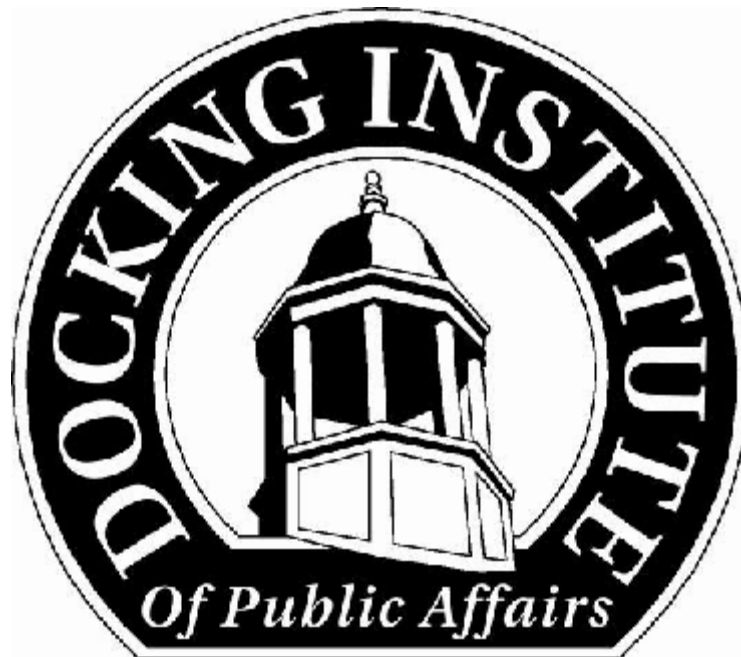


Douglas County Workforce Skills Assessment Survey



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Executive Summary

The Lawrence Chamber of Commerce's ECO² Taskforce contracted the Docking Institute of Public Affairs to conduct a survey of Douglas County employers with 10 or more employees. This project was conducted to ascertain the quality of the existing labor force and to determine prevailing wage levels among certain occupational categories. The survey instrument was a self-administered questionnaire mailed in three waves to employers between May 15, 2001, and June 14, 2001.

The primary objectives of the survey were to:

- Determine the general characteristics of employees and employing organizations/businesses in Douglas County.
- Assess the skill levels required for organizations/businesses in Douglas County, and compare the skill levels required of new employees to those required five years ago.
- Determine the need to improve basic skills, thinking skills, personal quality skills, and technical skills of the Douglas County workforce.
- Determine if "new hires" today meet the needs of the organization.
- Compare the ability to hire qualified/skilled employees today with this ability two to three years ago.
- Ascertain whether the Douglas County workforce will need additional training in basic skills, thinking skills, personal quality skills, technical skills, and computer skills.
- Determine if employers believe the Douglas County workforce is a strength or weakness to the business environment, and how employers successfully recruit good employees.
- Determine the importance of the public education system in Douglas County for local business investment and expansion, and ascertain the strength of the public school system for the business environment of the area.
- Estimate prevailing wage levels and benefits associated with common occupational categories for both full-time and part-time workers.
- Ascertain barriers to employee productivity.

From the analysis of the survey results, we find that:

- The 153 employers surveyed employ 10,317 full- and part-time employees. About 55% of the employees are full-time, and about 45% are part-time. Most employees work in the customer service field (18.35%), while another large percentage (18.06%) are unskilled labor. Seventy-eight percent of the businesses/organizations are privately owned/single operations.

- About 60% of respondents indicate that most employees must have “average skills,” while about 30% report needing employees with “high skills.” About 40% report that the skill levels needed have “increased slightly” over the past five years.
- Almost 80% of respondents report that current employees need some improvement in “listening” and “oral communication” skills. More than 80% also express a need for skill level improvement in “creative thinking,” “decision making,” “problem solving,” “goal-setting,” “leadership,” and “work attitudes.” Employers report needed skill improvement in all technical areas, especially “management,” “software competency,” and “sales.”
- Employers indicate that most employees are “adequate” to meet their needs. However, 20% of the respondents suggest that new sales employees do not meet the needs of the organization.
- Thirty-five and 38% of employers find it “much more difficult” and “slightly more difficult” (respectively) to hire qualified/skilled employees today compared to the ease in finding such employees two to three years ago. Almost half of the respondents believe that the prospect of hiring skilled employees in the next 2 to 3 years will remain the same as it is now.
- To address the work environment of 2 to 3 years from now, employers anticipate the need for additional employee training in most skill areas. Of particular importance are “decision making” and “problem solving” in the thinking skills area, “goal-setting” and “leadership” in the personal quality skills area, and “software competency,” “business management,” and “sales” in the technical skills area.
- Employers are somewhat split on the issue of whether the Douglas County workforce is a strength (36.4%) or weakness (39.6%) to the business environment. “Advertising,” “word of mouth,” and “referrals” are three of the practices preferred by employers to recruit good employees.
- Obtaining a “high school diploma” is the minimum educational requirement for the employees of half the employers surveyed. Almost three-fourths (72.7%) of the respondents indicate that the quality of the public education system in Douglas County was “very important” and/or “somewhat important” for investment and/or expansion. About two-thirds (64%) report that the public education system is a “strength” to the area’s overall business environment.
- In terms of average hourly wages for full-time employees, engineers (\$23.08) and “other professionals” (\$20.26) command the highest compensation. The lowest hourly wages tend to be found among unskilled labor (\$7.59), and customer service staff and clerical workers (both at \$8.99).
- For part-time employees, designers/draftsmen (\$19.00) and “other professionals” (\$14.53) command the highest compensation. The lowest hourly wages tend to be found among unskilled labor (\$6.86) and sales operatives (\$7.10).
- A majority of employers offer vacation, health care coverage, and retirement benefits for full-time employees in all occupational categories represented in their organization. The

percentage of each occupational category that receives any one of these benefits ranges from a low of 66% to a high of 100%. Fewer employers provide benefits for part-time employees. The percentage of each occupational category that receives any one of these benefits ranges from a low of 10% to a high of 100%.

- Forty percent of the employers surveyed suggest that the lack of childcare negatively influences the productivity of employees. Other “barriers” include “transportation to the job” (about 27%), “access to health care” (about 25%), “substance abuse” (about 21%), and “elderly relative care” (about 7%).

Introduction

In an economy that is becoming increasingly global, employees must have skills to be competitive with workers in other states and countries. In a future increasingly influenced by technology, workers must have flexible technical and thinking skills. To determine skills levels among workers in Douglas County, Kansas, the Lawrence Chamber of Commerce's ECO² Taskforce contracted the Docking Institute of Public Affairs to conduct a labor skills assessment in the county.

Methods

Findings of this study are based on a self-administered, three-wave mail survey of the 400 employers in Douglas County who employed at least 10 individuals during 2001. The employer list was acquired by the Chamber and was the most current listing of employers available. The first copy of the survey was mailed with a cover letter on May 15, 2001. It was signed by Kate Michaelis from the Chamber. A follow-up letter and survey were mailed on May 30, 2001, to those who had not yet responded to the original mailing. A third, and final, follow-up letter and survey were mailed on June 14, 2001. A total of 153 completed questionnaires were returned by June 29, 2001, the end of the data collection period. Eighteen questionnaires were returned as undeliverable. The response rate for the survey of Douglas County employers was 40%.

Survey Instrument

The instrument used for this research project contained 207 survey items, and the survey instrument is provided in the Appendix. Lawrence Chamber of Commerce and Docking personnel agreed upon the survey items used, with the former identifying the study objectives and the latter developing items that were valid, reliable, and unbiased. Question wording and the design of the survey instrument are the property of the Docking Institute and are not to be used for additional surveys unless written permission is given by the Director of the Docking Institute.

Type of Employees and Characteristics of Organization

Table 1 shows summary statistics for the number of full- and part-time employees. The number of full-time employees employed by a single employer ranges from a low of zero to a high of 686, while the median number is 12. The number of part-time employees employed by a single employer ranges in number from zero to 650, with a median of 6. The combined number of full- and part-time employees employed by a single employer ranges from three to 1336, with a median of 21.

The total number of full-time employees is 5660 and the total number of part-time employees is 4657, giving a combined total of 10,317.

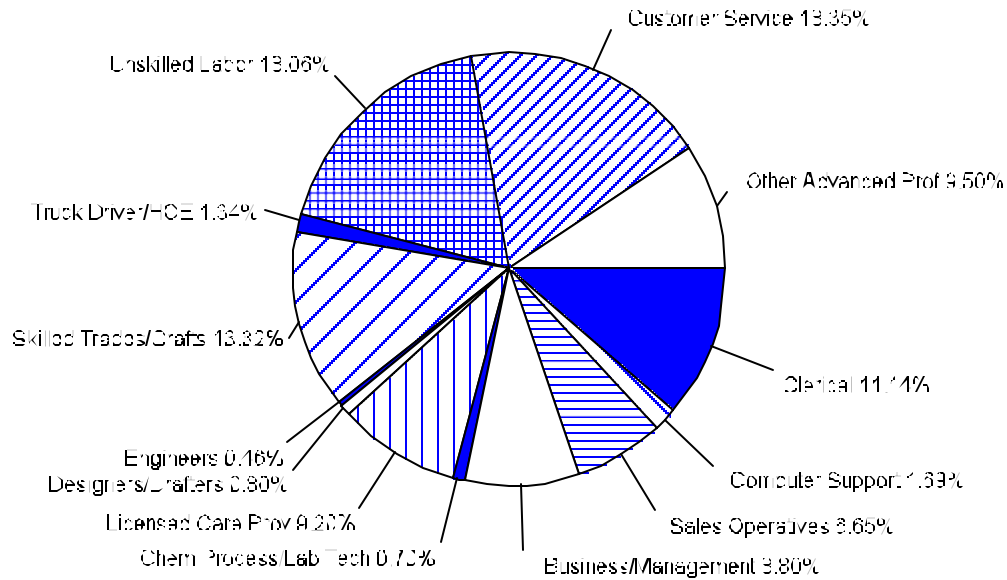
Table 1. Summary Statistics on Full-time, Part-time, and Total Number of Employees

	Minimum	Median	Maximum	Total
Full-time	0	12	686	5660
Part-time	0	6	650	4657
Combined	3	21	1336	10,317

Those respondents with part-time employees were asked to indicate “on average, how many hours a week do your part-time employees work?” The number of hours ranges from 4 to a maximum of 50. The mean (average) number of hours worked among part-timers is 20.

Respondents were asked to provide the total number of employees in the organization employed in 13 different of occupational categories. Figure 1 shows the percentage of employees by occupational category. As is common in most areas, unskilled labor, skilled labor, and clerical workers constitute relatively large percentages of the total employees among the 13 occupational categories at about 18%, 13%, and 11%, respectively. However, customer service constituted the largest percentage of total

Figure 1
Percentage of Employees by Occupational Category



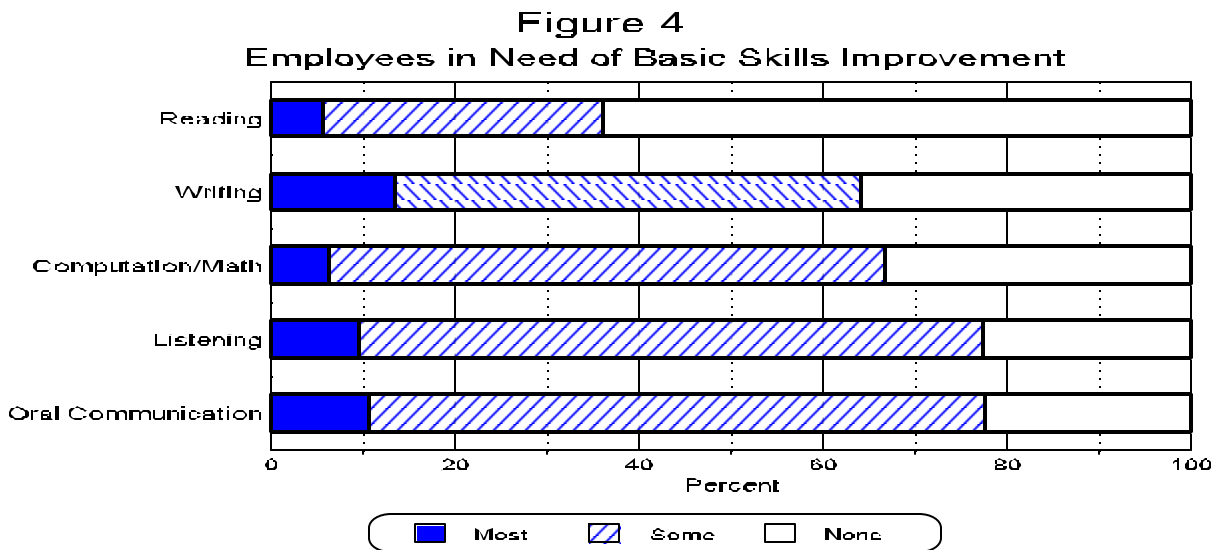
employees at almost 18.4%. This might be explained by the presence of the University of Kansas and a large number of students working in the customer service field.

Employers were asked, “Is your business a subsidiary of a larger corporation/public organization; or is it a single local organization? About 22% report that their organization is a subsidiary organization. Single organizations represent 78% of the sample. Employers were also asked how long their business or organization has been in the Douglas County area. The tenure ranges from a low of one year to a high of 143 years. The mean tenure among organizations is about 24.5 years.

Respondents were also asked to indicate whether their organization is within city limits, within one mile of city limits, or more than one mile from city limits. A clear majority (94%) are located within city limits, with 2% and 4% located within one mile and more than one mile of city limits, respectively.

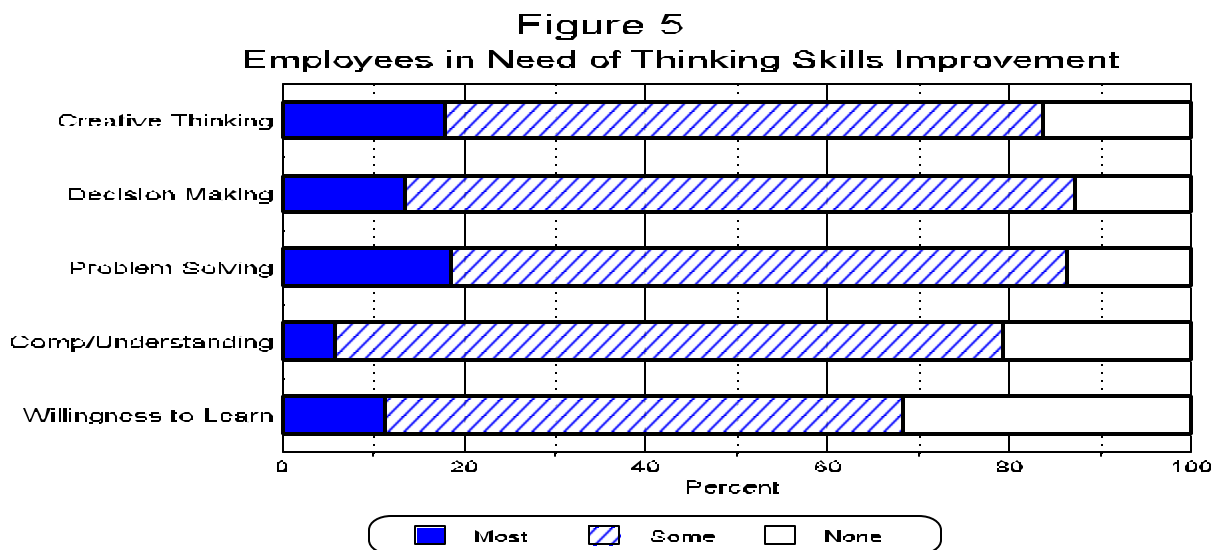
indicate the extent to which their employee workforce needs improvement in various types of skills. Response categories include: “most of my employees need improvement,” “some of my employees need improvement,” and “none of my employees need improvement.” Figure 4 shows the extent to which employers think their employees need improvement in basic skill

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math, listening, and oral communication. The two areas in need of most improvement are communication and listening, with more than 65% of employers indicating that some of their employees need improvement in these two basic skills. Employers seem most satisfied

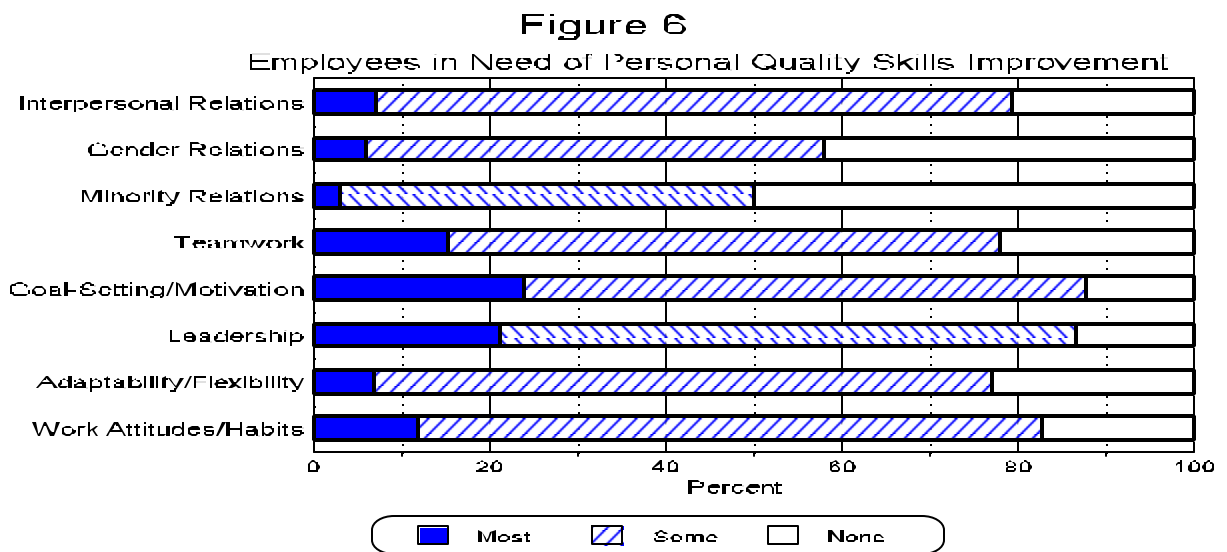
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65% indicate that none of their employees need improvement and only about 6% indicating that most of their employees need improvement.

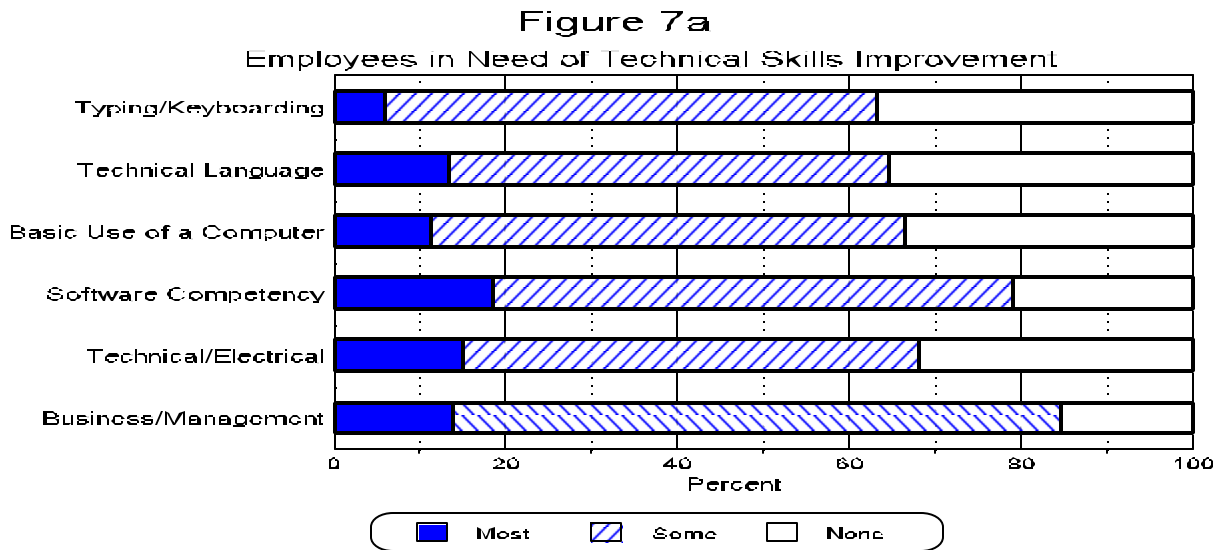
Employers were also asked to indicate the extent to which their employees need improvement in the following thinking skills: creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, comprehension, and willingness to learn. Figure 5 shows that a large percentage of employers (ranging between about 65% and 74%) believe some of their employees need improvement in creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, and comprehension/Understanding skills.

Personal quality skills are important characteristics of employees, and employers were asked to rate employees' need for improvement in this area. Figure 6 finds that a clear majority (more than 80%) of the employers feel that at some of the employees need improvement in work attitudes and habits, while another 12% feel most of their employees need improvement in these areas. Similarly, almost 80% feel that "some" and/or "most" of their employees need improvement in interpersonal relations, while about 18% suggesting that "none" of their employees need improvement in this area. Employers are generally satisfied with their employees' skills in minority relations, with 50% suggesting that employees need no improvement in this area.



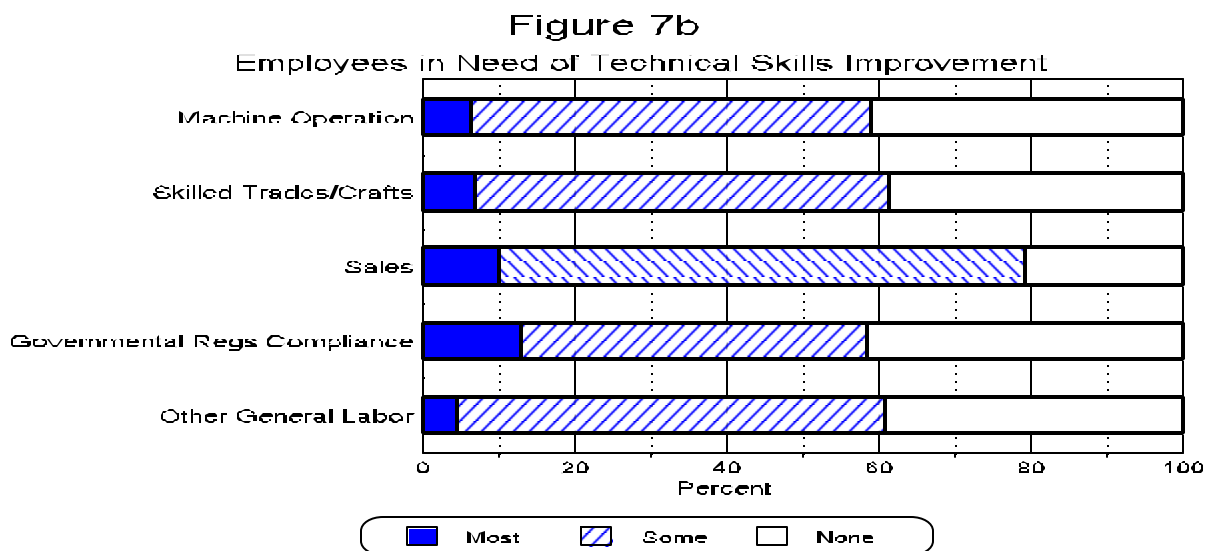
The final skills area assessed is technical skills. Again, employers were asked to indicate the extent to which their employees need improvement on several technical skills,

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ng, computer literacy, technical/electrical, business/management, machine operation, mechanical, skilled trades/crafts, sales, and governmental regulation compliance. Figures 7a and 7b show results on employees in need of technical skills. The figures show that the

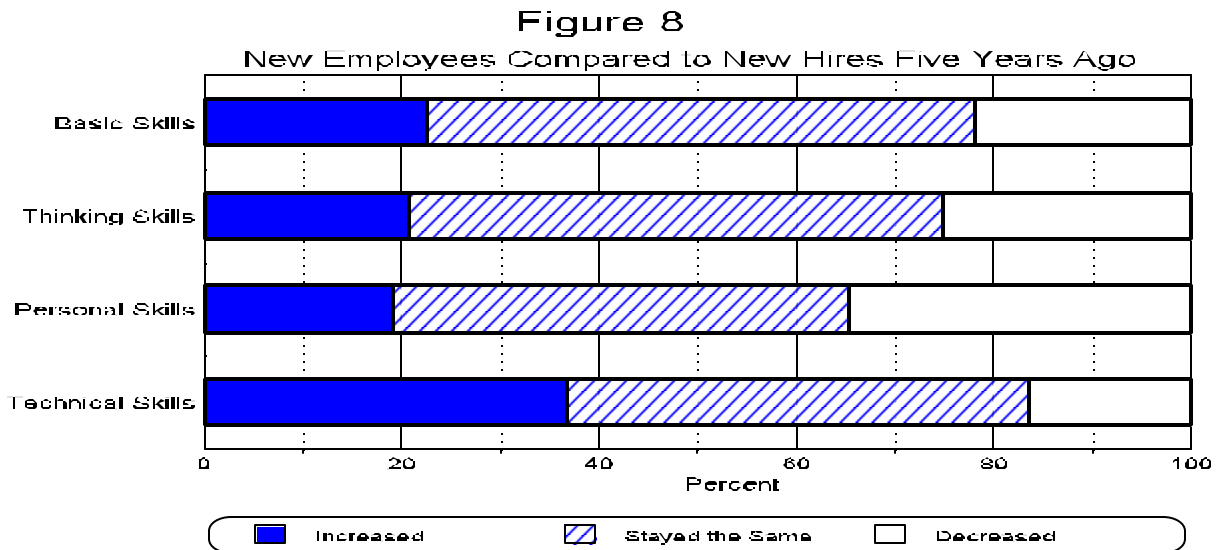
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ern are business management, sales, and software competency, with about 80% of respondents indicating that some *and* most of their employees need improvement in these areas.

On the four general skill areas (basic skills, thinking skills, personal qualities, and technical skills), employers were asked to assess the skill levels of newly hired employees compared to skill levels of newly hired employees five years ago.

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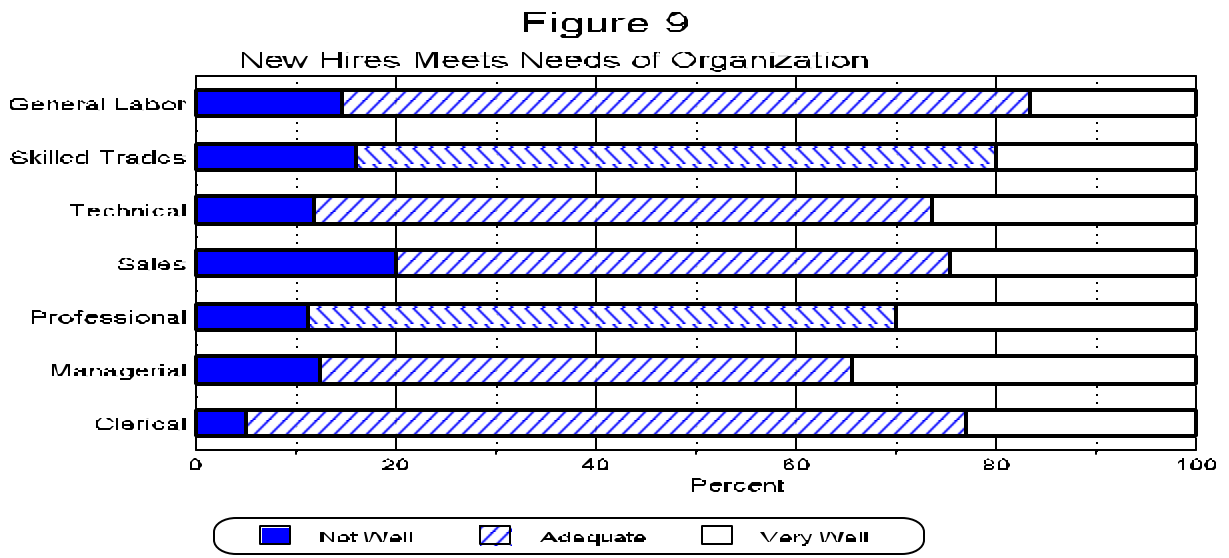


s tend to be somewhat favorable to today's new hires compared to new hires five years ago. The skill in which the most improvement seems to have occurred is technical skills, as almost 37% of the employers indicate that technical skills have increased. Most employers (55.5%) suggest that basic skills have stayed the same, but more (22.6%) indicate that skills have increased than suggest that skills have decreased (21.9%).

One-fourth to one-third of the employers report two areas where skills have decreased over the past five years: thinking skills and personal qualities. About 25% of employers report that they feel that thinking skills have decreased, while only 20% report an increase in thinking skills. Similarly, almost 35% report a decrease in personal qualities, while only 19% report increase in the personal quality skills of their employees. In an effort to further understand employer satisfaction with new hires, respondents were asked to

indicate how well the qualifications of newly hired employees meet the needs of the organization. Figure 9 shows that employers generally find new hires adequate to meet their needs. New professional and clerical employees seem to fit well into the workforce. Specifically, a high percentage of employers indicate that the qualifications of new professionals and clerical workers meet the need of their organizations “very well” (with 30% and 23%, respectively). Furthermore, these two types of employees received the lowest “not

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d 5.1%, respectively.

Between one-fourth and one-third of the respondents suggest that the qualifications of managerial, sales, and technical employees match their need “very well” (35%, 25%, and 26%, respectively), but these types of employees also received higher “not well” percentages than did professionals and clerical workers. For example, 20% of employers suggest that the qualifications of new sales personnel do not meet their needs well.

Employers seem satisfied with new general labor employees (scoring this category of new worker with the second highest “adequate” percentage, at 68.8%). In addition, employers are almost split on whether the qualifications of new general labor employees (with 14.6% “not well” and 16.7% “very well”) meets their needs.

Training and Skill Requirements

A series of questions dealt with the required training and educational standards of the employers. Employers were asked “how difficult is it to hire full-time skilled employees today compared to two or three years ago?” The response categories included “much more difficult,” “slightly more difficult,” “about the same,” “slightly less difficult,” and “much less difficult.”

Figure 10 shows that about the same percentage of respondents find it is “much more difficult” and “slightly more difficult” to hire full-time skilled employees now compared to two or three years ago (with 38% and 35%, respectively). About 25% find it “about the same,” and only 2% suggest the ability to hire full-time skilled employees is “slightly less difficult” than it was two or three years ago. None of the respondents believe it is “much less difficult” to hire full-time skilled employees now than it was two or three years ago.

Figure 10

Hiring Full-Time Skilled Compared to 2 or 3 Years Ago

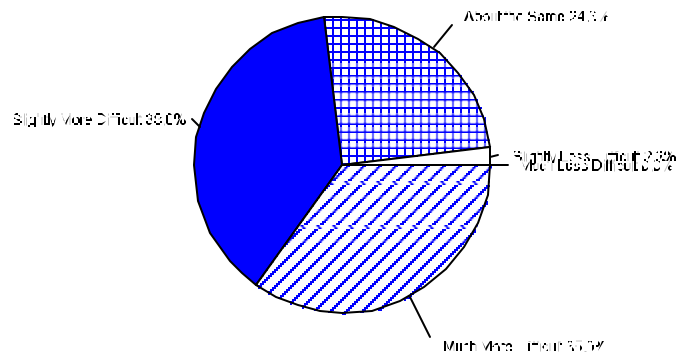
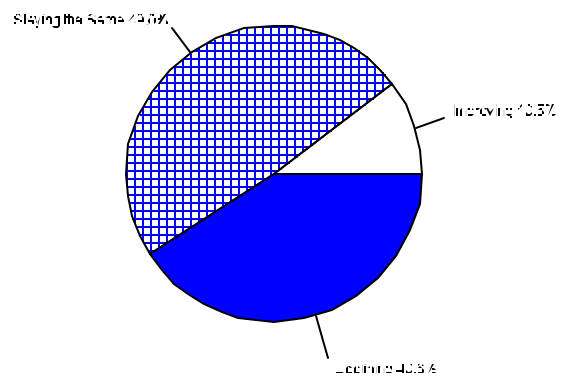


Figure 11 shows the responses to a question asking the employers to rate the potential for finding good skilled employees in Douglas County over the next two to three years. Almost half believe the potential will remain about the same, while less (about 40%) anticipate a decline in the potential for finding good skilled employees. Slightly more than 10% anticipate

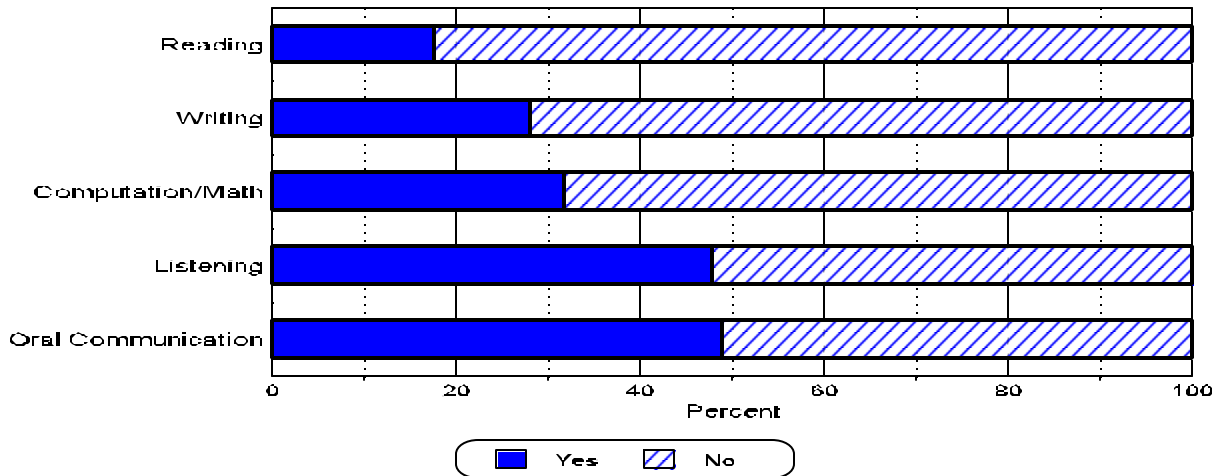
Figure 11

Finding Skilled Employees in Douglas County in 2 to 3 Yrs



organizations adapt to technological change, employers were asked whether they anticipate that their employees will need additional training in particular skills. The skills correspond to those mentioned earlier under the category of basic skills, thinking skills, personal qualities skills, and technical skills.

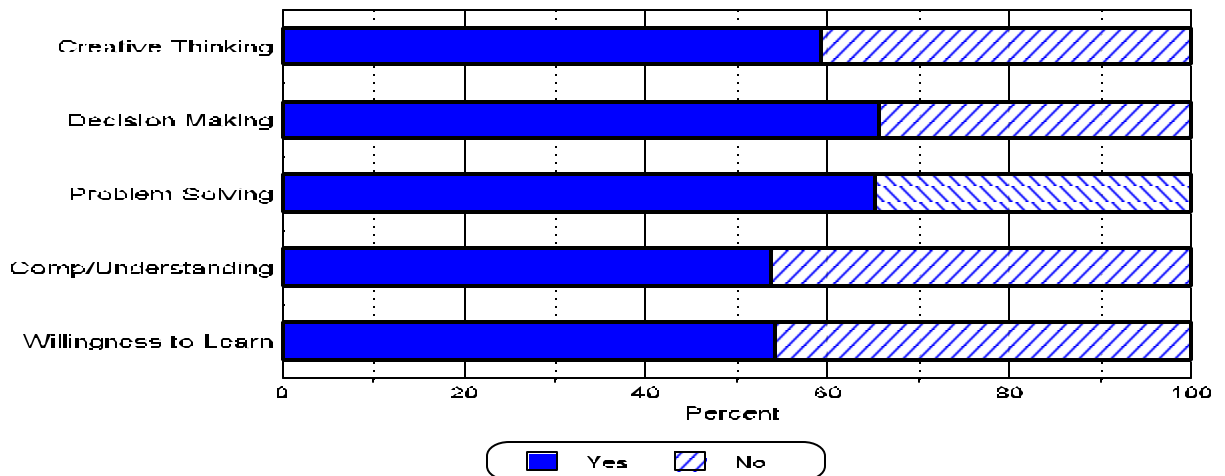
Figure 14
Employees Will Need More Basic Skills Training



ng skills, personal qualities skills, and technical skills.

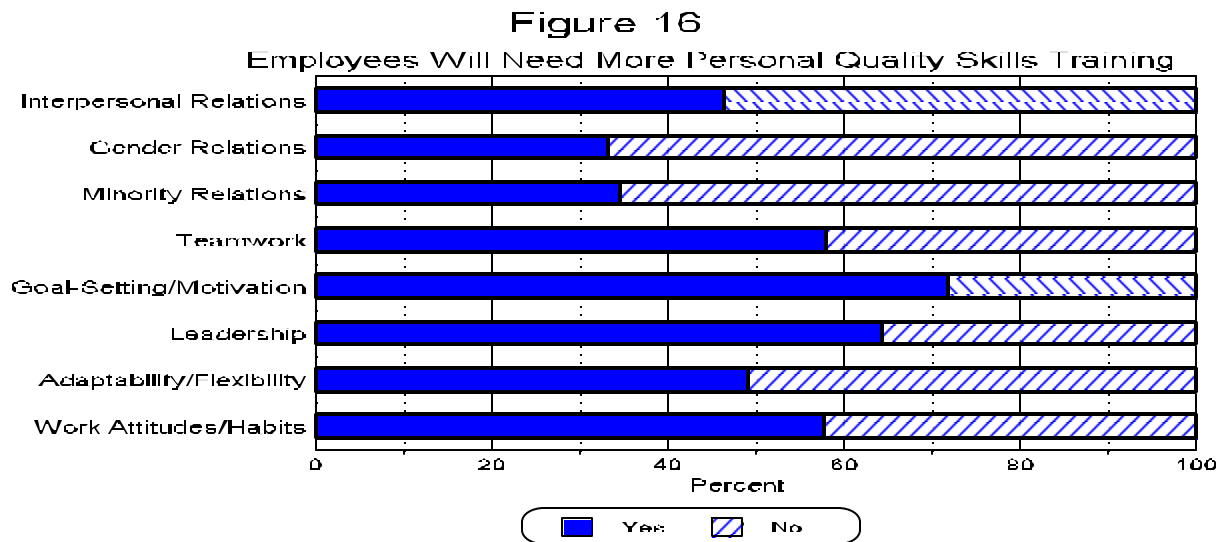
Figure 14 shows results for basic skills. Communication and listening are the two basic skills in which employers anticipate the greatest need for improvement over the next two to three years. Almost 50% of employers see a need for additional training in these two skills.

Figure 15
Employees Will Need More Thinking Skills Training



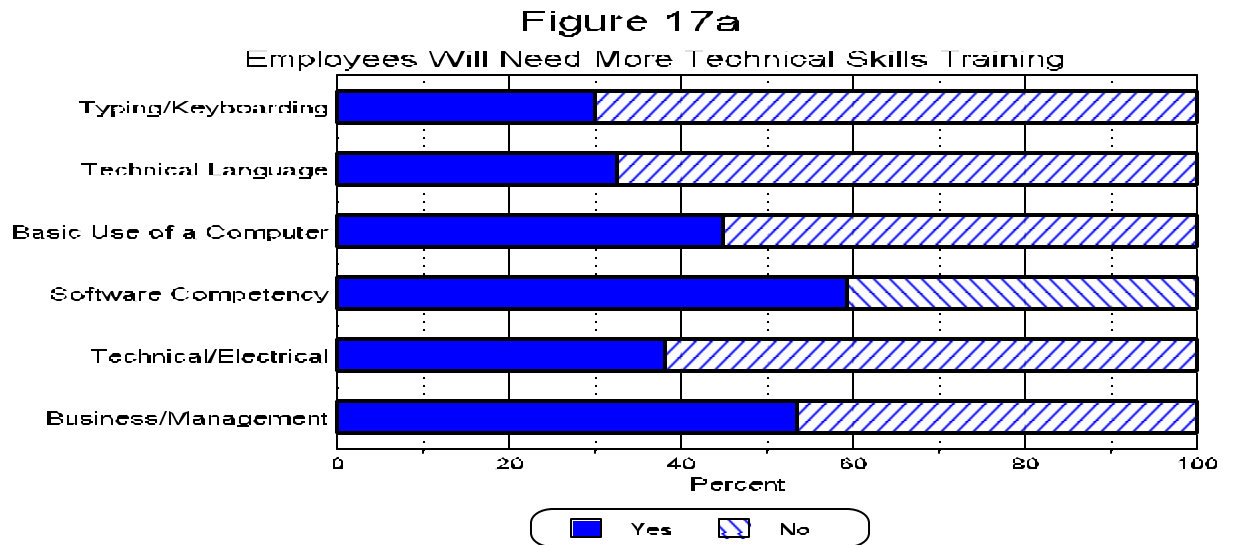
e a need for additional training in math skills. Figure 15 (on the previous page) shows employers' anticipated need for additional employee training in thinking skills to help the organization adapt to any technological changes. On every thinking skill, employers who anticipate a need for additional training over the next two to three years outnumber those employers who do not anticipate a need for additional training. There is a particular concern for training in problem solving and decision making skills, as about 65% indicate the need for additional training in these two areas.

Turning to findings in Figure 16, those personal quality skills in which almost 60% or more of employers anticipate a need for training include: work attitudes/habits, leadership, goal-setting/personal motivation, and teamwork.



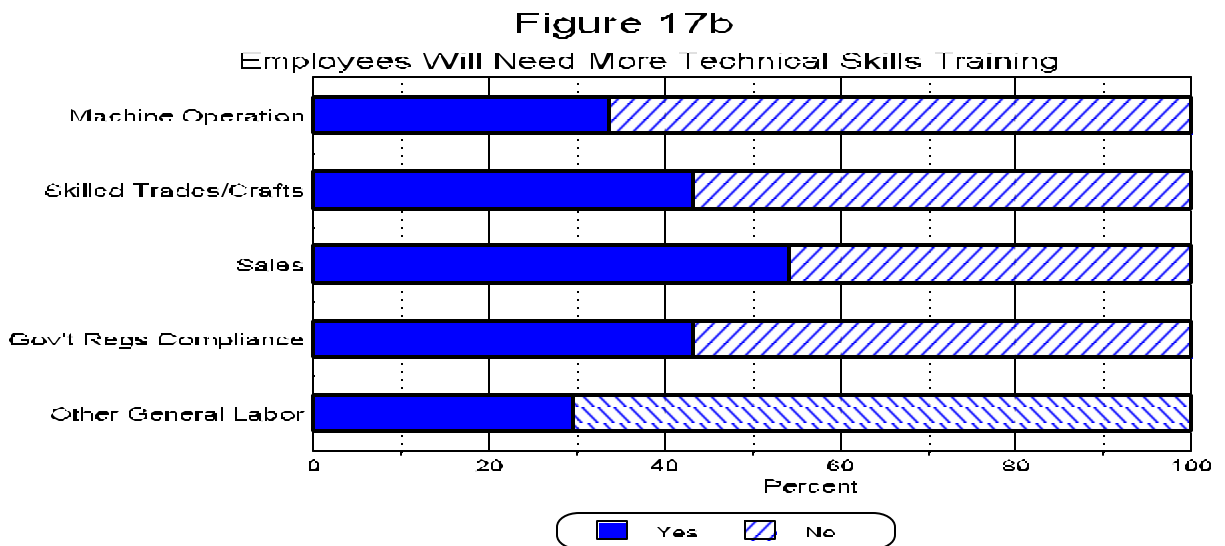
The final skills area assessed is technical skills in Figure 17a. and 17b. As one might expect in the computer age, a large percentage of employers (almost 60%) anticipate a need for additional training in software competency to help the organization adapt to technological changes. However, in most other areas of technical training, employers seem

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ers will not need additional training. A majority of employers **do not** anticipate a need for additional training in typing/keyboarding, technical language, basic use of a computer, technical/electrical, machine operation, skilled trades/crafts, government regulation

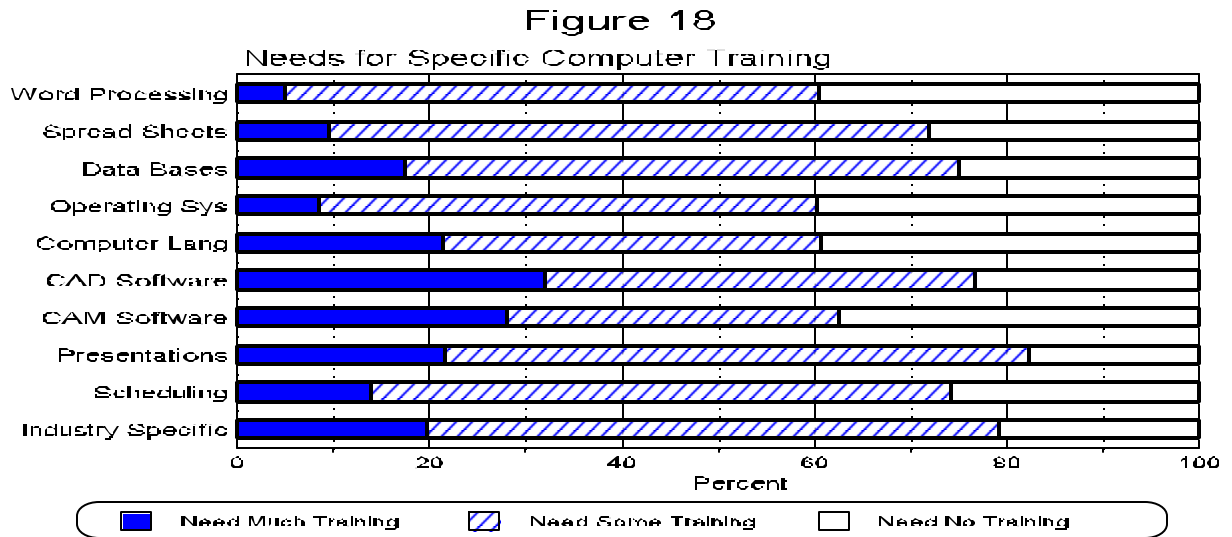
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general labor.

Turning to specific training needs, employers were asked the extent to which training for various types of software packages and operating systems needs to be implemented in their organization. Results for each item reported in Figure 18 pertain to only those respondents belonging to organizations that use the respective type of software or operating system. The area in which employers perceive the greatest organizational need for training is presentations software (e.g., Corel Presentations, Microsoft PowerPoint), as about 82% of those that use presentations software in their

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“much training” and/or “some training” is needed.

CAD systems (e.g., Geographic Information Systems) software also stands out, as about 32% of those that use CAD systems suggest that “much training” is needed, while about 45% of respondents feel that at least “some training” is necessary for their employees to fully utilize the software/systems that they currently use. While this may seem like a negative finding, it does suggest that employers are utilizing software and hardware that is vital to business in the information age.

Respondents were also asked whether they would rate the Douglas County area's labor force as a strength or weakness of its business environment. Figure 19 shows that slightly more employers rate the labor force as a weakness of the business environment (with a combined "very much weakness" and "somewhat weakness" of almost 40%) than a strength (a combined

"very much strength" and "somewhat strength" of about 36%). However, when comparing only the "very much" categories, more employers rated the labor force as a strength (9.3%) than a weakness (7.0%).

To address the issue of how employers find and

hire good employees, respondents were asked to list their "three most successful recruitment practices." Answers were open-ended, and Table 2 (on the next page) presents the frequencies of various responses. As can be seen in the table, advertising (in newspapers, placing help-wanted signs in windows, and over the Internet) is clearly the practice preferred by most employers to recruit new employees. "Word of mouth," "referrals" from other employees and employers, and "providing benefits" are also popular practices. "Increased salaries", "better work environments," and placing notices on "bulletin boards at UK" and placing job announcements with university/college job placement services also garnered some support.

Figure 19
Labor Force as Strength of Business Environ

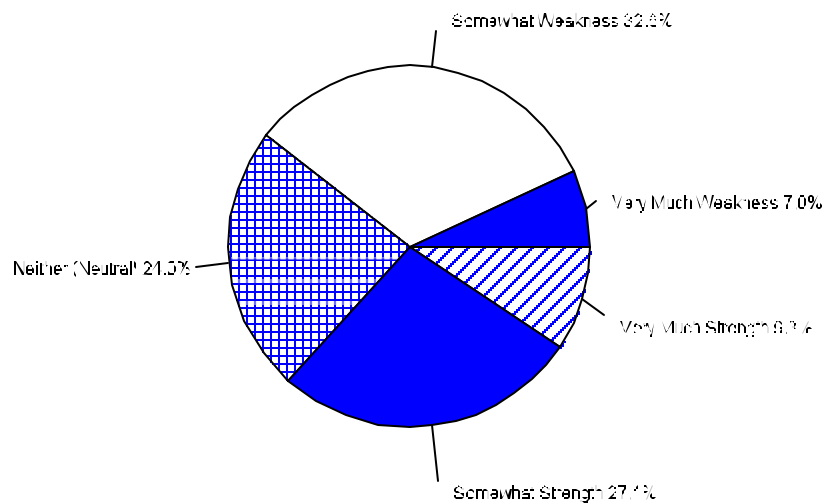


Table 2. Frequencies of “Most Successful Recruitment Practices” (N=153).

Recruitment Practices	Listed 1st (Q15a)	Listed 2nd (Q15b)	Listed 3rd (Q15c)
Advertising (newspapers, signs, internet)	38	30	22
Benefits (401K, health insurance, tuition/child care discounts)	17	19	7
Salary (regular increases, competitive wages)	10	7	9
Referrals (from employees, other employers, labor unions)	28	11	12
Word of Mouth/Good Reputation/Networking	28	19	2
Environment (pleasant work areas, flexible schedules)	7	11	8
University Bulletin Boards/College Job Placement	1	10	6
Job Service/Non-University Placement Centers	2	6	4
Good Management (restructuring, communication)	3	5	9
Non-Applicable			2
No Answer	19	35	72
Total	153	153	153

Education and the Business Environment

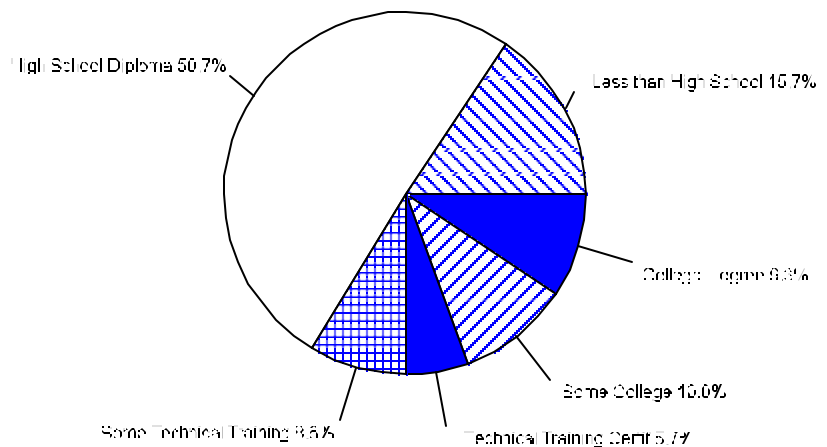
The public education system is a crucial provider of skills that businesses and organizations seek in a workforce. To determine the extent to which Douglas County employers rely on public education to provide important background skills for their own business/organization, the survey asked employers what the minimum educational and training standards were for most positions in their business (see Figure 20).

Employers were also asked how important the public education system was in their firm's decision to expand or invest in the area. Figure 21 shows that most employers consider the quality of the public education system to be an important factor in local expansion and investment decisions.

Only about 27% indicate that the community's public education system is unimportant in such decisions.

As a follow-up, employers were asked, "Would you rate public education as a strength or weakness of the Douglas County area's business environment?" Figure 22 shows that a combined percentage of about 64% consider the local public education system to be "somewhat of a strength" or "very much a strength" of the local business environment. A combined total of only 14% consider the public education system to be "somewhat of a weakness" or "very much a weakness." Clearly, respondents hold a very favorable view of

Figure 20
Minimum Educational Requirements



the public education that exists in Douglas County.

Figure 21

Importance of Public Education in Expansion/Investment

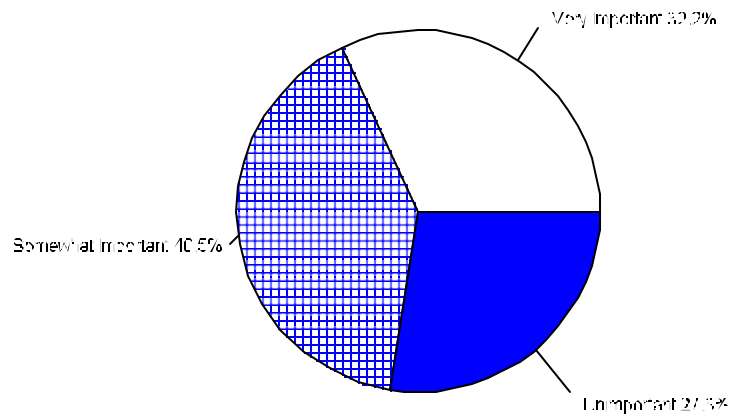
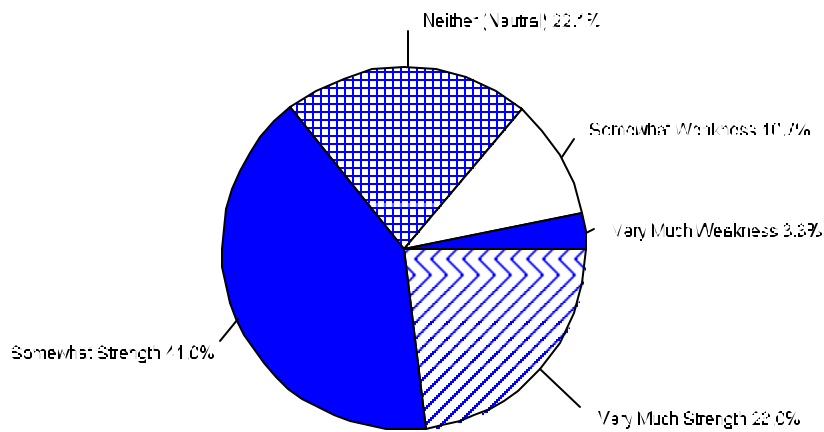


Figure 22

Public Education as Strength of Business Environment



Wage & Benefit Levels and Barriers to Employment

Employers were asked to provide wage and benefit information for the various occupational categories found in Tables 3 and 4. For full-time employees, the average hourly wages for engineers (\$23.08) and “other professional” (\$20.28) represent the highest compensation. The lowest full-time hourly wages tend to be found among unskilled labor (\$7.59), and customer service staff and clerical positions (both at \$8.99).

The percentage of employers providing vacation benefits for full-time employees across the occupational categories ranges from 100% for chemical processing and 95% of truck drivers and heavy equipment operators to 83% for computer support staff and engineers. The percentage providing health care coverage is also high, ranging from 100% for lab technicians and engineers to 77% for computer support staff and unskilled labor.

Table 3. Full-time Wage and Benefit Levels by Occupational Category

Position	Average Hourly Wage (\$/hour)	Range of Hourly Wage Rate (\$/hour)	Vacation Benefits (%)	Health Care Coverage (%)	Retirement Benefits (%)
Clerical	\$8.99	\$6.00 – \$15.50	92%	87%	67%
Computer Support Staff	\$13.03	\$7.00 – \$35.00	83%	77%	66%
Sales Operatives	\$11.95	\$5.15 – \$25.00	89%	88%	75%
Business/Management	\$16.27	\$8.00 – \$30.00	94%	96%	72%
Chemical Process/Lab Technicians	\$12.55	\$8.00 – \$15.49	100%	100%	83%
Licensed Care Providers	\$12.89	\$7.25 – \$25.00	93%	86%	92%
Designer/Draftsmen	\$13.32	\$7.00 – \$20.00	92%	92%	75%
Engineers	\$23.08	\$12.00 – \$38.50	83%	100%	83%
Skilled Trades/Crafts	\$12.93	\$6.00 – \$25.00	94%	90%	67%
Truck Drivers and Heavy Equipment Operators	\$12.03	\$8.00 – \$17.00	95%	80%	70%
Unskilled Labor	\$7.59	\$5.15 – \$12.00	84%	77%	66%
Customer Service Staff	\$8.99	\$5.15 – \$15.00	89%	86%	77%
Other Advanced Professionals	\$20.28	\$6.00 – \$50.00	93%	84%	86%

Finally, the percentage of employers providing retirement benefits across the occupational categories ranges from 92% for licensed day care providers to 66% for computer support staff and unskilled labor.

For part-time employees, the average hourly wages range from \$19.00 for designers/draftsmen and \$14.53 for “other professional” to \$6.86 for unskilled labor and \$7.10 for sales operatives. Interestingly, when comparing wages only for designers/draftsmen, part-time workers earn almost \$6.00 more per hour.

The percentage of employers providing vacation benefits for part-time employees across the occupational categories ranges from 100% for designers/draftsmen and

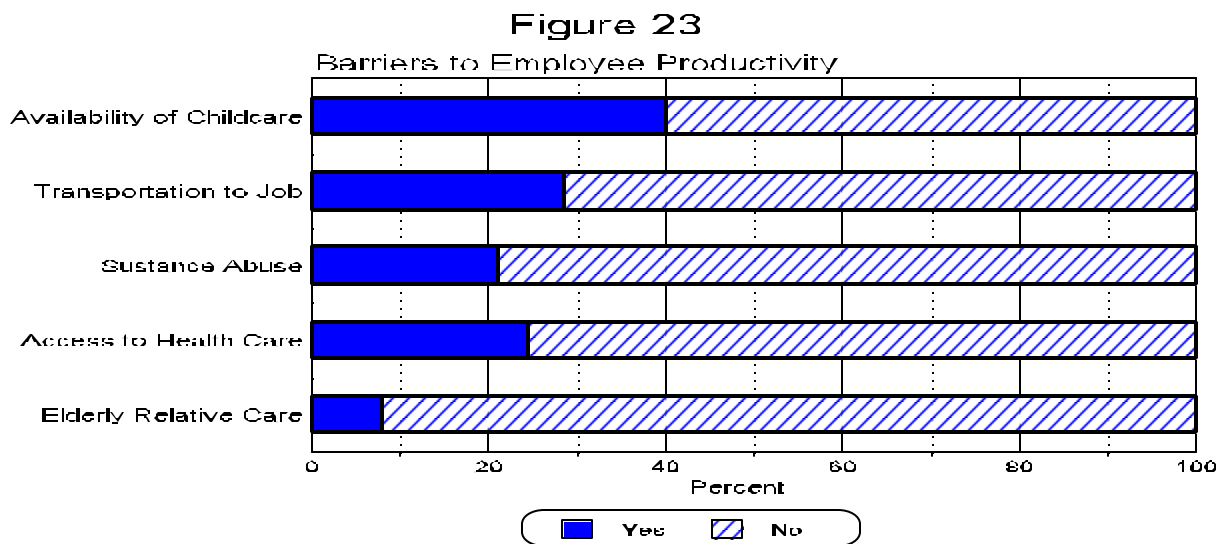
Table 4. Part-time Wage and Benefit Levels by Occupational Category

Position	Average Hourly Wage (\$/hour)	Range of Hourly Wage Rate (\$/hour)	Vacation Benefits (%)	Health Care Coverage (%)	Retirement Benefits (%)
Clerical	\$7.50	\$5.15 – \$12.00	33%	26%	28%
Computer Support Staff	\$9.82	\$6.00 – \$14.35	64%	43%	50%
Sales Operatives	\$7.10	\$5.15 – \$10.00	25%	10%	11%
Business/Management	\$10.70	\$6.50 – \$17.03	71%	53%	64%
Chemical Process/Lab Technicians	\$11.24	\$7.00 – \$15.49	100%	50%	50%
Licensed Care Providers	\$13.03	\$6.00 – \$25.00	57%	43%	54%
Designer/Draftsmen	\$19.00	\$19.00 – \$19.00	100%	100%	100%
Engineers	\$10.00	\$10.00 – \$10.00	100%	100%	100%
Skilled Trades/Crafts	\$12.04	\$6.00 – \$25.00	38%	18%	29%
Truck Drivers and Heavy Equipment Operators	\$10.06	\$8.00 – \$12.00	43%	43%	43%
Unskilled Labor	\$6.86	\$5.15 – \$11.50	27%	16%	21%
Customer Service Staff	\$7.27	\$5.00 – \$14.00	44%	24%	28%

Other Advanced Professionals	\$14.53	\$8.00 – \$27.00	47%	47%	43%
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engineers to 27% and 25% for unskilled labor and sales operatives, respectively. The percentage of employers providing health care coverage for part-time workers ranges from 100% for designers/draftsmen and engineers to 16% and 10% for unskilled labor and sales operatives, respectively. Finally, the percentage of employers providing retirement benefits for part-time workers ranges from 100% percent for designers/draftsmen and engineers to 21% and 11% for unskilled labor and sales operatives. As can be seen in Table 4, part-time designers/draftsmen and engineers fare best across all three benefits areas, while unskilled labor and sales operatives receive the fewest benefits.

Another issue of importance to employers is employee productivity. Figure 23 indicates that 40% of the respondents feel that a lack of “available childcare” presents a barrier to employee productivity on the job. Between 20% and 30% of the employers surveyed indicate that “transportation to the job,” “access to health care,” and “substance abuse” also cut into employee productivity. Of the options presented, care for older relatives seems to negatively influence employee productivity for less than 10% of the employers surveys. However, this number is expected to increase as the parents of “baby boomer” and “generation x” employees age and need more care.



Appendix

Survey Instrument for Employers Survey

Please fill in the blank or circle the appropriate response.

- Q1. How many of your employees are classified **Full-time**?
Number of Full-time Employees _____
- Q2. How many of your employees are classified **Part-time**?
Number of Part-time Employees _____
- Q3. If you have **Part-time** employees, on average, how many hours a week do your part-time employees work?
Average Hours a week for Part-time employees _____
- Q4. About how many employees of each type does your organization employ? If your business employs no workers in a particular category, please indicate so by writing 0.
- _____ Clerical
 - _____ Computer Support Staff (Programming, Data Processing, etc.)
 - _____ Sales Operatives
 - _____ Business/Management
 - _____ Chemical Process/Lab Technicians
 - _____ Licensed Care Providers
 - _____ Designer/Draftsmen
 - _____ Engineers
 - _____ Skilled Trades/Crafts (Machine Operators, Assemblers, Inspectors, Mechanics/Machinists, Electronic/Electrical)
 - _____ Truck Drivers and Heavy Equipment Operators
 - _____ Unskilled Labor (Stockers, Custodial, etc.)
 - _____ Customer Service Staff
 - _____ Other Advanced Professionals
- Q5. Which of the following best describes the required skill level for most of your employees.
(Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)
- 1. Core work processes use relatively low employee skill levels.
 - 2. Core work processes use average employee skill levels.
 - 3. Core work processes use very high employee skill levels.

Q6. The one to three scale below can be used to assess whether your employees need improvement in the following skills. Using the blank beside each skill, please indicate whether (1) most of your employees need improvement, (2) some of your employees need improvement, or (3) none of your employees need improvement.

1. Most of my employees need improvement
 2. Some of my employees need improvement
 3. None of my employees need improvement
- DK or NA. Don't know or not applicable

Basic Skills

- _____ Reading
- _____ Writing
- _____ Computation/Math
- _____ Listening
- _____ Oral Communication

Thinking Skills

- _____ Creative Thinking
- _____ Decision Making
- _____ Problem Solving
- _____ Comprehension/Understanding
- _____ Willingness to Learn

Personal Qualities

- _____ Interpersonal Relations
- _____ Gender Relations
- _____ Minority Relations
- _____ Teamwork
- _____ Goal-setting/Personal Motivation
- _____ Leadership
- _____ Adaptability/Flexibility
- _____ Work Attitude/Habits

Technical Skills

- _____ Typing/Key Boarding
- _____ Technical Language
- _____ Basic Use of a Computer
- _____ Software Competency
- _____ Technical/Electrical
- _____ Business/Management
- _____ Machine Operation
- _____ Skilled Trades/Crafts
- _____ Sales
- _____ Governmental Regulation Compliance
- _____ Other General Labor

Q7. Over the last five years, how much have the skill requirements increased or decreased for entry level jobs in your business? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

- 1. Decreased significantly
- 2. Decreased slightly
- 3. Remained unchanged
- 4. Increased slightly
- 5. Increased significantly

Q8. What are your minimum educational and training standards for most jobs in your business? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

- 1. Less than high school degree
- 2. High school degree
- 3. Some technical training
- 4. Some Technical Training
- 5. Technical Training Certification
- 6. Some college
- 7. College degree

Q9. How do the skill levels of newly hired employees today compare to the skill levels of newly hired employees five years ago? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

		Increased	Stayed the Same	Decreased	Don't Know
→	Basic Skills.....	1	2	3	9
→	Thinking Skills.....	1	2	3	9
→	Personal Qualities...	1	2	3	9
→	Technical Skills.....	1	2	3	9

Q10. For each of the following types of workers, how well do the qualifications of newly hired employees meet the needs of your business? (Circle your answer. Leave blank if your business does not employ that type of worker.)

		Not Well	Adequate	Very Well	Not Applicable	Don't Know/
a. Clerical.....	1		2	3		9
b. Managerial.....		1	2		3	9
c. Professional.....		1	2		3	9
c. Sales.....	1		2	3		9
d. Technical.....		1	2		3	9
e. Skilled Trades...		1	2		3	9
f. General Labor...		1	2		3	9

Q11. How difficult is it to hire *full-time skilled* employees today compared to two or three years ago? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

1. Much more difficult
2. Slightly more difficult
3. About the same
4. Slightly less difficult
5. Much less difficult
9. Don't know

Q12. How would you rate your potential for finding good *skilled* employees in the Douglas County area over the next two to three years? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

1. Improving
2. Staying about the same
3. Declining
9. Don't know

Q13. How difficult is it to hire *full-time unskilled* employees today compared to two or three years ago? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

1. Much more difficult
2. Slightly more difficult
3. About the same
4. Slightly less difficult
5. Much less difficult
9. Don't know

Q14. How would you rate the potential for finding good *unskilled* employees in the Douglas County area over the next two to three years?
(Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

1. Improving
2. Staying about the same
3. Declining
9. Don't know

Q15. What have been the three most successful recruitment practices your organization has used to attract employees in an economy with such full employment?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Q16. For the following skills, please indicate whether you anticipate that (1) your employees will need additional training to help your organization adapt to any technological changes in the next two to three years or (2) your employees will not need more training. Please mark your answer in the blank beside each skill.

1. Yes, my employees will need more training in this area
 2. No, my employees will not need more training in this area.
- DK or NA. Don't know or not applicable.

Basic Skills

- Reading
- Writing
- Computation/Math
- Listening
- Oral Communication

Thinking Skills

- Creative Thinking
- Decision Making
- Problem Solving
- Comprehension/Understanding
- Willingness to Learn

Personal Qualities

- Interpersonal Relations
- Gender Relations
- Minority Relations
- Teamwork
- Goal-setting/Personal Motivation
- Leadership
- Adaptability/Flexibility
- Work Attitude/Habits

Technical Skills

- Typing/Key Boarding
- Technical Language
- Basic Use of a Computer
- Software Competency
- Technical/Electrical
- Business/Management
- Machine Operation
- Skilled Trades/Crafts
- Sales
- Governmental Regulation Compliance
- Other General Labor

Q17. For the following types of computer software, please indicate whether your business...

1. needs to obtain much training to use the software properly.
 2. needs to obtain some additional training to use the software's full capabilities.
 3. needs no additional training for this type of software.
 4. does not use this type of computer software.
-
- ___a. Word Processing (WordPerfect, MS Word, WordStar, etc.)
 - ___b. Spread Sheets (Lotus, Quattro, Excel, etc.)
 - ___c. Data Bases (DBase, PCFile, Paradox, etc.)
 - ___d. Operating Systems (DOS, Windows, Unix, etc.)
 - ___e. Computer Languages (Pascal, C, etc.)
 - ___f. CAD systems, Geographic Information Systems and/or other sophisticated Management Information Packages
 - ___g. CAM (Computer Aided Manufacturing) systems
 - ___h. Presentations Software (PowerPoint, Corel Presentations, etc.)
 - ___i. Scheduling Software (Lotus Organizer, Microsoft Outlook, etc.)
 - ___j. Industry specific software

Q18. Overall, would you rate the Douglas County area's labor force as a strength or weakness of its business environment? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

1. Very much of a weakness
2. Somewhat of a weakness
3. Neither a strength or weakness
4. Somewhat of a strength
5. Very much of a strength
9. Don't know

Q19. Is your business a subsidiary of a larger corporation/ public organization; or is it a single local organization? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

1. Subsidiary organization
2. Single organization

Q20. About how many years has your business or company been in the Douglas County area (if it is less than 2 years, please indicate if it has been in existence about ½ year, 1 year, or 1 and ½ years)?

Number of years _____

Q21. Please write in the entry wage scale (e.g. \$7.75) for the following Full-time positions in your organization. Then, circle “yes” or “no” to indicate whether the full-time position is accompanied by the particular benefits mentioned. If your organization employs no workers in a particular full-time position, please indicate so by writing 0 in the entry wage space.

Position	Entry Hourly Wage	Vacation Benefits (circle one)	Health Care Coverage (circle one)	Retirement Benefits (circle one)
Clerical	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Computer Support Staff	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Sales Operatives	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Business/Management	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Chemical Process/Lab Technicians	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Licensed Care Providers	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Designer/Draftsmen	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Engineers	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Skilled Trades/Crafts	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Truck Drivers and Heavy Equipment Operators	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Unskilled Labor	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Customer Service Staff	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Other Advanced Professionals	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

Q22. Please write in the entry hourly wage scale (e.g. \$7.75) for the following Part-time positions in your organization. Then, circle “yes” or “no” to indicate whether the part-time position is accompanied by the particular benefits mentioned. If your organization employs no workers in a particular part-time position, please indicate so by writing 0 in the entry wage space.

Position	Entry Hourly Wage	Vacation Benefits (circle one)	Health Care Coverage (circle one)	Retirement Benefits (circle one)
Clerical	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Computer Support Staff	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Sales Operatives	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Business/Management	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Chemical Process/Lab Technicians	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Licensed Care Providers	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Designer/Draftsmen	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Engineers	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Skilled Trades/Crafts	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Truck Drivers and Heavy Equipment Operators	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Unskilled Labor	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Customer Service Staff	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
Other Advanced Professionals	\$ /hr	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

Q23. In your opinion, which of the following are *very important* barriers to employee productivity in your organization?
(Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
A. Availability of childcare	1	2	9
B. Transportation to the job	1	2	9
C. Substance abuse	1	2	9
D. Access to health care	1	2	9
E. Elderly relative care	1	2	9

Q24. How important is public education in a community to your firm's decision to expand or invest in the area? (Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

1. Unimportant
2. Somewhat important
3. Very Important
9. Don't know

Q25. Would you rate public education as a strength or weakness of the Douglas County area's business environment?
(Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

1. Very much of a weakness
2. Somewhat of a weakness
3. Neither a strength or weakness
4. Somewhat of a strength
5. Very much of a strength
9. Don't know

Q26. Zip code of your business? _____

Q27. Is your business located within the city limits of a town, within one mile of city limits of a town, or more than one mile from the city limits of a town?
(Please circle the number that corresponds to your answer)

1. Within city limits
2. Within one-mile of city limits
3. More than one-mile from city limits

**Thank you from the Docking Institute and the Lawrence Chamber of
Commerce's ECO² Taskforce.
Please tape the booklet shut and put it in the mail.
The postage is pre-paid.**