



LABOUR NEEDS IN NORTH PEEL



The Brampton
Board of Trade
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LABOUR NEEDS IN NORTH PEEL



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The Board also appreciates the support of The Region of Peel for providing funding for The Skills Without Borders Job Fair.

And finally we would like to extend our thanks to Brampton and Caledon employers who responded to our survey.

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"Skills Without Borders" is a program designed to raise awareness about labour needs in North Peel and the ability of skilled immigrants to meet those needs.

INTRODUCTION

"Skills Without Borders" (SWB) is a program designed to raise awareness about **Labour Needs in North Peel** and the barriers skilled immigrants face in finding employment.

The Brampton Board of Trade has partnered with various community organizations and agencies and the Federal Government through Service Canada to help better connect employers in North Peel (Brampton and Caledon) with skilled immigrants.

The Brampton Board of Trade is leading the project, with core funding assistance from Service Canada and funding from The Region of Peel.

Other partners include The Caledon Chamber of Commerce; Brampton's Economic Development Office; COSTI Immigrant Services; United Way of Peel; Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC); ACCES; Human Resources Professional Association of Peel and the Brampton Neighbourhood Resource Centre.

As part of the **SWB** project, The Brampton Board of Trade delivered a questionnaire to 500 employers in North Peel to ask about current and future labour needs. It also conducted focus groups among employers to help better understand some of the barriers to hiring skilled immigrants. (Presented in a separate report called **Barriers to Hiring Skilled Immigrants**)

Both reports are available at www.skillswithoutborders.com

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SWB has also prepared a **Resource Guide** for local employers. The Guide is intended to increase employer awareness about the programs and services available to facilitate the employment of skilled immigrants, including job placement services, language and accreditation programs, co-op and internship programs, wage subsidies and mentorship programs.

The **Labour Needs Survey** was distributed in Brampton and Caledon to a cross-section of 500 employers by industrial sectors and workforce size, canvassing their opinion about their current and future occupation and skill needs as well as their hiring experiences.

The purpose of the survey was to:

- Better understand the current and future labour needs of North Peel employers.
- Identify the current and future occupation and skill needs of employers, their hiring approach, and the difficulties they experience in hiring and retaining skilled employees

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METHODOLOGY

The research conducted for this report is not intended to meet strict scientific research criteria. Time and resources prevented a comprehensive survey of labour needs.

The primary mandate of **Skills Without Borders** is to create awareness about labour needs and the barriers skilled immigrants face in finding employment.

Consequently, we consider the sample to be directionally indicative of the trends in the marketplace if not, in pure research terms, statistically reliable.

The questionnaire was designed to gather specific information about the needs of local employers. The business databases of the City of Brampton and the Town of Caledon were used to develop the distribution list.

The questionnaire was distributed by email to 500 employers in Brampton and Caledon, cross-referenced by workforce size and industrial sector.

The response rate was 10 per cent.

The results were sorted by size of workforce and of the respondents, 21% came from employers with 1-10 employees, 33% from the 11-25 group; 10% from the 26-50 size; 17% from the 51-100; 13% from the 100 plus and 3% from the 500 plus.

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*By 2011
Brampton's
employment is
forecast to grow
16% to 209,000
and Caledon will
grow 9% to
29,000.*

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

By 2011, Canada's entire net labour force growth will come from immigration, according to Statistics Canada.

Leading experts from all sectors stress the importance of better integrating immigrant skills to make our communities strong and vibrant.

Babyboomers are set to retire in record numbers over the next 10 years

"By 2011, about 20% of the working population will reach retirement age." - *Statistics Canada, 2001*

"The country's labour pool - which is expected to shrink under the weight of an unprecedented retirement bulge within the next five years - isn't even close to producing enough skilled people, homegrown or imported to meet demands." - *Globe and Mail, September 2003*

Historically, immigrants have made a fundamental contribution to the Canadian labour market and society, and the importance of their contribution will increase in the face of declining labour force growth and an aging population.

By 2011, Brampton's employment is forecast to grow 16% to 209,000 and Caledon employment will grow 9% to 29,000.

According to the 2005 Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Management Issues survey, companies are reporting difficulties attracting and retaining personnel with specialized skills, particularly in the fields of manufacturing, management, engineering, marketing, business development, design and machining.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The findings in the survey of labour needs in North Peel are not dissimilar from other surveys of labour needs across Canada.

While many employers in North Peel (Brampton and Caledon) are expecting their business to grow (38%) or at least stay the same (56%) over the next 12 months, the majority (79%) are already having difficulty filling positions.

Employers identified sales and marketing (31%), skilled trades (construction, mechanical, technical) (22%), Information Technology (16%), engineering (14%) and administrative support (14%) as the skills they need to meet their short-term needs.

However, 40% said they are having trouble filling jobs today in areas of skilled trades (construction, mechanical, technical). 19% said engineers (structural, electrical and civil); sales and marketing was mentioned by 15%; and managers and administration by 15%.

Selecting from a list of possible reasons, 39% of respondents attributed it to a shortage of applicants with the appropriate skills, qualifications or licenses. 37% said applicants lacked the necessary experience; 27% attributed job conditions or specific requirements (demand/hours/rate of pay) as being unattractive; and 24% said there was a shortage of suitable labour available in the marketplace.

Once the job is filled, only 22% said they had difficulty retaining employees and most of those were general labourers.

Employers have been hiring mostly university or college-educated employees (57%). Another 27% said they have hired employees with trade certificates or other non university training.

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The majority of employers at 59% do not believe there are skill gaps in their current workforce.

The 35% that identified a gap said product knowledge, experience and communication were areas they are concerned about.

The gaps most frequently mentioned were soft skills, communication and customer service, and mostly related to language.

Skills required in the future covered a broad spectrum, but there was common ground around a need for skills in new technology, including computers, robotics, electro-mechanical, IT and engineering (structural, mechanical and electrical), including design.

A majority of respondents expressed concern over an expected shortage of skilled trades.

The majority agreed that communication, written and oral, and marketing and sales are required for employers to sustain, improve and expand over the next 5-10 years.

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38% said employment will increase while 56% said it would remain the same.

SURVEY RESULTS

Employment change

We asked employers about their current and future needs in order to establish how the demand for jobs and skills was changing in North Peel.

Specifically we wanted to know whether their workforce had increased, decreased or remained the same over the past 12 months and what they expect will happen over the next 12 months.

The results were almost evenly split between growth and status quo. Overall, 40% of **all employers** said staff had increased in the past 12 months and by an average of 8.5%. Another 44% said it stayed the same, while only 8% experienced staff reductions.

<i>Workforce Past 12 months</i>	<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>	<i>Stay the same</i>	<i>No response</i>
1-10	60%	10%	30%	
11-25	31%	6%	63%	
26-50	40%	20%	20%	20%
51-99	38%		50%	12%
100 plus	50%		33%	17%
500 plus		33%	33%	33%

When factored by workforce size, the decreases are relative to the sample size in the larger employment companies.

In the next 12 months, 38% overall said they expected to increase staff, predicting average growth of about 20%, while 56% expected employee levels to remain the same and 2% expected staff decreases.

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More than 30% need marketing and sales skills. Another 20% are looking for skilled trades' people.

The majority of employers expecting growth attributed it to a growing economy in North Peel, and expectations that Brampton and Caledon would continue to grow faster than most communities in Canada.

<i>Workforce Next 12 Months</i>	<i>Increase</i>	<i>Decrease</i>	<i>Stay the same</i>	<i>No Response</i>
1-10	60%		40%	
11-25	50%		50%	
26-50	40%		40%	10%
51-99	13%		75%	13%
100 plus	17%	17%	67%	
500 plus			66%	33%

Skill sets required

We asked respondents to choose from a list of broad skills, identifying which skills they required to facilitate current operations and future growth.

The list provided included:

- Research
- Marketing & Sales
- Financial
- Executive, Managerial
- Logistics
- Teaching
- Health care
- Professional (doctors, lawyers)
- Design (i.e. architecture, drafting, cad cam)
- Skilled Trades (i.e. construction, mechanical, technical)
- Scientific
- Bio-tech
- Automotive
- Engineering
- IT
- Admin support

The largest number at 31% identified marketing and sales as a skill they required. Skilled trades, including construction, mechanical, technical, was second at 22%.

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16% use outside agencies to fill vacant positions.

Information technology (IT) skills were identified by 16% of employers, followed closely by administrative support and engineering, including structural, civic, electrical at 14%.

Respondents also said they needed design skills across a broad range of industries. To a lesser extent, financial, managerial and professional skills, defined as lawyers and doctors, were also identified.

<i>Skills needed</i>	
<i>Marketing and Sales</i>	31%
<i>Skilled Trades</i>	22%
<i>IT</i>	16%
<i>Engineers all types</i>	14%
<i>Admin support</i>	14%
<i>Design</i>	8%
<i>Financial</i>	4%
<i>Managerial</i>	4%

How they hire

We asked employers to tell us about their hiring practices; how they hired and what they looked for in academic qualifications.

Although all employer respondents hire directly, utilizing a number of tools including newspapers and print advertising, employee referrals, resumes on file and the internet, 16% also use outside agencies to fill vacant positions.

Educational Requirements

We wanted to understand what academic qualifications employers required and 57% said they look for a college or university education. Another 27% accept trade certificates or other non university training.

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79% said that they had experienced some difficulty in filling vacancies.

14% will accept high school education.

About 25% indicated they hired from outside of Brampton and Caledon but from within Canada. Only 2% said they hired from outside Canada.

<i>Educational Requirements</i>	
<i>University, College</i>	<i>57%</i>
<i>Trade certificates</i>	<i>27%</i>
<i>High School</i>	<i>14%</i>
<i>Within Canada</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>Outside Canada</i>	<i>2%</i>

Difficult jobs

For those employers who had recruited in the past year, 79% said that they had experienced some difficulty in filling vacancies. Most employers were looking to fill two vacancies.

The most difficult jobs to fill among respondents were skilled trades (construction, mechanical, technical) at 40%, followed by engineers (structural, electrical and civil) at 19%; sales and marketing at 15% and managers and administration at 15%.

We asked respondents why they believed these occupations were difficult to fill and provided a list of possible reasons:

- Shortage of applicants with appropriate skills, qualifications, license
- Applicants lack experience necessary
- Applicants lack language skills
- Job conditions/requirements (demands/hours/rate of pay) not attractive
- Shortage of suitable labour available in the marketplace

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Only 22% said they had difficulty retaining staff.

39% of respondents attributed hiring difficulty to a shortage of applicants with the appropriate skill, qualifications or licenses. Another 37% said applicants lacked the necessary experience, and 27% attributed job conditions or specific requirements (demand/hours/rate of pay) as being unattractive. 24% said there was a shortage of suitable labour available in the marketplace.

Retention

Despite the difficulty employers had in recruiting, only 22% said they had difficulty retaining staff.

Of those respondents, most said they had difficulty retaining general labourers.

The skills gap

The majority of employers at 59% do not believe there are skill gaps in their current workforce.

The 35% that identified a gap said product knowledge, experience and communication were areas they are concerned about.

The occupations most frequently mentioned can be characterized as technical (computer skills) or skilled trades, (electrical, auto mechanic, sheet metal, hydraulics)

The gaps most frequently mentioned were soft skills, communication and customer service, mostly related to language.



The majority agreed that communication, including language skills, marketing and sales will be essential to sustain, improve and expand.

Future skills

Skills required in the future covered a broad spectrum, but there was common ground around a need for skills in new technology, including computers, robotics, electro-mechanical, IT and engineering (structural, mechanical and electrical), including design.

A majority of respondents expressed concern over an expected shortage of skilled trades.

The majority agreed that communication, written and oral, and marketing and sales are required for employers to sustain, improve and expand over the next 5-10 years.

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APPENDIX A

Letter to Survey Participants

The Brampton Board of Trade is conducting this research to better determine the skill needs of Brampton and Caledon employers today and in the future. We need your help to increase our level of understanding about future labour needs. Please take a moment to complete this survey. There are only 13 questions and many offer you a choice of answers. Your information will be confidential. The findings of the complete sample will be summarized in a report and made available on The Brampton Board of Trade website www.bramptonbot.com at a later date.

Thank you for your assistance

Sheldon Leiba
Chief Executive Officer
The Brampton Board of Trade



APPENDIX B

The Brampton Board of Trade Labour Needs Survey in North Peel

1. How many staff do you employ in each of the following categories?

Managers and administrators _____ (e.g. Directors, Managers)

Professional _____ (e.g. scientists, engineers, doctors, lawyers, accountants)

Clerical and secretarial _____ (e.g. secretary, receptionists, data entry clerks)

Service _____ (e.g. sales, marketing and customer service)

Manufacturing _____

Other, please specify

2. Over the *past* 12 months has the size of your workforce at your facility increased, decreased or remained the same?

Increased and by what percentage _____%

Decreased and by what percentage _____%

Stayed the same

3. Over the *next* 12 months do you expect the size of the workforce at your facility to increase, decrease or stay the same?

Increase and by what percentage _____%

Decrease and by what percentage _____%

Stay the same

4. Briefly describe the main reasons for any anticipated increase/decrease over the next 12 months?



5. If you are expecting growth, what skills do you require?

- Research
- Marketing & Sales
- Financial
- Executive, Managerial
- Logistics
- Teaching
- Health care
- Professional (doctors, lawyers)
- Design (i.e. architecture, drafting, cad cam)
- Skilled Trades (i.e. construction, mechanical, technical)
- Scientific
- Bio-tech
- Automotive
- Engineering
- IT
- Admin support

Other (please specify)

6. Does your company hire directly or outsource to an Employment Agency?

- we hire our own employees
- we contract an employment agency to hire our employees

7. Typically, when you are hiring, are your new recruits?

- College or University Graduates
- People with a trade certificate, diploma or other non University training
- High School Graduates only or less
- From outside the Brampton/Caledon but from within Canada
- From outside Canada

8. Can you please list the occupational group (job title) and the number of vacancies that you have found difficult to fill?

Job Title	Vacancies
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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9. Why do you feel these occupations have been difficult to fill? (check all that apply)

- Shortage of applicants with appropriate skills, qualifications, license
- Applicants lack experience necessary
- Applicants lack language skills
- Job conditions/requirements (demands/hours/rate of pay) not attractive
- Shortage of suitable labour available in the marketplace

Other, please specify _____

10. Do you have difficulty retaining staff?

- Yes
- No

Please list the type of occupations that you are having difficulty retaining?

11. Are there any gaps between the skills currently available within your workforce and those skills your business needs today or in the future?

- Yes
- No

12. What occupational groups and skills are missing?

Occupational group	Skills gap
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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13. Please lists the skills you will need to sustain, improve or expand your business over the next 5-10 years?
