

1000 Island Workforce Development Board EmployerOne Survey

Executive Summary

The EmployerOne survey was conducted by the 1000 Island Workforce Development Board during the period of October 2015 to January 2016 and concentrated on businesses operating in the Kingston area. The survey asked businesses to reflect on hiring and separations that had taken place in their workplace in the past year and projected hiring in 2016 along with recruitment and training practices. The goal of the survey is to better understand labour market conditions in Kingston and the Frontenacs in order to provide insight and direction on activities and initiatives that will minimize labour market challenges and leverage opportunities.

In total, 226 businesses initiated the survey with 162 or 71.8% representing 9,045 employees completing the assessment. The 162 completed surveys exemplify 1.9% of the 13,514 businesses with employees operating in Kingston and the Frontenacs as of June 2015. The greatest volume of responses were from the Health Care and Social Assistance; Manufacturing; and Professional, Technical and Scientific sectors.

Survey highlights include:

- Amongst the survey respondents, there was net job creation of 148 jobs in the past twelve months.
- Net job creation took place in all occupational groups except Managers and Executives and occupations classified as “Other”.
- The greatest incidence of labour market churn or turnover took place amongst production and service occupations as well as those classified as “Other”.
- Job openings in over 250 occupations were filled in the past twelve months with 73 businesses indicating some positions were difficult to fill. Recruitment challenges took place in occupations across all educational levels as well as business sizes.
- The most commonly cited reason for a position being difficult to fill was a lack of skill, education or experience amongst applicants.
- The most commonly sought skills in future workers are Problem Solving/Reasoning/Creativity; Work Ethic/Dedication/Dependability and Technical Skills.
- More than three in four responding companies indicated they plan on hiring in 2016. Projections identify 822 full-time positions, 381 part-time, 61 contract and 206 seasonal positions across all sectors of the local economy. The most common reason for projected hiring is business expansion and reorganization.
- 53.75% of businesses rank the availability of workers locally as Excellent or Good. 46.25% rank worker availability at Fair or Poor.
- When recruiting, businesses rely equally on personal networking and postings on online job boards.
- Eight out of ten survey respondents do invest in and financially support employee training. Training most often takes the form of on-the-job training. Cost and loss of productivity during training time is the most often cited barrier to training.
- More than half of the survey respondents had hired one or more individuals with education or credentials acquired outside of Canada in the past three years.

The report concludes by identifying recommended actions to ensure that the workforce supports the growing economy in Kingston and the Frontenacs.

1000 Island Workforce Development Board EmployerOne Survey

Background

The EmployerOne survey was conducted for the first time in Kingston and the Frontenacs October 2015 to January 2016. In total, 226 businesses initiated the survey with 162 or 71.8% representing 9,045 employees completing the assessment.

The goal of the survey is to better understand labour market conditions in Kingston and the Frontenacs in order to provide direction on activities and initiatives that will minimize labour market challenges and leverage opportunities.

Labour Market Conditions in Kingston and the Frontenacs

The general conditions of the local labour market set the stage for survey responses. As of January 2016, the labour market in Kingston and Frontenacs consisted of 84,800 people. An estimated 79,700 residents were employed and 5,100 were unemployed (unable to find employment). At 6.0% the unemployment rate in Kingston and the Frontenacs is somewhat lower than Ontario's 6.7%, suggesting a tighter supply of labour.

Respondent Demographics

- 226 surveys launched, 162 or 71.8% completed
- 156 (96.3%) surveys were completed by employers located in Kingston
- The greatest volume of responses were from Health Care and Social Assistance (23.3%), Manufacturing (12.9%) and Professional, Scientific and Technical (9.8%) sectors
- The 162 businesses responding to the survey represent 1.9% of the 13,514 businesses with employees operating in Kingston and the Frontenacs as of June 2015.

Table One identifies the number of responses from each sector of the local economy.

Table One – Survey Responses by Sector		
Sector	Number of Completed Responses	Percentage
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0.0%
Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction, Quarrying	1	0.6%
Construction and Utilities	6	3.7%
Manufacturing	21	12.9%
Wholesale Trade	8	4.9%
Retail Trade	13	8.0%
Transportation and Warehousing	3	1.8%
Information and Cultural Industries	6	3.7%
Finance and Insurance	9	5.5%
Real Estate and Leasing	4	2.5%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	16	9.8%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0.0%
Administrative Support, Waste Management	3	1.8%
Educational Services	8	4.9%
Health Care and Social Assistance	38	23.3%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	9	5.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	14	8.6%
Other Services (except public administration)	2	1.2%
Public Administration	2	1.2%

Table Two examines the size of businesses completing the survey. Over 28% of respondents were small businesses with fewer than ten employees. Over one in four businesses responding to the survey employed 20 to 49 people. Twenty businesses or 12.4% employ more than 100 people.

Table Two: Survey Respondents by Employee Size Range		
Employee Size Range	Number of Businesses	Per Cent of Total
1 to 4 employees	16	9.9%
5 to 9 employees	30	18.6%
10 to 19 employees	34	21.1%
20 to 49 employees	41	25.5%
50 to 99 employees	20	12.4%
100 to 199 employees	9	5.6%
200 to 499 employees	9	5.6%
More than 500 employees	2	1.2%

Age of the Workforce of Respondents

Table Three examines employment of younger and older workers across sectors of the economy. The sectors with the youngest workforce, age 25 and under are Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (44.7%), Other Services (40.0%) and Accommodation and Food Services (32.1%).

The sectors with the greatest percentage of workers age 55 and over is Other Services (45.0%), Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (25.6%), Construction and Quarrying (16%) and Health Care and Social Assistance (15.1%).

Sector	No. of Companies Responding	Total Number of Employees	Average Percent Under Age 25	Average Percent Over Age 55
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Construction and Quarrying *	7	232	6.3%	16.0%
Manufacturing	21	1,023	10.6%	9.6%
Wholesale Trade	8	483	7.3%	11.6%
Retail Trade	13	186	13.8%	9.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	3	507	18.7%	12.7%
Information and Cultural Industries	6	301	17.3%	6.2%
Finance and Insurance	9	186	13.7%	9.4%
Real Estate and Leasing	4	826	1.3%	25.6%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	15	472	8.4%	10.5%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0	0.0%	0.0%
Administrative Support, Waste Management	3	71	3.7%	6.0%
Educational Services	8	148	10.0%	13.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	38	2,319	15.3%	15.1%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	9	224	44.7%	8.0%
Accommodation and Food Services	14	982	32.1%	7.9%
Other Services (except public administration)	2	55	40.0%	45.0%
Public Administration	2	1,710	6.1%	8.9%

* To protect the confidentiality of survey respondents, Mining and Quarrying has been combined with the Construction sector throughout this report.

Employment Status of the Workforce of Survey Respondents

Table Four provides an overview of the composition of the workforce by employment status within each sector and highlights that:

- Full-time employment is most predominant in Manufacturing, Transportation and Warehousing and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing Services sectors.
- Part-Time employment is most predominant in Accommodation and Food Services, Health Care and Social Assistance and Educational Services sectors.
- Contract employment is not as commonplace, but observed most often in Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Information and Cultural and Professional Services sectors.
- Seasonal employment is most predominant Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Construction and Public Administration.

Sector	Total	Full-Time	Per Cent	Part-Time	Per Cent	Contract	Per Cent	Seasonal	Per Cent
Agriculture	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Construction	232	183	78.9%	0	0.0%	5	2.2%	44	19.0%
Manufacturing	1,023	976	95.4%	27	2.6%	14	1.4%	6	0.6%
Wholesale Trade	483	389	80.5%	90	18.6%	4	0.8%	0	0.0%
Retail Trade	186	119	64.0%	49	26.3%	4	2.2%	14	7.5%
Transport/Warehouse	507	466	91.9%	40	7.9%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%
Information/Cultural	301	239	79.4%	11	3.7%	44	14.6%	7	2.3%
Finance and Insurance	186	140	73.5%	40	21.5%	1	0.5%	5	2.7%
Real Estate/Leasing	826	738	89.3%	68	8.2%	15	1.8%	5	0.6%
Professional Services	472	388	82.2%	41	8.7%	43	9.1%	0	0.0%
Mngt of Companies	0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Admin/Waste Mngt.	71	60	84.5%	9	12.7%	1	1.4%	1	1.4%
Educational Services	148	91	61.5%	45	30.4%	12	8.1%	0	0.0%
Health/Social Assist.	2,319	1,298	56.0%	897	38.7%	45	1.9%	79	3.4%
Arts, Entr't/Recreation	224	41	18.3%	36	16.1%	54	24.1%	93	41.5%
Accommodation/Food	982	393	40.0%	461	46.9%	25	2.5%	103	10.5%
Other Services	55	45	81.8%	10	18.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Public Admin.	1,712	1,038	60.6%	483	28.2%	2	0.1%	189	11.0%

Employment Dynamics

Survey respondents reported the following employment dynamics in 2015:

1,798 people were hired
 751 people quit
 90 people retired
 219 people were temporarily laid off
 116 people were permanently laid off
 134 people were dismissed
 An additional 340 people left employment for other reasons

- There was a net gain of 148 jobs amongst 158 survey respondents during 2015
- Of the 158 companies who responded, 139 (88%) had hired in the past twelve months
- 121 or 76.6% had experienced workforce separations (quit, retire, laid-off, etc.)
- In the past 23 months, of the 136 companies responding, 28 (20.6%) had re-hired 140 individuals who had been temporarily laid off.

Tables Five identifies the number of hires and separations by occupational group.

Table Five: Number of Hires and Separations by Occupational Group (2015)											Net Jobs +/-
Occupational Groups	Hires				Separations						
	FT	PT	Ctt	Sea	Quit	Ret.	T LO	P LO	Dism	Oth.	
Managers & Executives	52	1	4	0	31	18	7	15	11	16	(-41)
Professional	79	20	8	2	34	6	13	6	4	8	38
Technical	35	5	5	11	20	0	3	8	3	4	18
Trades (Journeyman)	36	10	0	27	22	4	12	10	6	0	19
Apprentice	10	0	0	4	4	0	4	1	0	2	3
Sales and Marketing	36	8	1	8	20	4	1	6	0	0	22
Administrative & Clerical	69	36	7	9	39	5	5	20	3	22	27
Production Workers	168	5	3	25	83	2	30	5	19	5	57
Service Workers	344	144	10	157	270	13	132	31	49	17	143
Other	181	235	36	7	228	38	12	14	39	266	(-138)
Total	1010	464	74	250	751	90	219	116	134	340	148

FT – Full-Time

Ctt – Contract

T LO – Temporary Lay Off

Dism – Dismissal

PT – Part-Time

Sea – Seasonal

P LO – Permanent Lay Off

Oth. – Other

Ret. - Retire

- Net Job Creation took place within all occupational groups except “Managers and Executives” and “Other”.
- The greatest incidence of labour market churn or turnover took place amongst production, service and occupations classified under “other”.

Hiring Practices and Challenges in 2015

Employers were asked to identify the three occupations most often hired in the past twelve months. The 148 employers responding to this question identified hiring in over 250 occupations with 73 employers indicating that at least one of the occupations was difficult to fill.

Table Six summarizes the number of difficult to fill positions by Occupational group, including the number of companies hiring in this group and educational requirements of the positions being filled.

Level A occupations are those that typically require university level education; Level B require college or apprenticeship; Level C usually require secondary school education and/or occupationally specific training and Level D typically require on-the-job training.

Table Six: Occupations identified as difficult to fill in the past twelve months						
Occupational Group	Number Hired	Number of Companies	Education Levels of Difficult to Fill Positions			
			A	B	C	D
0 Managers	17	12	17			
1 Business, Finance, Administrative	50	21	12	22	16	
2 Natural and Applied Sciences	31	15	11	20		
3 Health Occupations	99	18	10	14	75	
4 Education, Law, Social & Government Services	44	8	3	41		
5 Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	43	6	3	40		
6 Sales and Service	319	33		26	58	235
7 Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators	108	17		28	40	40
8 Occupations in Manufacturing	14	5			6	8
TOTAL	725	135	56	191	195	283

A full listing of the occupations identified as difficult to fill is included in Appendix One. Along with the numbers hired and the number of companies hiring, we looked at the education typically required to perform successfully in these occupations. It is interesting to note that opportunities range across all educational levels.

Table Seven examines the number of companies by employee size range identifying that they have challenges in filling positions. For our survey respondents, the size of the business had little bearing on recruitment challenges. The size ranges of business reporting the greatest degree of difficulty filling positions were those employing 200 to 499 and those employing five to nine.

Employee Size Range	No. of Survey Respondents*	Companies identifying Difficult to Fill Positions	
		No of Companies	Percentage
1 to 4 employees	12	2	16.7%
5 to 9 employees	25	15	60.0%
10 to 19 employees	33	15	45.5%
20 to 49 employees	37	21	56.8%
50 to 99 employees	18	6	33.3%
100 to 199 employees	9	4	44.4%
200 to 499 employees	8	5	62.5%
More than 500 employees	2	1	50.0%

* Identifies companies responding to the question asking if there were positions difficult to fill.

Employers were asked the reasons why positions were difficult to fill. Table Eight summarizes their responses.

Reason Identified	Number of Companies
Applicants not meeting skill requirements	47
Applicants not meeting qualification requirement (Educational or Credential)	38
Applicants not meeting work experience requirements	38
Applicants not meeting motivation, attitude or interpersonal abilities	32
Not enough qualified applicants	26
No local qualified applicants	17
Inability to compete with other employers due to pay and benefits	12
Inability to compete with other employers due to the nature of the work (seasonal, shift work, irregular hours, job content)	5
Applicants not meeting language requirements	4
Other – Difficult to attract professionals from large urban centres	1
Inability to compete with other employers due to remote location, poor public transit	0
No applications	0
Inability to assess a foreign educational qualification or credential	0
Inability to compete with other employers due to lack of promotional opportunities	0

Skills Priorities

More than 150 of 155 responding businesses identified that positions were difficult to fill because local candidates lacked the required education, technical or interpersonal skills and/or work experience.

Table Nine identifies the competencies most valued by survey respondents.

Table Nine: Valued competencies in the current and future workforce					
Competencies	Total Responses	Current Workforce		Future Workforce	
		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Customer Service	89	63	70.8%	26	29.2%
Teamwork – Interpersonal Skills	84	50	59.5%	34	40.5%
Technical Skills	83	54	65.1%	29	34.9%
Work Ethic/Dedication/Dependability	82	53	64.6%	29	35.4%
Communication Skills (Oral & Written)	81	54	66.7%	27	33.3%
Self-Motivation – Ability to work with little or no supervision	68	42	61.8%	26	38.2%
Problem Solving, Reasoning, Creativity	65	35	53.8%	30	46.2%
Willing to Learn	55	33	60.0%	22	40.0%
Professionalism	53	36	67.9%	17	32.1%
Time Mngmt. - Organizational Skills	43	24	55.8%	19	44.2%
Analytical – Research Skills	35	21	60.0%	14	40.0%
Computer Literacy Skills	34	17	50.0%	17	50.0%

- The three most valued skills in the current workforce are Customer Service, Oral and Written Communication Skills and Technical Skills.
- The three most valued skills in the future workforce are Problem Solving/Reasoning/Creativity, Work Ethic/Dedication/Dependability and Technical Skills.

Projected Hiring in 2016

Survey respondents were asked to identify if they planned to hire in 2016. Of the 153 companies responding, 115 (75.2%) indicated they would be hiring.

Table Ten summarizes projected hiring by sector.

Table Ten: Projected Hiring in 2016 by Sector							
Sector	Number of Companies Responded	Number of Companies Hiring		FT	PT	Ctt	Sea
Construction and Quarrying	7	4	57.1%	32	0	0	0
Manufacturing	13	13	100.0%	97	0	2	0
Wholesale Trade	8	6	75.0%	19	11	0	0
Retail Trade	12	12	100%	16	4	0	9
Transportation and Warehousing	3	2	66.7%	12	0	0	22
Information and Cultural	6	4	66.7%	15	0	0	0
Finance and Insurance	9	6	66.7%	10	1	1	0
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	4	2	50.0%	110	1	1	0
Professional, Scientific, Technical	15	9	60.0%	14	2	1	0
Admin Support, Waste Mngmt, Remediation	3	3	100.0%	3	0	0	1
Educational Services	8	4	50.0%	7	1	1	0
Health Care and Social Assistance	38	28	73.7%	64	66	8	7
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	9	6	66.7%	1	11	47	78
Accommodation and Food Services	14	12	85.7%	122	78	0	89
Public Administration	2	2	100.0%	300	200	0	0
Other	2	2	100.0%	0	6	0	0
TOTAL	153	115		822	381	61	206

FT - Full-Time

PT - Part-Time

Ctt - Contract

Sea - Seasonal

- Public Administration; Accommodation and Food Services; Real Estate, Rental and Leasing; and Manufacturing project the greatest job creation/hiring in 2016.
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sector will continue to hire significant numbers in contract and seasonal positions.

Survey respondents were asked to identify the reasons for these job openings. At 58%, “Other” was most often cited as the reason for hiring with survey respondents most often pointing to staff turnover and seasonal hiring. Expansion or re-organization followed at 35% and retirements at 6.2%. Less than 1% were hiring as a result of technological change.

Table Eleven provides a summary of the reasons for hiring by occupational group.

Occupational Groups	Retirements		Expansion/Re-organization		Technological Change		Other		Total Projected Hiring	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Managers & Executives	3	12.5	14	58.3	3	12.5	4	16.7	24	4.1
Professional	4	11.4	21	60.0	0	0.0	10	28.6	35	6.0
Technical	2	7.7	19	73.1	0	0.0	5	19.2	26	4.5
Trades (Journeyman)	4	12.9	25	80.6	0	0.0	2	6.5	31	5.3
Apprentice	0	0.0	15	93.8	0	0.0	1	6.3	16	2.8
Sales and Marketing	4	12.5	15	46.9	0	0.0	13	40.6	32	5.5
Admin. & Clerical	4	13.3	17	56.7	0	0.0	9	30.0	30	5.2
Production Workers	1	3.3	24	80.0	0	0.0	5	16.7	30	5.2
Service Workers	13	6.7	39	20.2	0	0.0	141	73.1	193	33.3
Other	1	0.6	14	8.6	2	1.2	146	89.6	163	28.1
Total	36	6.2	203	35.0	5	0.9	336	57.9	580	100.0

Worker Availability and Recruitment

Local businesses had divergent views on the availability of workers locally; 53.75% ranked workforce availability as either excellent or good while 46.25% indicated worker availability as either fair or poor.

Availability	Business Response	Per Cent
Excellent	17	10.6%
Good	69	43.1%
Fair	54	33.8%
Poor	20	12.5%

Companies were most likely to recruit locally within Kingston and the Frontenacs. More than 87% recruit locally, 31.5% recruit within Ontario, 12.3% recruit nationally while 3.7% recruit internationally.

Of the 162 survey respondents, only 10 (6.2%) have used a paid recruitment service and approximately one in four utilize a government employment centre. Similarly, a minority of employers used specialized programs offered free of charge:

- 38 have used programs that support youth age 15 to 24
- 11 have used programs assisting persons with disabilities
- 10 have accessed immigrant and visible minority programming
- 4 utilized older worker initiatives
- 3 have accessed programming to support Aboriginal workers.

Recruitment methods used by employers responding to EmployerOne combined networking and online approaches. Table Ten summarizes recruitment strategies.

Table Ten: Recruitment methods used by local employers	
Recruitment Methods	Number of Responses
Word of mouth, personal contacts, informal networks	118
Online job boards and postings	117
Company's own internet website	73
Unsolicited resumes	48
Government employment centres or websites	41
Onsite recruitment at schools, colleges or universities	37
Newspaper Ads	34
Trade or Professional Associations Publications/Websites	23
Onsite job signs or posters	21
Job fairs	20
Executive search companies or temporary help agencies	10
Other: Social media	2
Other: Current volunteers or work placements	1
Other: Military Transition Program	1
Other: Local Union Halls	1

While word of mouth and networking continues to be the leading way survey respondents recruit, companies are also relying on online promotion of their employment opportunities whether on their own websites or on online employment sites.

Business Investment in Training

Employers in the Kingston and the Frontenacs are investing in training. Of the 158 companies responding, 127 (80.4%) indicate that they support ongoing training and education. This support is provided as follows:

	Number of Respondents
○ Financial Support (fully or partially)	94
○ Offer Flexibility in work schedule	77
○ Use government hiring and training incentives	37
○ Supply information on career advancement	37
○ Other	18

Of the 18 identifying other methods, 13 (72.2%) provided in-house training and 2 identified access to online learning or webinars.

The most common sources of training are:

○ On-the-job	99
○ Industry and Professional Associations	70
○ Peer to Peer	60
○ Distance or online education	48
○ College (including continuing education)	46
○ University (including continuing studies)	31
○ Other	10

Cost and loss of productivity during training time was the predominant barrier to training. The greatest challenges or barriers to employee training are:

○ Cost	81
○ Loss of productivity during training time	58
○ Relevant training is not provided locally	51
○ Losing trained employees to other businesses	41
○ Distance to travel to training facility	30
○ Lack of awareness of existing training programs	25
○ Other	14
○ Lack of awareness of training support programs	11
○ Lack of awareness of legislated training	10

Approximately one in three survey respondents offer experiential learning opportunities to students at all education levels.

Education	No.	Education	No.
Secondary School Unpaid Placement	15	University Unpaid Placement	32
Secondary School Paid Placement	43	University Paid Placement	43
Apprenticeship	6	Apprenticeship	6
College Unpaid Placement	55	Job Seeker Unpaid Placement	8
College Paid Placement	34	Job Seeker Paid Placement	6
Apprenticeship	16	Apprenticeship	6

Internationally Trained Workers

Employers were surveyed about their practice of hiring immigrants and internationally trained workers in the past three years.

Hiring Practices	Number of Companies	Per Cent of Total
Hired one or more staff who have foreign education training and/or credentials in the last three years	84	51.6%
Have not hired an immigrant or internationally trained worker within the last three years	29	17.9%
Recruited/hired directly from overseas for a difficult to fill position(s)	5	3.1%
Attempted to recruit or hire overseas for a difficult to fill position(s)	3	1.9%
Hired an immigrant or internationally-trained worker who faced cultural challenges in the workplace	3	1.9%
Challenges with internationally-trained new hires due to insufficient English language skills	3	1.9%
Other (3 of 4 responses identified student internships/placements)	4	2.5%

The majority of employers did not view an immigrant's ability to integrate within the community as a barrier to hiring new employees. The most often cited challenge to an immigrant, finding a family doctor, was identified by 18 employers.

Next Steps

The net job creation of 148 jobs in 2015 and the projected hiring of more than 1,000 jobs in 2016, clearly signals that the economy of Kingston and the Frontenacs is strengthening. However, with an unemployment rate at 6.0%, the tight labour market threatens economic growth.

The following strategies, more fully outlined in the 1000 Islands Workforce Development Board Local Labour Market Plan 2016, are examples of actions that will contribute to ensuring an adequate supply of workers who have the knowledge and skills required by employers of today and tomorrow:

- Engage further with employers and educators in sectors where demand is acute to identify more specifically the technical and interpersonal communication skill required. Create strategies to deliver these skills including promotion of businesses participation in experiential learning.
- Ensure educators, guidance and employment counsellors and youth in the region are provided with the labour market information necessary to support viable education and career decisions.
- Address barriers to full labour force participation for groups experiencing varying levels of marginalization including older workers, people with disabilities, women, visible minorities, newcomers, rural residents and Indigenous peoples.
- Attract and retain workers within the region.
- Coordinate with employment, education and other health service providers to ensure youth, the unemployed and those discouraged from participating in the labour force are made aware of the services and supports available to them. Market employment services to the business community to ensure they are fully accessing available support for recruitment.