

## 2008 SECT Center Business Survey Results

In 2008, the Supported Employment Consultation and Training (SECT) Center developed a Business Survey. The purpose of the survey was to obtain information about businesses' hiring practices and support needs in the effort to improve the overall efficiency of employment services provided by Supported Employment agencies in Indiana.

The survey was designed so that a business could answer questions anonymously through a survey website. There were 6 demographic questions and 12 questions related to the company's hiring practices and potential services offered by supported employment agencies. The survey was distributed via email to Indiana Chamber presidents and Work Investment Board Members. Each person was asked to forward the email link to their business members. The survey was posted for two weeks prior to closing. Below are the results from the survey.

### **Demographics**

Seventeen businesses completed the survey from three Vocational Rehabilitation Regions (see *Diagram 1: Map of Participants by City*). All of the participants came from the central and southern regions of the state. Sixty-three percent of the participants came from a rural area. Additional demographics are as follows:

#### Title/position:

- Directors/Managers: 7
- Human Resource Directors/Managers: 4
- Presidents/CEO: 3
- Business owner: 1
- Other: 2 (recruiter, title not listed)

#### Number of Employees:

- 15 or less employees: 9
- 16-100 employees: 4
- 101-250 employees: 3
- 251+ employees: 1

#### Type of Company:

- Agriculture, Farming, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting: 2
- Educational Services: 1
- Finance & Insurance: 1
- Health Care & Social Assistance: 3
- Information: 1
- Manufacturing: 1
- Mining: 1
- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services: 1
- Other: 4

## **Survey Results**

The first few questions were about the hiring practices of businesses.

### *1. What is the primary method you currently use to solicit job applicants?*

- 26.7% (4) Word of Mouth
- 20.0% (3) Newspaper advertisement
- 20.0% (3) On-line applicants
- 13.3% (2) Job fairs
- 6.7% (1) Resume
- 6.7% (1) Unsolicited applications
- 6.7% (1) Work One
- 6.7% (1) College

Word of Mouth was the highest response. Help wanted signs and staffing agencies had zero responses.

### *2. What is your primary method for soliciting a job application?*

Sixty-seven percent of the people who responded to this question stated that they use hand-written applications as their primary method to obtain job applications.

### *3. What is the primary factor that influences your decision to hire a person?*

- 46.7% (4) Interview
- 20.0% (3) Education and training
- 6.7% (1) Appearance/First impression
- 6.7% (1) Hard skills
- 6.7% (1) Resume
- 6.7% (1) Word of mouth
- 6.7% (1) Work history

The interview had the highest response for influencing an employer's hiring decision. Application, Employee testing, and soft skills had zero responses.

### *4. What percentage of your employees have a known disability?*

Eighty-two percent of the people who responded to this question stated less than 5% of their staff have a known disability. Two companies stated that more than 20% of their staff have a known disability; however, both of these companies provide employment services under a government entity.

5. *When working with a staffing agency, which of the following services, would you find beneficial to your company overall if they were offered?*

- 23.5% (4) Team-building strategies
- 23.5% (4) Specific job or task analysis
- 17.6% (3) Development of job-specific or task-specific checklists
- 11.8% (2) Soft skills or “people” skills training
- 11.8% (2) Retention assistance services
- 11.8% (2) Job modification or restructuring to increase efficiency
- 5.9% (1) The Americans with Disabilities Act or “ADA” training
- 5.9% (1) One-to-one training
- 5.9% (1) Job accommodations for applicants or employees with disabilities
- 5.9% (1) Drug testing and/or counseling
- 5.9% (1) Company-wide training on ways to support coworkers with disabilities

Fifty-nine percent indicated that they do not use a staffing agency to fill their employment openings. Supervised volunteers, interns or apprentices had a zero response.

6. *If a bond was offered as an incentive to hiring someone with a blemished work record (e.g. bad credit, ex-offender, spotty work history), would that impact your decision to hire that person?*

Eighty-two percent of the people responded no.

7. *Which of the following criminal convictions would automatically rule out an applicant from being hired at your company?*

- 53% (9) Crimes against persons (other than sex crimes)
- 53% (9) Sex crimes
- 41% (7) Drug/Substance abuse
- 41% (7) Theft/Burglary
- 24% (4) Crimes against property

Forty-one percent stated that they would be open to hiring an ex-offender if the person meets the qualifications of the job. Thirty-five percent stated that they would not consider hiring an ex-offender under any circumstance.

8. *What are your company’s usual methods for training new employees?*

- 77% One-to-one training by a supervisor
- 71% One-to-one training by a co-worker
- 65% Small group orientation
- 47% On-line learning
- 29% Large group orientation

9. *What is the average job retention time for positions within your type of business (e.g. how long do most people stay in their jobs)?*

- 31% More than 10 years
- 25% 5 years-10 years
- 19% 3 years-5 years
- 25% 1 year-3 years
- 0% Less than 1 year

10. *What types of positions turn over most frequently in your company's area of business?*

- Non-certified, entry-level positions
- General and physical labor
- Equipment and CNC operators
- Tellers
- Front-counter
- Bus drivers
- Clerical
- Residential job coaches
- Housekeeping
- Teacher assistants

Two agencies indicated that they do not have turnover. Entry-level positions, front-counter, and general labor ranked among the highest jobs for turnover.

11. *Which of the following services do you think would help to reduce turnover at your company?*

- 56% Employee incentive programs
- 38% Team-building strategies
- 38% Stress management and burnout prevention training
- 38% Employee incentive programs
- 31% Conflict management training (for supervisors)
- 25% Soft skills training
- 19% Career planning

12. *Supported employment is a service that assists persons with disabilities in finding competitive employment-community jobs paying at least minimum wage, which any person can apply for according to their choices and capabilities. Has your company ever hired employees through a supported employment service?*

Eighty-five percent stated that they have not hired a person through supported employment. Some of the reasons for not using a supported employment service were:

- Never had the opportunity/No applicants provided
- No need
- Work is too demanding, labor intensive
- Safety issues
- All positions are professional-level positions
- Own HR department

The largest response was that they never had an opportunity or had no applicants from a supported employment program.

13. *What information would you find helpful to receive if approached by someone from a Supported Employment program that represents persons with disabilities?*

- 43% Testimonials from employers
- 43% Employer references
- 36% Retention statistics
- 29% Placement statistics
- 29% Brochures
- 14% Testimonials from applicants
- 7% Agency history/other services
- 7% Marketing give-a-ways

Twenty-nine percent stated that none of the items would be helpful.

### **Conclusion**

Because of limited number of responses, it is not possible to develop any statistical conclusions. However, the results suggest that supported employment programs should continue outreach to new employers and provide individualized services that meet their business needs.

For more information about this business survey or how your company may benefit from supported employment services, please contact:

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**Diagram 1: Map of Participants by City**

