Career Development in the Canadian Workplace: National Business Survey

Prepared for CERIC



Summary

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- A shortage of skilled workers is the top of mind issue than Canadian executives are concerned about for the coming year, and it presents the greatest challenge to their business right now, along with the general state of the economy.
- Finding workers with the right skill set is not an easy task, particularly for those businesses located outside of Ontario, and as a result, many businesses rely on referrals from current employees and internal promotions to fill positions.
- Half of Canadian businesses think it is important to check out a perspective employee's online profile, but the value of resumes has not been diminished as a result. Three in four employers say that resumes are just as important now as in the past.
- A majority of executives perceive a gap between the skills they are looking for, and what most job seekers have, but this gap is not generally seen as a recent development. Employers are split over the correct course to address the skills gap, with equal proportions saying employees need to better prepare themselves, and that businesses need to provide more training.
- Most executives say that their organizations are willing to provide training for new employees, but losing employees after investing the resources into training is a real concern.



Summary

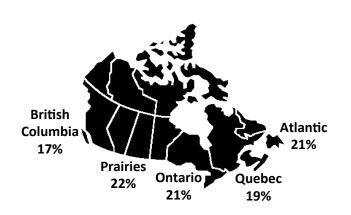
- Many businesses provide on-going training to longstanding employees, but it is generally the largest organizations that are able to afford professional development opportunities, as well as formal coaching or mentoring.
- Employers say they are willing to hire an employee with soft skills and provide technical training, but they also have difficulty finding candidates with the soft skills they are looking for. The most important soft skills to Canadian executives are a positive attitude, communication skills and a strong work ethic.
- High youth unemployment is most often attributed to the high demands of young workers and a lack of real world experience. Recruiting online and through social media are the top ways executives attempt to attract young workers, but admittedly they do not put a great deal of effort into the process.
- Most employers agree that they have a responsibility to offer career management programs, but in reality, only the largest organizations are able to offer the programs on a somewhat regular basis.
- A lack of time is said to be the greatest challenge preventing businesses from offering career management programs, but for small organizations, a lack of expertise is also a factor.



Methodology

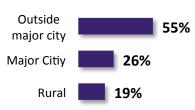
- This report presents results of a telephone survey conducted among 500 Senior officials from Canadian businesses. The margin of error for a sample of this size is plus or minus 4.4 percentage points (at the 95% confidence level).
- The survey took place from October 25 to November 11, 2013
- The sampling method was designed to complete interviews within businesses randomly selected across the country.
- Participants were asked a series of questions related to the size, location and industry of the organization to aid in analysis.
- In this report, results are expressed as percentages unless otherwise noted. Results may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple responses. Net results cited in the text may not exactly match individual results shown in the charts due to rounding.

Sample breakdown

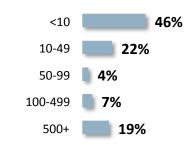


Title	% of sample
CEO/President	20%
General Manager	14%
Owner	12%
Director	11%
Human Resources (other)	9%
Plant/office/operations manager	8%
Manager/administrator	8%
Human Resources Manager	5%
Chief Operating Officer (COO)	5%
Vice President	2%
Executive Vice President	1%
Controller	1%
Senior Vice President	1%
Other	3%

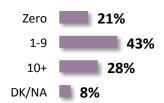
Location



Number of employees



Number of new employees in past year



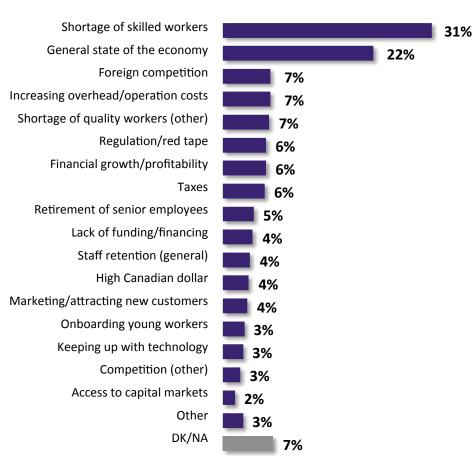
Industry	% of sample
Service	24%
Manufacturing	12%
Hospitality	8%
Health care	8%
Education	7%
Retail	6%
Non-profit	4%
Finance	4%
Technology	3%
Public administration	3%
Natural resources	3%
Agriculture	3%
Construction	3%
Entertainment/Recreation	3%
Professional services	2%
Automotive	2%
Energy	2%
Transportation/Warehousing	1%
Distribution	1%
Other	2%





The biggest challenge that Canadian businesses will face in the coming year is a shortage of skilled workers

Greatest challenge facing Canadian businesses in general



Executives and senior level officials from across the country list a number of challenges facing Canadian businesses in the coming year, but the most commonly noted issue is a shortage of skilled workers. Three in ten (31%) say an unskilled workforce will present the greatest challenge, while two in ten (22%) believe it is the general state of the economy. Other issues mentioned by fewer than one in ten each include foreign competition (7%), increased costs (7%) and a lack of a quality workforce not related to skills (7%).

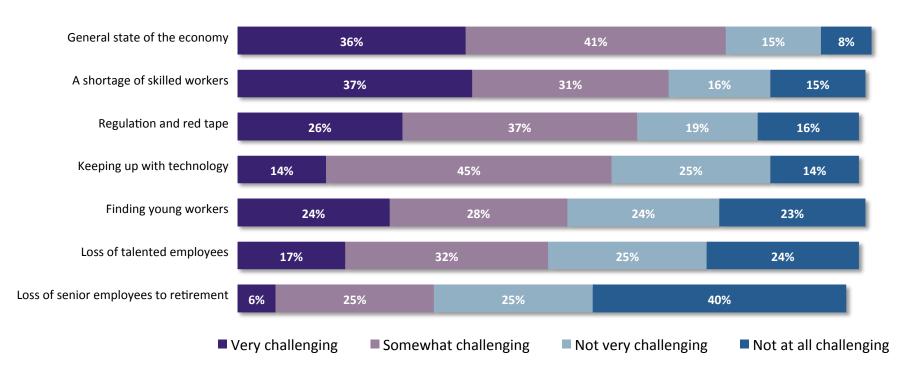
Concern about a shortage of skilled workers is greatest in the prairies, where half of executives (50%) believe it will be the greatest challenge in the coming year. In Ontario (32%) and British Columbia (29%) the state of the economy is believed to be the number one issue.



^{4.} Looking ahead to the coming year, what would you say is the greatest challenge facing Canadian businesses in general? *Other contains a number of responses of less than 2% each.

A shortage of skilled workers and the general state of the economy present the biggest challenges to Canadian businesses right now

Current challenges for Canadian businesses



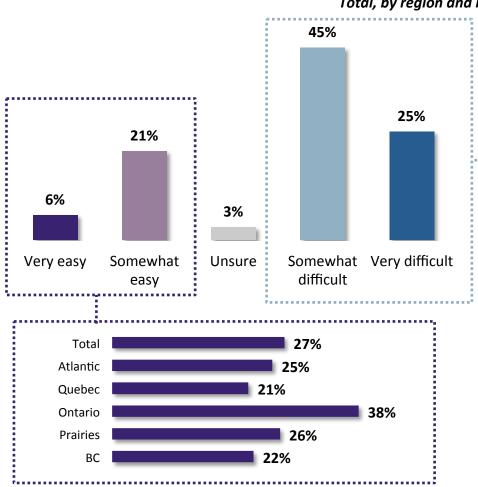
When asked the extent to which various issues present a challenge to their business right now, the general state of the economy is said to be at least somewhat of an issue for three in four executives (77%). The shortage of skilled workers is a challenge for seven in ten (68%) across the country, but is less of an issue in Ontario (59%). Finding young employees is a problem for half of executives (51%), but presents the greatest challenge for those in rural areas (64%).

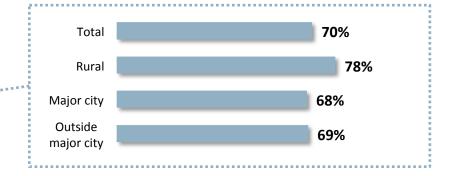


For many Canadian businesses, finding employees with the right skill set presents a difficult task

Ease of finding skilled workers

Total, by region and by location type





For seven in ten executives across Canada (70%), finding a skilled employee is not an easy task, including one in four (25%) who say it is very difficult.

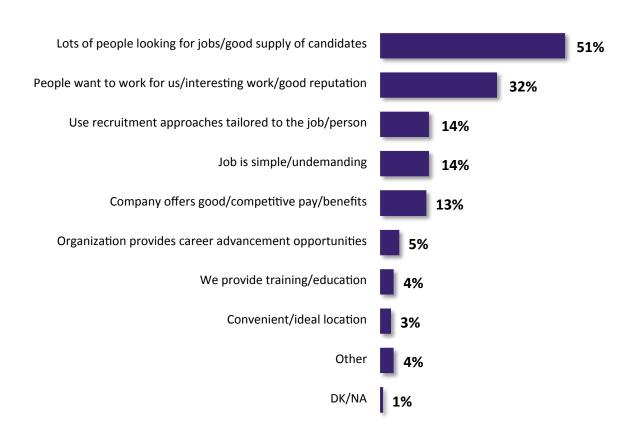
Finding the right employee is an easier undertaking for businesses in Ontario (38%), but is more challenging for those in Quebec (21%) and British Columbia (22%). Businesses in rural locations also express more difficulty when

ENVIRONICS

Those who believe finding skilled employees is easy attribute that to the supply of candidates, and their own company's reputation

Why finding skilled employees is easy

Those who say finding employees is easy (n=133)

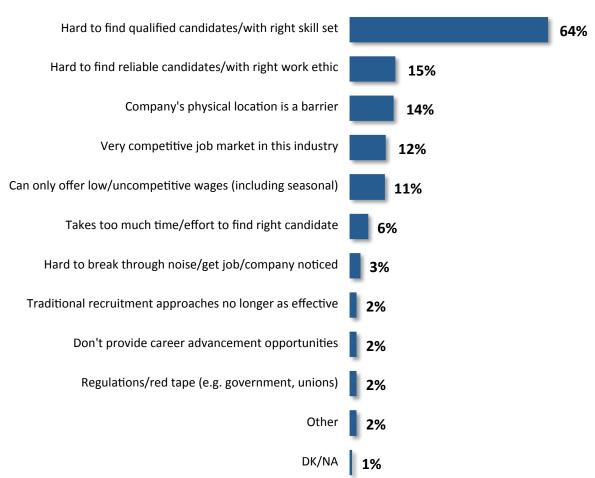


Among those who say it is easy to find skilled workers, half (51%) say it is because there is a good supply of candidates, while three in ten (32%) attribute the ease of finding employees to their ability to attract potential employees through the company's reputation or type of job offered. Other reasons that finding skilled workers can be easy for some businesses include tailored recruitment approaches (14%), and offering good pay and benefits (13%).

A lack of people with the right qualifications is the top reason some businesses say finding employees is difficult

Why finding skilled employees is difficult

Those who say finding employees is difficult (n=352)

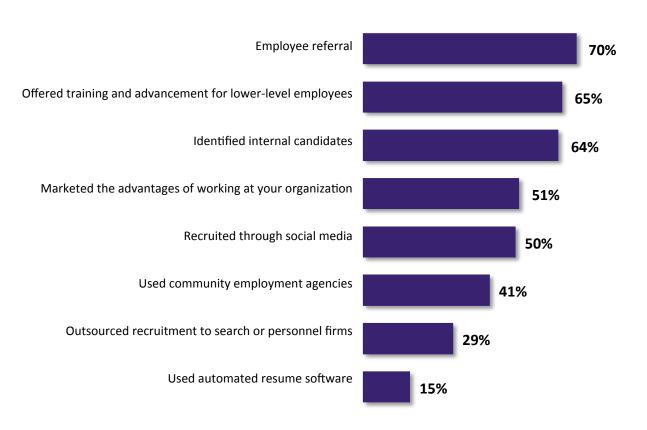


For nearly two in three executives who have difficulty finding skilled employees (64%) the reason is candidates lacking the right qualifications. Other reasons mentioned include difficultly finding people with the right work ethic (15%), the physical location of the company as a barrier (14%) and the competitive job market (12%).



Referrals from current employees are the most common way businesses fill skilled positions, followed by internal advancement

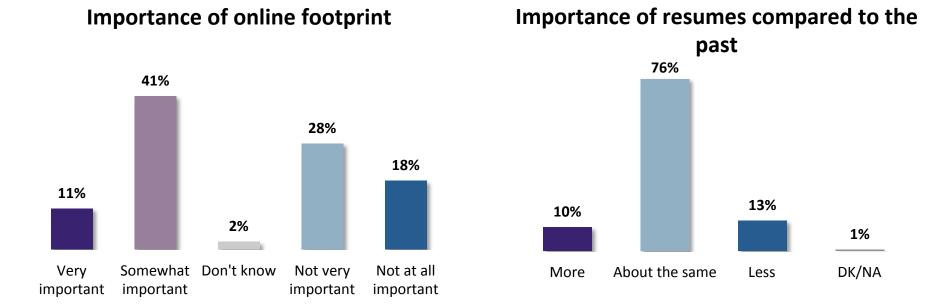
What employers have done in the past five years to find skilled employees



In order to find skilled employees in the past, executives say their organizations' have most commonly relied on referrals from current employees. Seven in ten (70%) businesses have used a employees referral to staff a position, while slightly fewer have identified (64%) and offered training (65%) for lower level employees. Half of businesses each market working at their organization (51%) or try recruitment through social media (50%). The use of community agencies (41%) or recruitment firms (29%) is low, while few businesses use automated resume software (15%).



Half of Canadian businesses say a potential employee's online profile is important, but the value of resumes has not been diminished



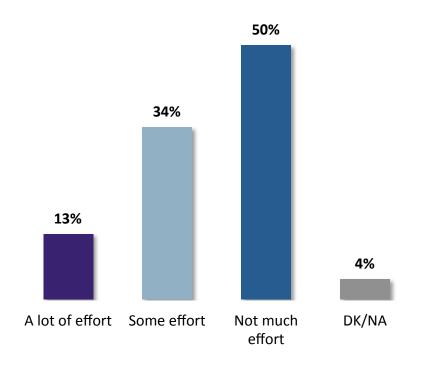
Just half of Canadian executives (52%) say that a potential employee's online footprint is important to them, with one in ten (11%) who say it is very important. Small businesses (less than 10 employees) are the least likely to consider a potential employee's online profile, as one in four (26%) say it is not at all important.

Although some Canadian businesses feel an online footprint is important, the value of resumes has not changed as a result. Three in four executives (76%) say resumes have retained their importance in comparison to the past, while an additional one in ten (10%) see resumes as having become more important.



Few companies put a great deal of effort in recruitment from under-represented groups

Effort into recruitment from under-represented groups



Canadian executives were asked about their organizations' efforts to recruit candidates from under-represented groups, such as visible minorities, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and new Canadians; half (50%) say that this is not something in which they invest a great deal of time or effort.

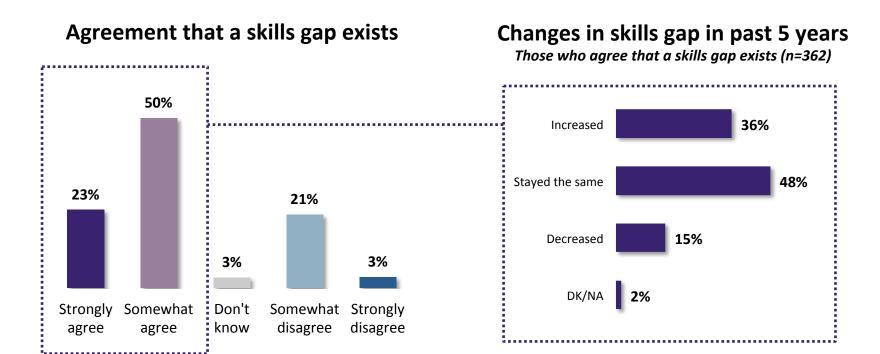
Large organizations with 500 or more employees are the most likely to tailor their recruitment to under-represented groups, as three in ten (30%) say they put in a lot of effort.

12. And how much effort would you say your company puts into customizing the recruitment approach in order to reach and attract members of underrepresented groups such as visible minorities, Aboriginal people, people with disabilities and new Canadians?





A strong majority of employers agree that there is a "Skills gap" but it is not necessarily a new development



Does a gap exist between the skill level and experience that prospective employees have and what Canadian businesses are looking for? When asked, seven in ten (72%) executives agree a skills gap exists in their industry. Agreement that a skills gap exists is similar across subgroups, but is greatest in Atlantic Canada (82%), and weakest in Quebec (64%).

Among those who agree that a skills gap exists, half (48%) believe this gap has stayed the same over the past five years, while more than one in three (36%) feel the gap has grown. Executives in organizations with over 500 employees are the most likely to say that the skills gap has gotten worse in recent years, as half (51%) say it has increased.



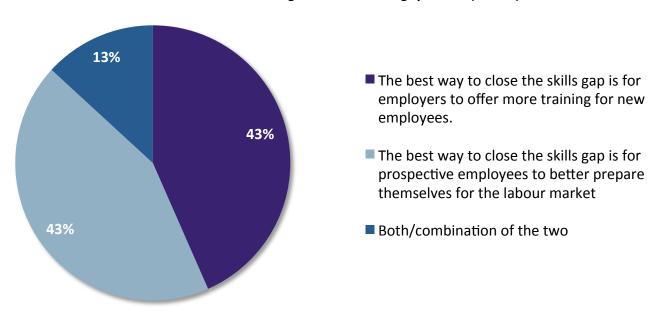
^{13.} To what extent do you agree with the following statement? There is a gap between the skill level and experience that prospective employees have, and what organizations in my industry are looking for.

^{14.} In the past five years, would you say that the skills gap in your industry has increased, decreased or stayed the same? Subsample: those who agree a skills gap exists (n=362)

Canadian businesses are divided on the best way to close the skills gap



Those who agree that a skills gap exists (n=362)

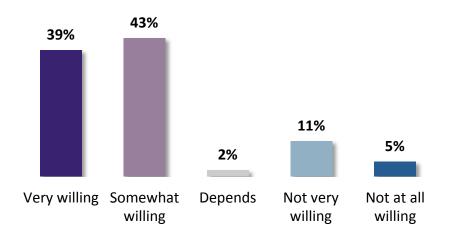


Executives who agree that the skills gap exists were given two opposing statements on the best way to address the gap, and asked which most closely resembles their own opinion. The results are an even split between those who feel the best way to close the gap is for employers to provide more training (43%), and those who say it is prospective employees who should better prepare them selves for the labour market (43%). The results are similar across the country and spectrum of business sizes.

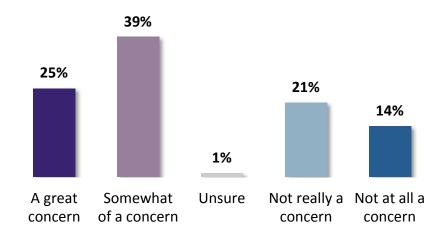
Employee training

Most businesses are willing to train new staff, but many are also concerned about losing their employees after making that initial investment

Willingness to train new employees



Concern about losing employees after investing in training



Eight in ten executives (82%) say they are at least somewhat willing to provide technical training for new employees, including four in ten (39%) who are very willing. Businesses located in Quebec (26%) and major cities across Canada (22%) are the least willing to provide training.

Although willingness to provide training is high, a majority of employers (64%) also express concern about losing employees after investing in training. This concern is greatest among executives of businesses located in the Prairies (77%) or Ontario (76%), and those organizations with 500 or more employees (75%).

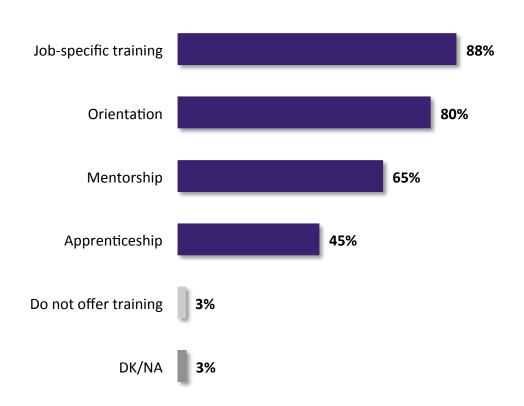


^{21.} Would you say that your organization is very willing, somewhat willing, not very willing or not at all willing to hire and train new employees who may lack in some technical skills?

^{22.} Would you say that losing skilled employees in which you have invested training to other organizations is...?

Nearly all Canadian businesses provide job-specific training to new employees

Types of training provided

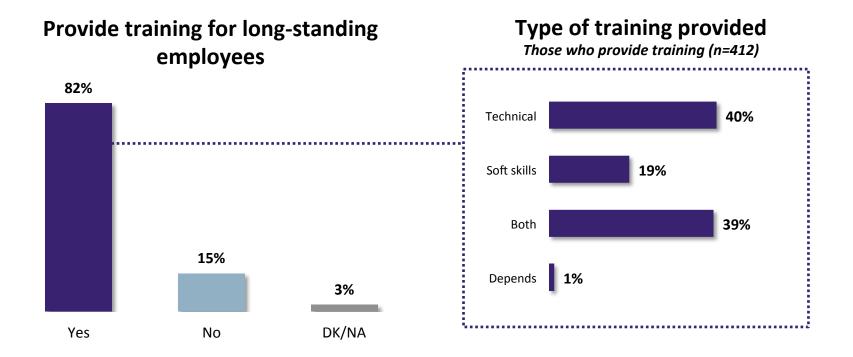


The most common types of training provided by Canadian businesses are jobspecific training and a general orientation. Nine in ten (88%) employers offer training related to the particular job, while eight in ten (80%) provide orientation. Two in three businesses (65%) offer a mentorship program, while fewer than half (45%) provide apprenticeships. Only a small proportion of employers (3%) say they do not offer training.

One major regional difference in the offering of training across Canada is the greater use of apprenticeships in Quebec, where seven in ten businesses (71%) say that apprenticeships are offered to new employees.

20. Does your organization provide new employees with any of the following types of training?

Most businesses provide training for longstanding employees



Training is not simply reserved for new employees according to Canadian executives, as eight in ten (82%) say long-standing employees receive training throughout their career. Nearly all large organizations with 500 or more employees provide consistent training (97%), but it is less common among small businesses with fewer than ten staff (74%).

Among those who provide on-going in training, equal proportions say it is more likely to be technical in nature (40%) or a combination of technical and soft skills. Two in ten (19%) of those who provide training to employees focus entirely on soft skills.

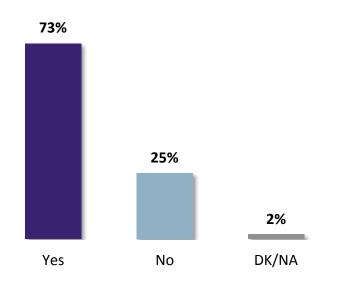
27a. Does your organization provide ongoing training for long-standing employees?
27b. Generally, is the training you provide to staff technical in nature, or focused on soft skills, such as team building or diversity awareness? Subsample: those who provide training (n=412)

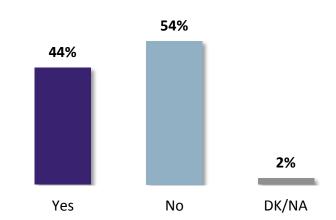


Three in four businesses provide employees professional development opportunities, but less than half have formal coaches or mentoring

Provides professional development opportunities

Provides formal coaching or mentoring





Three in four Canadian executives (73%) say their organization provides professional development opportunities for employees such as conferences or workshops. Formal coaching programs or mentorships are less common among Canadian businesses, as they are offered by fewer than half (44%). For both, it is large organizations (500+ employees) that are most likely to provide training opportunities for their staff, as nearly all (97%) offer professional development opportunities, and three in four (74%) provide coaching or mentors.



^{28.} Does your organization provide employees with professional development opportunities, such as conferences or workshops?

^{29.} Does your organization offer formal coaching or mentoring programs for employees?

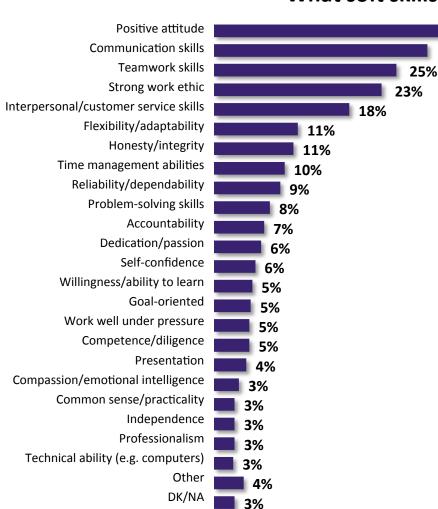
Soft skills

A positive attitude and good communication skills are the soft skills most valued by employers

What soft skills are important

29%

36%

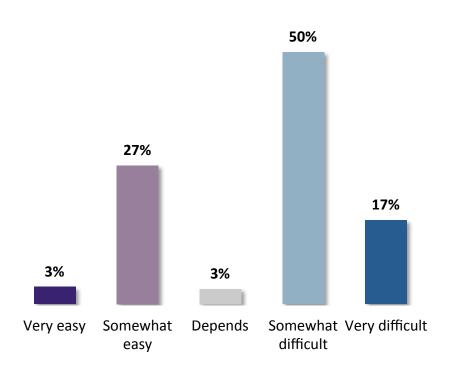


When it comes to soft skills, Canadian executives most value a positive attitude (36%), communication skills (29%), teamwork (25%) a strong work ethic (23%) and customer service (18%). Other soft skills deemed important by one in ten each include adaptability (11%), honesty (11%), time management (10%) and reliability (9%).

Small businesses of fewer than 50 employees are the most likely to value a positive attitude, while large organizations of 100 employees or more put greater emphasis on the importance of teamwork.

Two in three employers say it can be difficult to find employees with the right soft skills

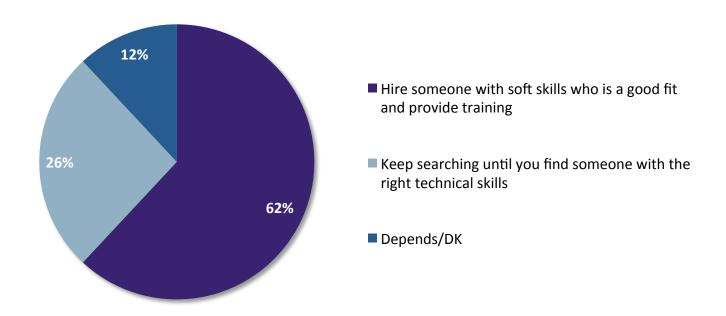
Ease of finding employees with soft skills



When it comes to finding employees with the soft skills that Canadian businesses are looking for, two in three (66%) say that it is at least somewhat difficult. Only a small proportion of employers (3%) would say it is very easy to find staff with the right soft skills. Businesses in Ontario report the most trouble finding employees with soft skills, as three in four (73%) say it is difficult.

When having trouble finding skilled employees, Canadian businesses are more likely to hire someone with soft skills and provide training

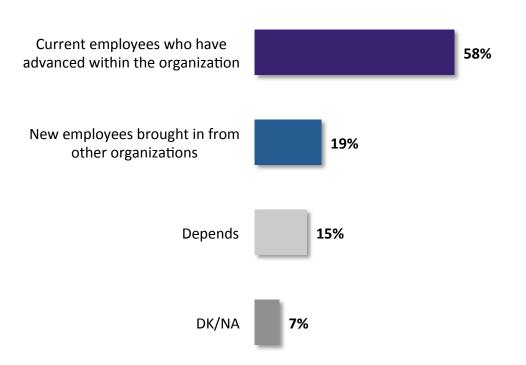
What do employers do when having trouble finding skilled employees?



When executives are having trouble finding skilled employees for their organization, six in ten (62%) say they would hire an employee with the right soft skills and provide training on the more technical aspects of the job. One in four (26%) would keep searching until they find someone with the right technical skills, while an additional one in ten (12%) say it would depend on the position. Employers in rural locations are the most likely to provide training for an employee that has soft skills and would be a good fit (72%), while those in Ontario (33%) and major cities across Canada (29%) are more inclined to keep searching until they find someone with the right technical skills.

Senior-level positions at a majority of Canadian businesses are filled by advancement from within the organization

How senior-level positions are filled

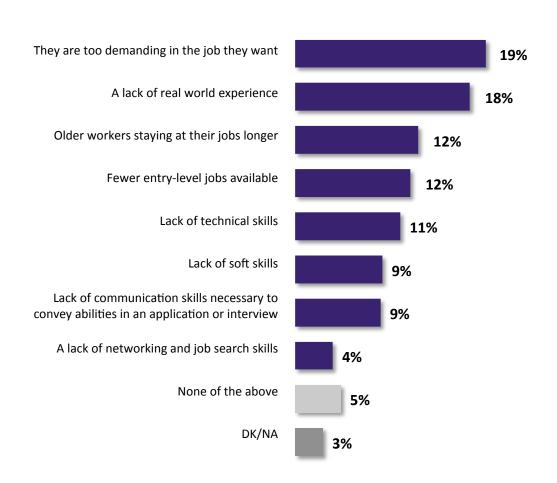


According to executives, senior positions in a majority of Canadian businesses are filled by current employees who advance within the organization. Six in ten (58%) say internal advancement is the most likely source of senior employees, while two in ten say they are more likely to come from outside the organization. An additional one in seven (15%) say it depends on the position. Businesses in Quebec (47%) and Ontario (49%) are the least likely rely on internal advancement to staff senior positions.



According to employers, the top reasons for high youth unemployment are that young people are too demanding, and lack real-world experience

Greatest reason for high unemployment among those under 25

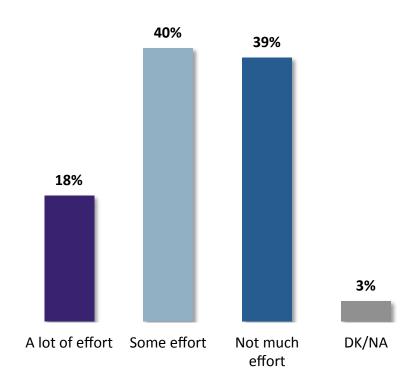


To consider the issue of high youth unemployment in Canada, executives were provided a series of possible reasons, and asked to pick which they feel is the greatest. The most commonly selected reasons are that young people are too demanding in the jobs that they want (19%) and that they lack real world experience (18%). Other reasons selected by one in ten include older workers staying at their jobs (12%), fewer entry-level jobs available (12%), a lack of technical skills (11%) a lack of soft skills (9%) and a lack of communication skills to sell themselves in an application or interview (9%).



Only a small proportion of businesses are going out of their way to tailor their recruitment approaches to reach young people

Effort into customizing recruitment to reach young workers



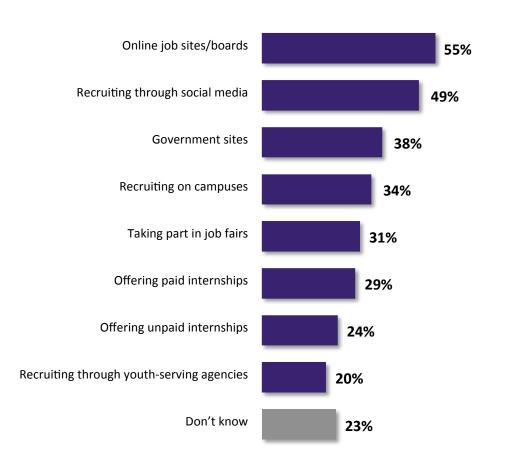
When it comes to attracting young workers, employers are willing to put a little more effort into tailoring their recruitment process. Two in ten (18%) businesses say they put a lot of effort into the recruitment of young workers, with large organizations (35%) and businesses located in Quebec (31%) the most likely to tailor their recruitment to young people.

31. When recruiting job candidates, how much effort does your company put into customizing the recruitment approach in order to reach young workers?



Half of Canadian businesses are using online job sites and social media to reach out to younger workers

What organizations are doing to attract young workers

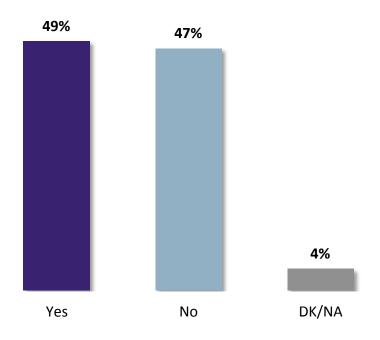


What do Canadian businesses do to attract young workers? According to executives, half post their job openings to online job sites (55%) or recruit through social media (49%). Campus recruitment (34%), job fairs (31%) and paid internships (29%) are used by three in ten businesses, while fewer recruit through youth service agencies.

The use of online job sites is highest in Ontario (73%), but is particularly low in rural locations (39%). Small businesses with a staff of under ten people are the least likely to use any of these recruitment methods to attract young workers.

Canadian businesses are divided on whether or not hiring young workers is part of the organization's CSR efforts

Is hiring young adults considered part of organization's CSR?



Canadian executives are split on whether the hiring of young worker is considered part of the organization's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Seven in ten executives of organizations with more than 500 staff members (71%) believe hiring young adults is part of their CSR efforts. In British Columbia (59%) and in rural locations across Canada (55%) executives are more likely to say that hiring young people is not considered CSR.

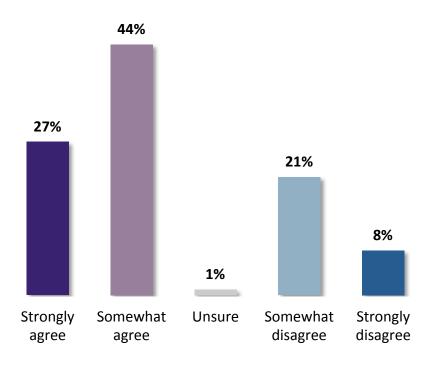
33. Would you say that hiring and training recent grads and young adults is part of your organization's CSR?





Seven in ten Canadian businesses agree that employers have a responsibility to provide career management programs for their workers

Employer responsibility to provide career management programs



Seven in ten executives (71%) agree that employers have a responsibility to provide career management programs for their staff, including one in four (27%) who agree strongly. Businesses located in Ontario (76%), the Prairies (77%) and major cities across Canada (79%) are the most likely to agree that career management is an employers responsibility.

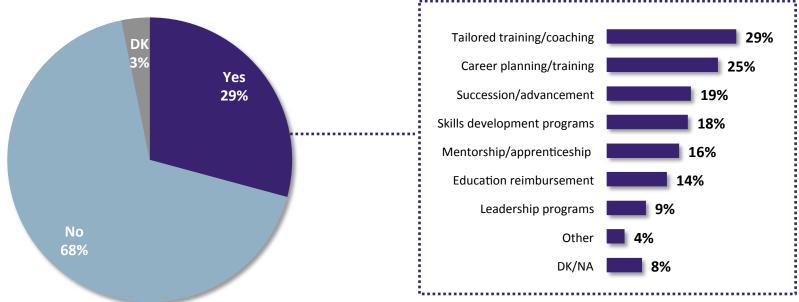
^{34.} Would you say that you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement? Employers have a responsibility to provide career management programs for their employees.

Only three in ten Canadian organizations have career management programs in place



Type of career management programs provided

Those who provide career management (n=146)



Although a strong majority of executives agree that it is an employer's responsibility to provide career management opportunities, only three in ten (29%) say that programs are currently being offered by their organization. Again, it is the largest companies that are most able to offer training and programs, as six in ten (63%) from businesses with more than 500 staff members say they provide career management programs. The most frequently offered programs include tailored coaching (29%) and career planning (25%).

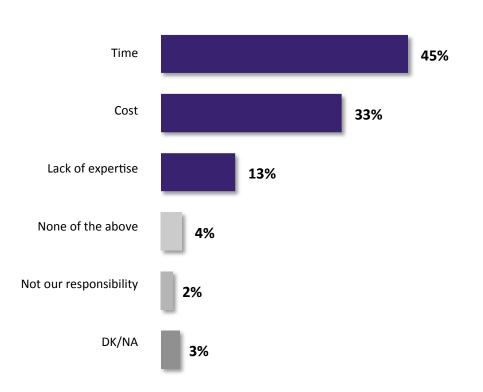


^{35.} Does your organization have career management programs for employees?

^{36.} What types of career management programs do you offer? Subsample: those who provide career management(n=146)

The greatest challenge to companies providing career management programs is a lack of time

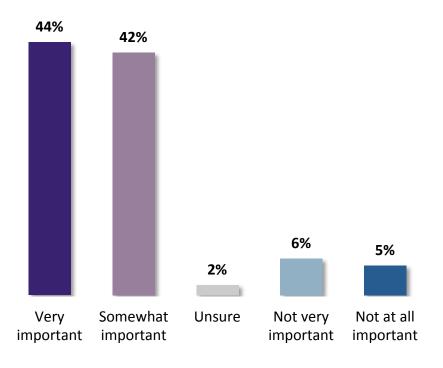
Greatest challenge to providing career management programs



When asked about the greatest challenge preventing employers from offering career management programs, the amount of time required (45%) beat out cost (33%) as the number one reason. One in ten executives (13%) across the country say that a lack career management expertise is the greatest challenge to offering programs, but this is an issue that is more prominent for small businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

Nearly all businesses say that it is important that employees have the opportunity to reach their own career goals

Importance of providing employees opportunities to reach their own career goals



For strong majority of executives, it is at least somewhat important that employees have the opportunity to reach their own career goals. Across the country and spectrum of businesses sizes there is agreement in the importance of providing opportunities for employees to meet their own goals.

38. How important would you say it is to your organization to provide employees the opportunities to reach their own career goals? Is it...?

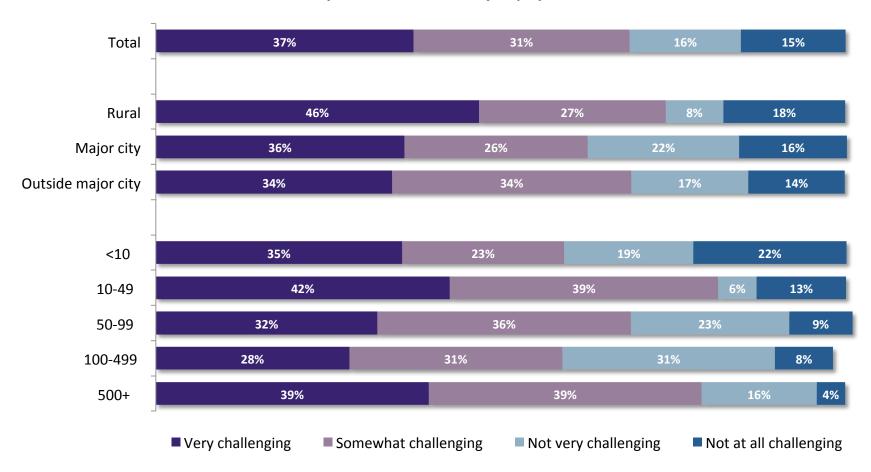


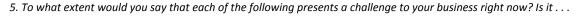


Challenge of a shortage of skilled workers

Challenge of a shortage of skilled workers

By location and number of employees

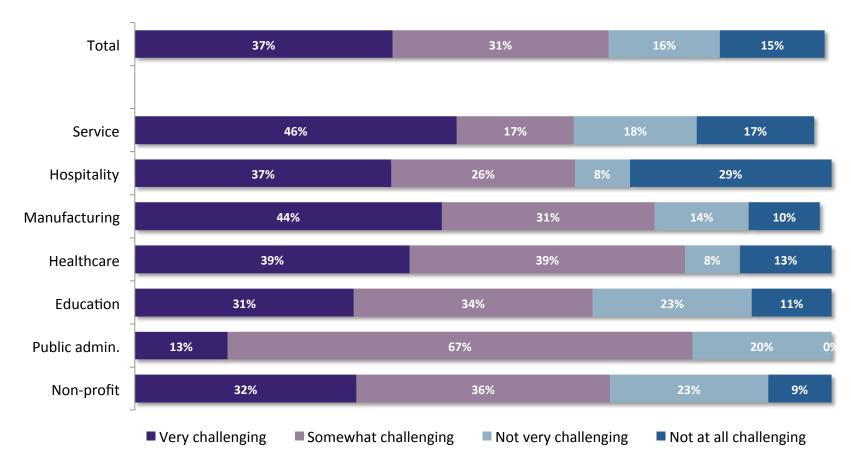






Challenge of a shortage of skilled workers

Challenge of a shortage of skilled workers By industry

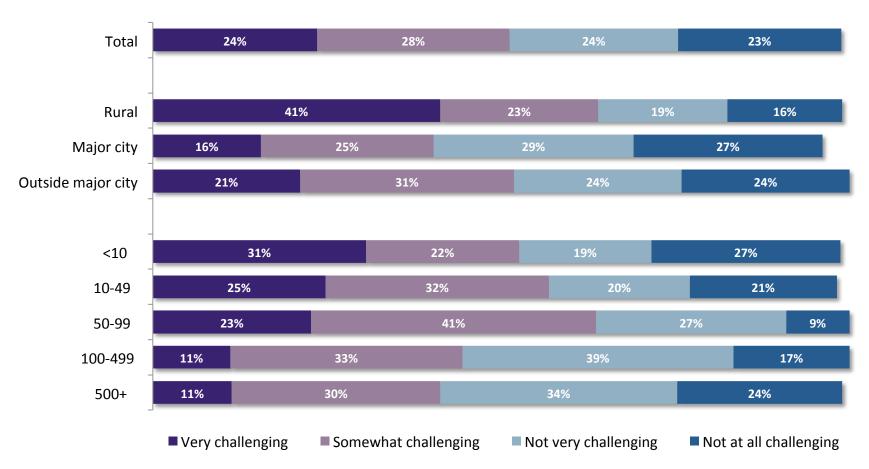


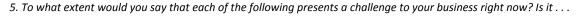


Challenge of finding young workers

Challenge of finding young workers

By location and number of employees

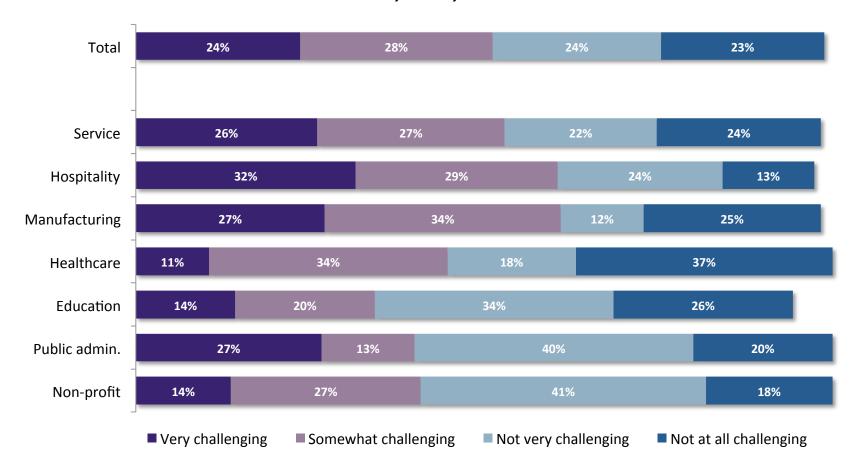






Challenge of finding young workers

Challenge of finding young workers By industry





Why finding skilled employees is easy

Why finding skilled employees is easy

Those who say finding employees is easy (n=133)

Reason	Number of employees						
	TOTAL	<10	10-49	50-99	100-499	500+	
Lots of people looking for jobs/good supply of candidates	51%	48%	50%	50%	45%	65%	
People want to work for us/ interesting work/good reputation	32%	26%	39%	-	55%	39%	
Use recruitment approaches tailored to the job/person	14%	14%	14%	-	9%	17%	
Job is simple/undemanding	14%	17%	11%	50%	9%	4%	
Company offers good/competitive pay/benefits	13%	8%	4%	-	18%	35%	
Organization provides career advancement opportunities	5%	5%	7%	-	9%	4%	
We provide training/education	4%	6%	4%	-	-	-	
Convenient/ideal location	3%	2%	-	-	-	13%	



Why finding skilled employees is difficult

Why finding skilled employees is difficult

Those who say finding employees is difficult (n=352)

			Number of	o mulo vo o o	•••					
Reason	Number of employees									
	TOTAL	<10	10-49	50-99	100-499	500+				
Hard to find qualified candidates/with right skill set	64%	66%	68%	50%	65%	61%				
Hard to find reliable candidates/with right work ethic	15%	18%	14%	17%	10%	9%				
Company's physical location is a parrier	14%	12%	14%	17%	15%	19%				
/ery competitive job market in this ndustry	12%	9%	10%	6%	15%	22%				
We can only offer low/uncompetitive wages (including seasonal)	11%	12%	9%	17%	5%	12%				
Takes too much time/effort to find right candidate	6%	9%	4%	-	5%	3%				
Hard to break through noise/get job/company noticed	3%	4%	3%	6%	5%	1%				
raditional recruitment approaches no longer as effective	2%	2%	-	6%	5%	3%				
Oon't provide career advancement opportunities	2%	2%	1%	-	5%	3%				
Regulations/ red tape (e.g. povernment, unions)	2%	4%	1%	-	-	1%				

What employers have done in the past five years to find skilled employees

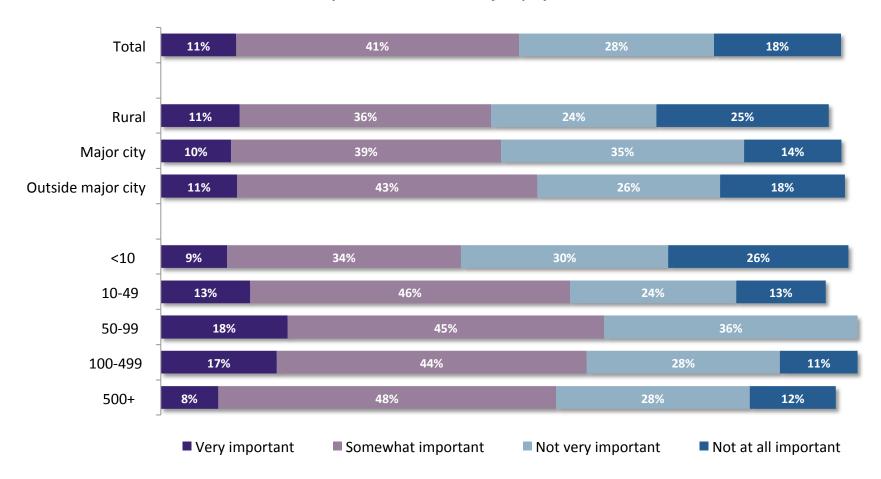
What employers have done in the past five years to find skilled employees

Reason	Number of employees						
	TOTAL	<10	10-49	50-99	100-499	500+	
Employee referral	70%	59%	76%	73%	89%	82%	
Offered training and advancement for lower-level employees	65%	49%	64%	82%	97%	89%	
Identified internal candidates	64%	40%	72%	91%	89%	96%	
Marketed the advantages of working at your organization	51%	34%	50%	32%	81%	87%	
Recruited through social media	50%	31%	59%	64%	78%	71%	
Used community employment agencies	41%	27%	48%	64%	56%	60%	
Outsourced recruitment to search or personnel firms	29%	13%	25%	55%	56%	59%	
Used automated resume software	15%	6%	11%	14%	22%	41%	

Importance of online footprint

Importance of online footprint

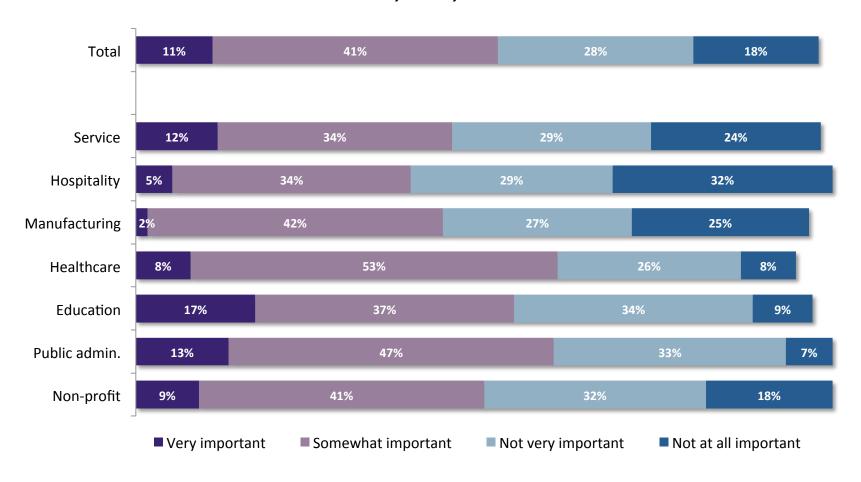
By location and number of employees





Importance of online footprint

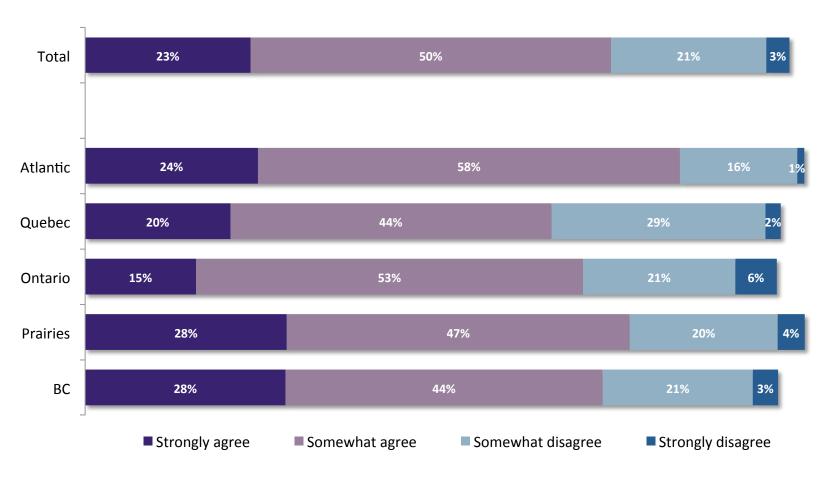
Importance of online footprint By industry





Agreement that a skills gap exists

Agreement that a skills gap exists By region

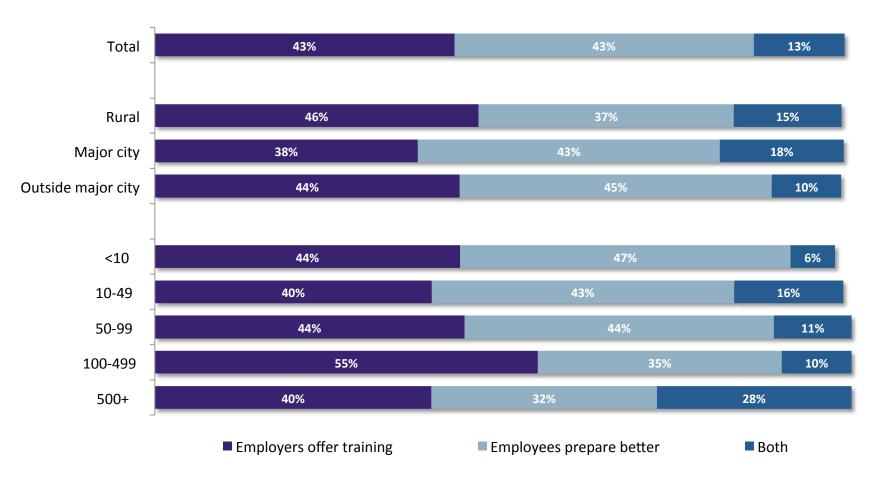


13. To what extent do you agree with the following statement? There is a gap between the skill level and experience that prospective employees have, and what organizations in my industry are looking for.

Best way to address the skills gap

Best way to address the skills gap

Those who agree that a skills gap exists (n=362)

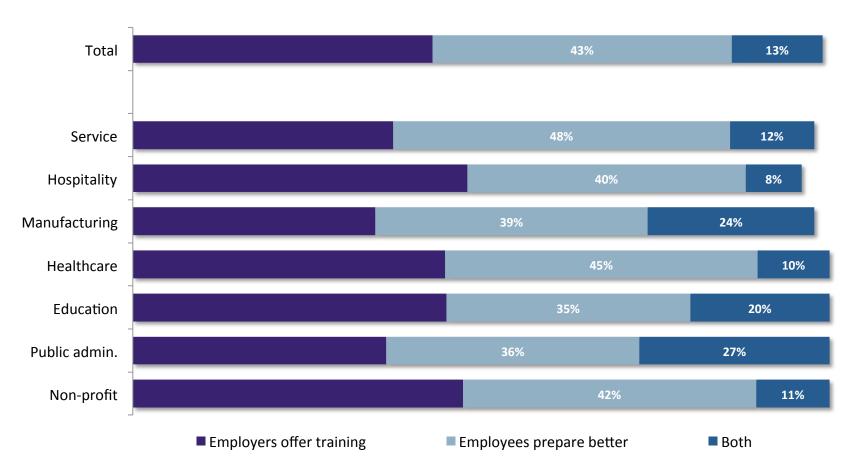


15. Which of the following statements is closer to your own opinion? Subsample: those who agree a skills gap exists (n=362)

Best way to address the skills gap

Best way to address the skills gap

Those who agree that a skills gap exists (n=362)

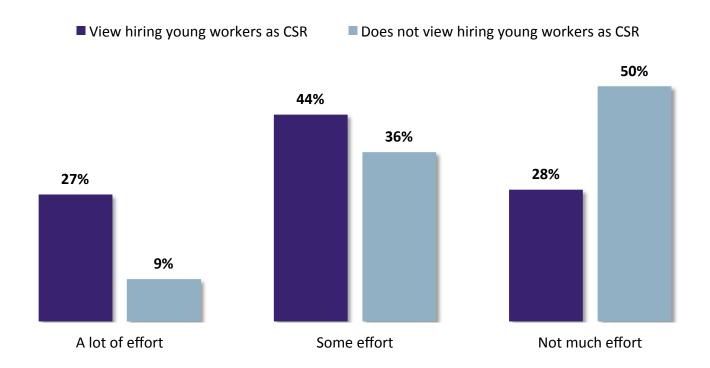


15. Which of the following statements is closer to your own opinion? Subsample: those who agree a skills gap exists (n=362)

Effort into customizing recruitment to reach young workers

Effort into customizing recruitment to reach young workers

By view of hiring young workers as part of CSR



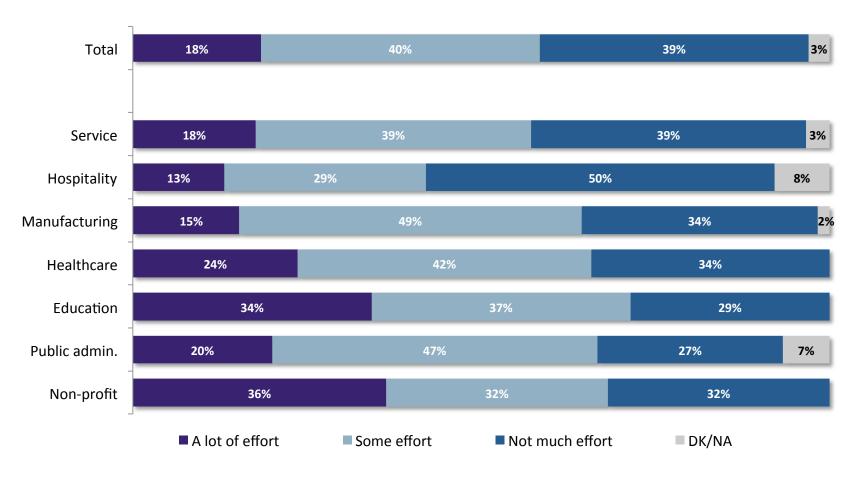


^{31.} When recruiting job candidates, how much effort does your company put into customizing the recruitment approach in order to reach young workers?

^{33.} Would you say that hiring and training recent grads and young adults is part of your organization's CSR?

Effort into customizing recruitment to reach young workers

Effort into customizing recruitment to reach young workers By industry



31. When recruiting job candidates, how much effort does your company put into customizing the recruitment approach in order to reach young workers?

What organizations are doing to attract young workers

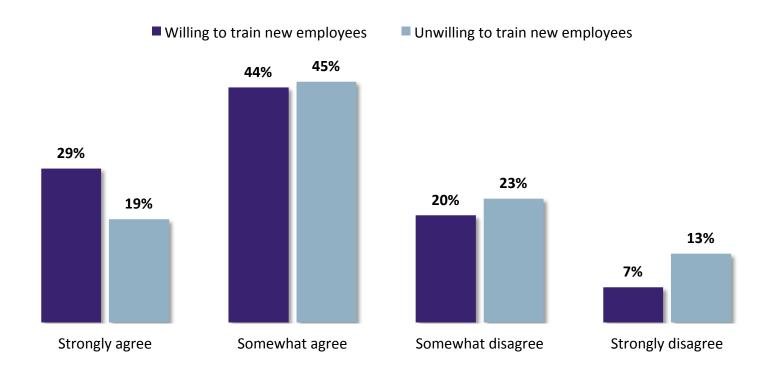
What organizations are doing to attract young workers

Reason	Industry							
	TOTAL	Service	Hospitality	Manufacturing	Health care	Education	Public admin	Non-profit
Online job sites/boards	55%	46%	45%	59%	66%	77%	73%	59%
Recruiting through social media	49%	45%	50%	56%	50%	57%	80%	68%
Government sites	38%	29%	26%	56%	47%	57%	60%	41%
Recruiting on campuses	34%	25%	18%	36%	55%	60%	53%	64%
Taking part in job fairs	31%	18%	13%	36%	53%	74%	73%	36%
Offering paid internships	29%	17%	11%	37%	37%	26%	47%	50%
Offering unpaid internships	24%	19%	11%	25%	42%	49%	27%	41%
Recruiting through youth- serving agencies	20%	15%	29%	22%	24%	20%	47%	36%

Employer responsibility to provide career management programs

Employer responsibility to provide career management programs

By willingness to train new employees



^{34.} Would you say that you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement? Employers have a responsibility to provide career management programs for their employees.



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