

# 2020

## EMPLOYERone survey

The results are in! For the seventh year Workforce Planning Hamilton (WPH) has delivered the EmployerOne Survey. Hamilton employers across all industries shared their hiring experience on the most in-demand jobs in Hamilton and highlighted recruitment, retention and skills concerns. This survey provides a snapshot of how local employers were fairing in the January 2020 labour market. **This year 266 employers completed the EmployerOne survey.**

**The 2020 EmployerOne results indicate that Hamilton's economy continues to be strong!** This research compliments other data sources that show the economy continuing to see strong employment growth. Over the last 4 years, our labour force grew at a high rate. The number of people employed in Hamilton increased by 37,000 bringing it to its highest level ever with 422,800 employed workers. The unemployment rate fell further in 2019 to 4.3%. (Labour Force Survey)

The labour force is made up of the total number of people in Hamilton who are employed or unemployed and looking for work. Hamilton's labour force has increased as people who may have been at the margins have rejoined the labour market. The labour force participation rate (the labour force as a percent of the population) has increased to 65.1% meaning nearly two-thirds of the population are working or looking for work. The length of time people have been unemployed has decreased and people who have been unemployed for over a year has decreased by -89% from 2016 to 2019. (Ontario figures)

### TRENDS FOR 2020

There are some early signs that growth in the new year may occur at a slower pace. **Forty-nine percent of employers stated their organization size is staying about the same** an increase of five per cent from last year. **Eighty two per cent of employers are planning to hire in 2020**, a slight dip from previous years rate at 84%.

For job seekers, while there is positive outlook with increasing job opportunities, one concern is the high number of contract positions. **Eighteen percent of employers had at least one position that was contract part-time and the same share for contract full-time.** Thirty percent had at least one position that was season/casual.

## Who completed the survey?

WORKFORCE SIZE	EMPLOYER RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
Sole proprietor	2	1%
1-4	39	15%
5-9	42	16%
10-19	51	19%
20-49	46	17%
50-99	31	12%
100-199	23	9%
200-499	19	7%
500+	13	5%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>100%</b>

## INDUSTRY (Percentage)

 Manufacturing	15%
 Construction	12%
 Healthcare and social assistance	12%
 Other services (except public administration)	12%
 Accommodation and food services	9%
 Retail trade	9%
 Professional, scientific and technical services	6%
 Educational services	5%
 Transportation and warehousing	5%
 Administration and support, waste management and remediation services	3%
 Arts, entertainment and recreation	3%
 Wholesale trade	3%
 Finance and insurance	2%
 Information and cultural industries	2%
 Real estate and rental and leasing	2%
 Public administration	1%

**12%** of businesses are start-ups. Accommodation and food services and Retail trade had the largest share of start-up businesses

# RECRUITMENT

## KEY FINDINGS

- The percent of employers stating **recruitment is 'very challenging'** increased from the previous year
- The share of employers that rate the **availability of qualified workers in Hamilton as 'poor'** also increased from the previous year
- Sixty percent of employers had at least one position that was **hard-to-fill**, with **'lack of qualifications'** and **'not enough applicants'** as the top two reasons



## PLANNING TO HIRE

**82%**  
of employers **plan to hire in 2020**, a slight dip from previous years rate at 84%.

**Expansion** is one of the top reasons for hiring, followed by filling a **vacancy/replacement**

Occupations employers are planning to hire



Welders  
General labourers  
Food servers  
Nurses  
Customer service representatives

**These jobs were identified by employers as potentially hiring over a hundred positions**

## SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

The industries that are most likely to hire are:

- Professional, scientific, and technical services (93%). This industry also saw the largest growth from last year, increasing from 88% to 93%
- Manufacturing (92%)
- Art, Entertainment and Recreation (89%)
- Construction (88%)

## HIRING

**88%** of employers hired at least one position in 2019, this has been consistent over the last few years

## SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

Highest rates of hiring:

- Manufacturing (97% of employers)
- Professional, scientific, and technical services (93%)
- Accommodation and food services (92%)
- Professional, scientific, and technical services had the largest year-over-year increase in the number of employers stating their **organization is growing** with an increase from 64% to 79%.

Most employers (83%) hired **permanent full-time** positions but a large percent also reported hiring contract and casual positions. Eighteen percent hired at least one **contract position** full-time or part-time, and 30% of employers hired at least one **seasonal/casual position**.

**83%** permanent full-time  
**41%** permanent part-time  
**18%** contract  
**30%** seasonal/casual

## TOP RECRUITMENT METHODS

Word of mouth/personal contacts/referrals/informal networks **69%**  
Online job boards/postings **65%**  
Social media **43%**  
Company's own internet site **43%**  
Unsolicited resumes **27%**

**Social media continues to be an important recruitment tool...**

Over the past five years Social media grew in importance of recruitment



## RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES

Employers continue to see recruitment challenges in this growing economy:

Twenty-eight percent of employer's state **recruitment is very challenging**. This has increased over the last three years

24%

2018

27%

2019

28%

2020

*"Recruiting qualified candidates is our #1 pain issue and growth limiter. I am willing to help the city understand and try to resolve the issues."*

## HARD-TO-FILL POSITIONS

Lack of qualifications (education level/credentials) **48%**

Not enough applicants **46%**

Lack of work experience **43%**

Lack of technical skills **39%**

Lack of motivation, attitude or interpersonal abilities **36%**

These five reasons were the same as last year. **Lack of qualifications** and **not enough applicants** has consistently been the top two reasons positions are hard-to-fill reflecting a potential skills shortage.

*"Imperative that we change the stigma of the construction trades at the high school level. Many people have long, lucrative, careers in the construction industry."*

60%

of employers experienced at least one position in 2019 that was hard-to-fill.



## SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

The largest growth in the number of employers stating recruitment was **very challenging** was:

- Construction, increased from 30% to 52%
- Health care increased, from 14% to 33%

23%

of employers state the **availability of qualified workers in Hamilton is poor**, which also increased from last year from 16%

### Skilled Trades in Hamilton: The skills gap is widening

The skilled trades continue to be in very high demand in the community. In WPH's report, *Under Pressure 2.0*, we consulted over 130 skilled trades employers in Hamilton about the job market challenges they are facing within the skilled trades. For more in depth information about the skilled trades please see the *Under Pressure 2.0* and our customized trades fact sheets on the WPH website. Many of the occupations listed below are also identified in the report and highlighted in the fact sheets.

#### Hard-to-fill skilled trade workers

MILLWRIGHT CNC MACHINE OPERATORS WELDER TRUCK DRIVER ELECTRICIAN CRANE OPERATORS COMMERCIAL ROOFERS

#### Other hard-to-fill occupations

PERSONAL SUPPORT WORKER GENERAL LABOURER FORKLIFT OPERATORS DATA ENTRY CASHIER COOK/CHEF DRIVER PARALEGAL SENIOR SOFTWARE DEVELOPER ENGINEER

# RETENTION

## KEY FINDINGS

- Separations have increased in 2019
- This year a question was also added regarding retention: **Is retention a concern for your organization?**



*"We are finding a multitude of issues with the current labour pool in Hamilton that we did not experience 10-15 years ago."*

## SEPARATIONS

The percent of employers that said they had a separation increased from 65% to 72% in 2019.

65 TO 72%



QUIT

71%  
2017

79%  
2018

81%  
2019

Eighty-one percent of employers had at least one employee quit compared to 79% in the previous year. Nearly a third of employers experienced a retirement in their workplace with Manufacturing having the highest retirements reported at 38%.

## RETENTION CONCERNS

Last year we asked job seekers in our *Job Satisfaction Survey* what are the most important factors for staying in a job. The top two responses mentioned **"Regular increases in pay"** and **"Feeling that my role is valued and my work is recognized by my employer."** In this year's EmployerOne survey, employers reported the same two responses as their top strategies for retention. Employers are on the right track!

### What retention strategies are employers using to encourage retention?

Regular increases in salary **60%**

Recognition for service and/or outstanding work **45%**

Training opportunities **41%**

Employee "perks" (ie, discounts on merchandise, company-branded clothing, staff...) **35%**

Clear promotional paths or advancement opportunities **28%**

Job flexibility (ie, work from home arrangements, flex time, job sharing) **26%**

**Retention** is top of mind for many employers as 65% saying it is a concern for their organization

## SUCCESSION PLAN

41%

of employers had a succession plan in place. It was mostly among larger-sized employers.

## SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

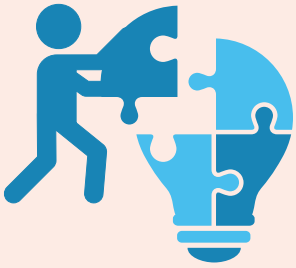
Sectors with the highest percent of employers stating retention is a concern:

- Healthcare and social assistance (74%)
- Manufacturing (72%)
- Construction (68%)



# SKILLS, SKILLS, SKILLS

Skills are vitally important in today's job market. WPH has noted over the past two years that technical skills have moved up in importance in the top competencies needed by employers. This year we asked employers for more details about essential and technical skills to better understand the needs in our community.



**In broad terms skills can be broken down into three main categories:**

**TECHNICAL SKILLS** are teachable occupation specific skills

**SOFT SKILLS** are psychological/emotional competencies

**ESSENTIAL SKILLS** are a combination of soft and technical skills. They are the skills needed for work, learning and life. They provide the foundation for learning technical skills, workplace safety and help people evolve with jobs and adapt to workplace change. Without these foundational skills, employees will struggle to perform their roles

## SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

Employers that identify more with technical skills are:

- Construction (72%)
- Professional, scientific, and technical services (71%)
- Manufacturing (68%)

Employers that identify more with soft skills are:

- Accommodation and food services (83%)
- Retail trade (61%)
- Health care and social assistance (61%)

## WHICH SKILLS ARE MOST IN DEMAND?

**49%**  
**SOFT SKILLS**

(Psychological/emotional competencies)

**51%**  
**TECHNICAL SKILLS**

(Teachable/occupation specific skills)



It is nearly evenly split among employers between which skills are most sought after between soft skills and technical skills. Both are important for employers but the demands may change depending on the occupation.

## TOP SOFT SKILLS

Soft skills are crucial for many employers. The top 5 soft skills are almost identical to previous years. **Dependability** and **Work ethic** continue to be most demanded soft skills by employers.

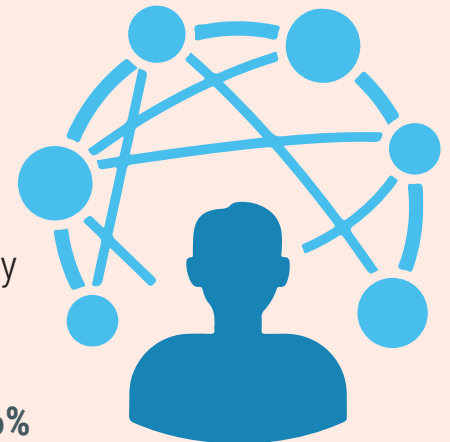
Dependability **44%**

Work ethic **44%**

Teamwork/  
interpersonal **34%**

Self-motivated/ability  
to work with little or  
no supervision **33%**

Customer service **26%**



*"I find that is hard to find staff with great work ethic that are dependable and able to follow policies."*

## TOP TECHNICAL SKILLS

The top technical skills needed by employers included a wide range of skills. Digital skills was a technical skill recognized across nearly all industries. The use of digital skills is becoming important across most jobs. Digital skills requirements appear in entry-level jobs such as retail salesperson through to more highly skilled jobs such as advanced computer programmer. More information will be needed in future surveys to differentiate the digital skills needed in different industries.



### Top technical skills include<sup>1</sup>:

- Digital skills (Basic computer skills/technology literate, Microsoft Office, Database Management, Google Suite, Computer networking, Specialized computer programming, Social media skills)
- Math skills (Construction and Manufacturing)
- Mechanical skills (Construction and Manufacturing)
- Medical terminology
- Food Preparation (Baking, Meat cutting, Barista skills)
- Construction skills (Tool skills, Measurement skills)



## CERTIFICATIONS/DIPLOMAS

This year we asked employers to identify any certifications needed among their employees. Some of the most commonly mentioned certifications are:

- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System Certificate (WHMIS)
- AZ Driver's license; General Driver's license
- Personal Support Worker Certificate
- Certified Professional Accountant/Bookkeeping
- Food Handling Certificate
- Forklift Certificate
- Smart Serve
- Various skilled trades Certificate of Qualification's
- Working at Heights Certificate
- High school Diploma
- Professional Engineering Certificate
- Registered Nurse
- Welding

*"Very hard to find young people who have technical skills and still willing to get dirty and lift weights."*

## SECTOR HIGHLIGHTS

Sector with the highest number of employers stating essential skills were a problem among entry-level employees

- Manufacturing (56% of employers)
- Construction (50%)

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS

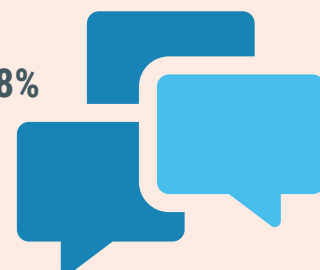
To further clarify the skills challenges faced by employers, WPH asked about their expectations for essential skills in their workforce.

# 40%

of employers state entry-level employees **lack essential skills**

### What essential skills are lacking among entry-level employees?

- Thinking **48%**
- Working with others **44%**
- Oral communication **41%**
- Continuous learning **32%**
- Computer/Digital Skills **28%**
- Writing **22%**
- Numeracy **20%**
- Document Use **18%**
- Reading **17%**



<sup>1</sup> The analysis for the technical skills identified in this report was challenging. Most reported technical skills have been grouped to create broader categories.

## About Workforce Planning Hamilton

Workforce Planning Hamilton is a community-based economic and labour market research and development organization. WPH works with a broad range of stakeholders including business, labour and employment service organizations to understand the employment needs in Hamilton. WPH is funded by the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. Visit our website for other labour market information [www.workforceplanninghamilton.ca](http://www.workforceplanninghamilton.ca)