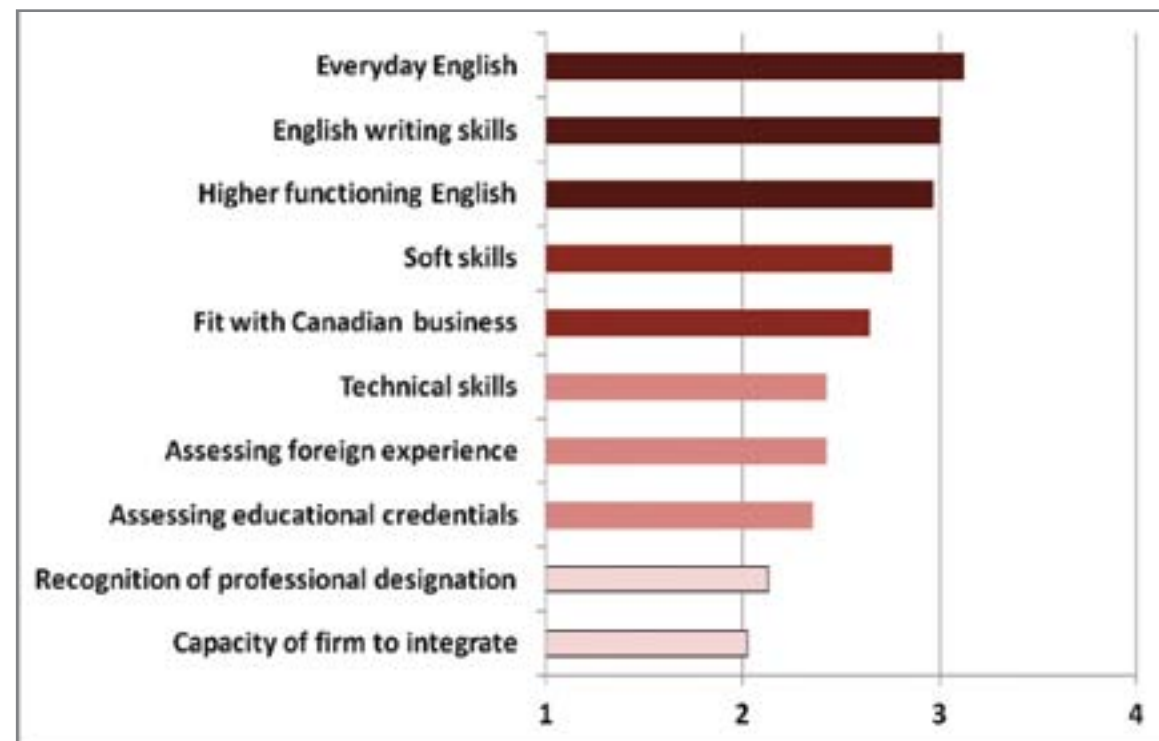
Everyday English	Everyday English conversational ability
English writing skills	English writing skills
Higher functioning English	Higher functioning English conversational skills (technical vocabulary, familiarity with slang and nuance)
Soft skills	Soft skills (interpersonal communication, team approach, taking the initiative)
Fit with Canadian business	Their "fit" or familiarity with Canadian business culture, practices and norms
Technical skills	Technical skills related to the job
Assessing foreign experience	Assessing their foreign work experience
Assessing educational credentials	Assessing their educational credentials
Recognition of professional designation	Getting recognition of their professional designation
Capacity of firm to integrate	The capacity of your firm to integrate a newcomer (HR support, cross-cultural awareness, potential mentors)

As can be seen in Chart 16, English language skills are by far the primary concern of employers when it comes to evaluating newcomer job recruits. The next priority of concern revolves around soft skills, both interpersonal skills and teamwork, as well as familiarity with Canadian business norms and practices. Issues relating to technical skills, prior experience and educational credentials/professional designation are ranked lower on the list of concerns.

The chart below tabulates the average score for each item, where each response was scored in the following way:

- 1 = Almost never a concern
- 2 = Sometimes a concern
- 3 = Often a concern
- 4 = Almost always a concern

**Chart 16: Employer concerns when evaluating newcomers**



In terms of different subcategories of employers, Knowledge Sector employers and firms with less than 50 employees expressed greater concern about the fit or familiarity of newcomers with Canadian business culture and norms. Firms with 1-4 employees expressed greater concern regarding their ability to integrate newcomers into their business. On the other hand, employers in the Service Sector were less concerned than other employers about assessing the foreign experience or educational credentials of newcomers, and expressed less concern regarding recognition of their foreign credentials.

These results regarding concerns have been further cross-tabulated with the question regarding the extent to which newcomers already form part of the firms' workforce (Table 7). Not surprisingly, employers who indicated that they would be relying on newcomers less usually had higher concerns regarding newcomers, suggesting that these employers had already had a bad experience with newcomers. In a number of instances, their scores were considerably higher than that of employers in the other categories (pink-shaded cells).

It is interesting that employers already relying to a considerable degree on newcomers expressed the least concern for each characteristic, whereas those who were not yet relying on newcomers expressed greater concerns. On the question of assessing educational credentials, employers who already employed a considerable number of newcomers voiced notably less concern (green-shaded cell).

**Table 7: Concerns regarding newcomers by degree to which newcomers form part of workforce**

	Already important source	Important in near future	Not important anytime soon	Will rely less
Everyday English	3.04	3.17	3.09	3.45
English writing skills	2.83	3.03	3.02	3.55
Higher functioning English	2.82	2.89	3.06	3.45
Soft skills	2.72	2.83	2.58	3.35
Fit with Canadian business	2.46	2.76	2.60	3.20
Technical skills	2.25	2.50	2.50	2.50
Assessing foreign experience	2.19	2.65	2.44	2.40
Assessing educational credentials	2.11	2.52	2.38	2.55
Recognition of professional designation	1.97	2.31	2.12	2.20
Capacity of firm to integrate	1.96	2.02	1.97	2.45

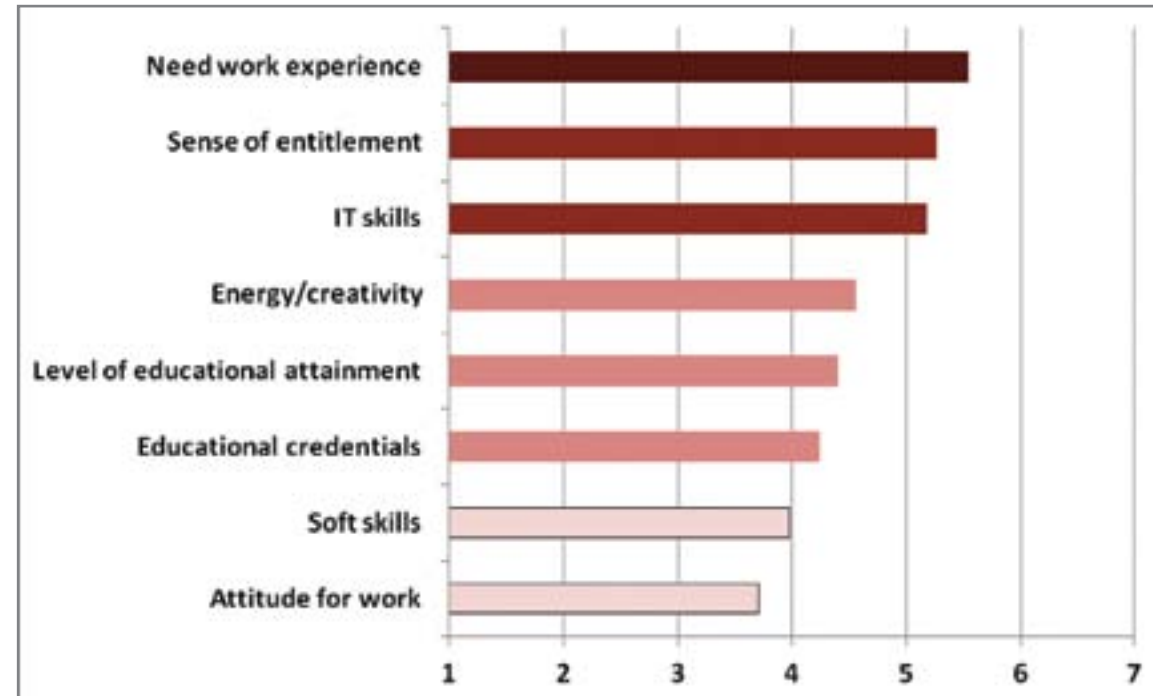
**Employer evaluation of youth**

In a similar fashion, employers were asked to rate a series of statements about young people (aged 15 to 29 years of age), on a scale of "1" to "7", where "1" equals "Disagree strongly" and "7" equals "Agree strongly". The statements from the survey have been abbreviated for the purposes of the chart:

Need work experience	Could benefit from getting some work experience, perhaps through an internship or work placement program.
Sense of entitlement	Have an exaggerated sense of entitlement regarding their salary and career advancement prospects.
IT skills	Usually have appropriate skills in working with new technology, computers and/or IT.
Energy/creativity	Usually bring a level of energy or creativity that is helpful and/or refreshing.
Level of educational attainment	Usually have the right level of educational attainment.
Educational credentials	Usually have educational credentials in the right discipline or subject.
Soft skills	Usually have the right soft skills, such as when interacting with others or communicating.
Attitude for work	Are usually motivated and have the right attitude toward work and toward taking direction.



**Chart 17: Employers' assessment of youth**



Employers were largely in agreement that youth could benefit from getting more work experience, and they also felt that youth exhibited an exaggerated sense of entitlement. Employers were also less likely to affirm that youth had the right attitude toward work or that they had the right soft skills.

On the other hand, employers were likely to judge youth as having the appropriate skills when it came to technology, computers and IT, and were also likely to agree that youth often brought energy and creativity to the workplace. Employers expressed slightly above average agreement with the view that youth had the right level of educational attainment and that their educational credentials were usually in the right field or subject.

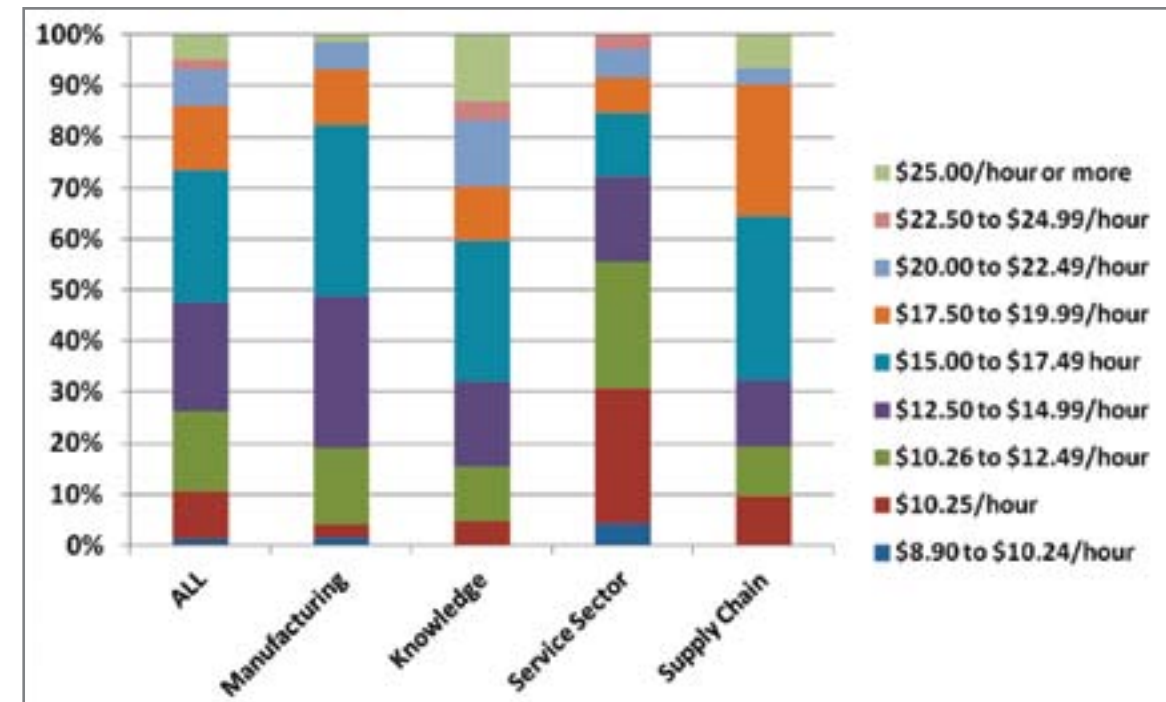
Knowledge Sector employers were more likely than other employers to feel that youth brought extra energy or creativity to the workplace, that youth had credentials in the right subjects and that youth had the right attitude toward work.



**Starting wage for entry-level jobs**

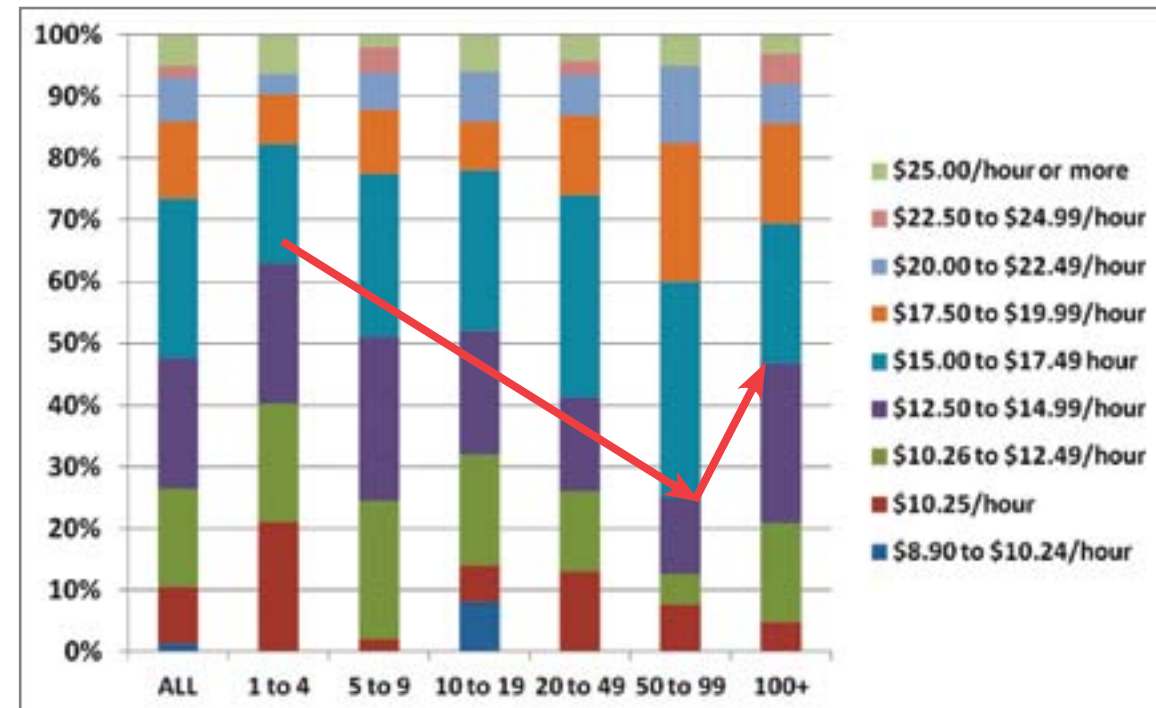
Even though the jobs may be entry-level, the distribution of the wage ranges by industry cluster varies considerably.

**Chart 18: Starting wage for entry-level job by industry cluster**



One way to read the chart is to focus on a specific wage rate, say \$10.26 to \$12.49 per hour, a level just above minimum wage. For the Service sector, that level reaches up to above the 50% mark, which means that over 50% of employers in the Service Sector indicate that the starting wage for their entry-level positions are at or below the \$10.26 to \$12.49 range. Among the other three industry clusters, 20% or less of employers claim that as the level of their starting wage. Conversely, 30% of the Knowledge Sector employers pay \$20.00 or more per hour for their entry-level occupations, while no more than 10% of employers in the other three clusters pay as much.

When these responses are broken down by the size of the establishment, a very clear pattern emerges.

**Chart 18: Starting wage for entry-level job by size of establishment**

The proportion of employers who pay at or below the \$12.50 to \$14.99 per hour band drops considerably as the size of establishment increases, only to rise again for firms with more than 100 employees. Thus, over 60% of firms with 1-4 employees pay at or below that rate, around 50% for firms with 5-9 and 10-19 employees, down to around 40% for firms with 20-49 employees, going down further still to 25% for firms with 50-99 employees, then rising back up to 45% for firms with 100 or more employees (this trend is highlighted by a red line on Chart 18).



## Conclusion

The most prominent findings from the survey:

- Some employers express fairly high expectations of job candidates even for entry-level jobs, when measured by levels of educational attainment and prior work experience; this is particularly the case among employers in the Knowledge Sector;
- Employers express much greater concern about recruiting and retaining senior-level staff as opposed to entry-level staff (although the latter is a greater concern for very small firms);
- Smaller firms are more likely to feel that addressing their workforce issues would reap greater positive impacts;
- Assessment of soft skills remain the most important factor when it comes to employers making hiring decisions;
- Training issues and having the workforce system work together are the biggest workforce development priorities for employers;
- Newcomers have already become an important source of new hires for a third of the employers surveyed, particularly so among manufacturing firms and larger firms;
- Employers express some concerns regarding the job readiness of newcomers, primarily in terms of their English language skills; however, employers who already rely on newcomers as a significant source of new hires express lower levels of concerns compared to other employers who have not hired newcomers in significant numbers; there is a small proportion of employers who expect to be relying less on newcomers, likely because they had a bad experience;
- Employers were largely in agreement that youth could benefit from getting more work experience, and they also felt that youth exhibited an exaggerated sense of entitlement; employers were also less likely to affirm that youth had the right attitude toward work or that they had the right soft skills;
- Starting wages for entry-level positions vary considerably across employers, with more Service Sector employers tending to pay at the low end of the scale, and more Knowledge Sector employers paying at the higher end; the proportion of employers paying at the low end drops considerably as the size of establishment increases, only to rise again for firms with more than 100 employees.

## Appendix A: Organizations Assisting In Outreach for the PHWDG 2012 Employer Survey

Getting employers to carve fifteen minutes out of their busy schedule to complete a survey about workforce development issues is a challenging proposition. The following organizations provided assistance to PHWDG in our outreach efforts to recruit employers to complete our survey:

1. ACCES Employment Services Mississauga
2. Brampton Economic Development
3. Burlington Chamber of Commerce
4. Burlington Economic Development
5. Caledon Chamber of Commerce
6. Caledon Economic Development
7. Supply Chain Sector Council
8. Centre for Skills Development & Training
9. Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre
10. Employment Halton
11. Halton Hills Economic Development
12. Human Resources Professionals Association of Peel
13. Jobs Caledon
14. Milton Chamber of Commerce
15. Mississauga Economic Development
16. Oakville Economic Development
17. Sheridan Community Employment Services



## Peel Halton Workforce Development Group

1100 Central Parkway West, Unit 4, Suite 200, Mississauga, ON L5C 4E5  
ph 905.306.9588 • fx 905.306.9590 • info@peelhaltonworkforce.com

[www.peelhaltonworkforce.com](http://www.peelhaltonworkforce.com)