

District Employer Survey Results

Background

The College conducted a district employer survey in Spring of 2017. The main purpose of the survey was to ascertain employer training needs, awareness of PSC’s academic and CED offerings, use of PSC services, and opportunities for future partnership and collaboration.

Clarus Corporation was hired to design and implement the survey. Primary focus was placed on contacting employers in healthcare, construction, manufacturing, transportation/communication/utilities, finance/insurance/real estate, and public administration industries. Clarus conducted phone interviews with 129 district employers with five or more employees.

Summary Results

Sixty-eight percent of respondents reported facing barriers to growth and profitability, and cited these top three reasons:

- Economy in the State of Illinois
- Lack of qualified staff and applicants
- Government regulations

Thirty-percent (30%) of the respondents had difficulty filling positions in the past year, and the reasons for this difficulty are cited in Chart #1. Overall, these were entry-level positions and only require a high school degree, and could lead to non-credit vocational certificates or credit career technical certificates.

Some type of continuing education, including Continuing Education Units (CEUs), is required by employers (see Chart #2).

The major areas in which employers plan to train employees in the next year include Safety, Welding, Hazardous Materials (Hazmat), OSHA, Forklift Operation, Supervisory Training, Firefighting, Sexual Harassment, and Computer Numerical Control (CNC). However, the percent of employers who plan to contract out these trainings varied in each industry from 0% to 34% (see Chart # 3).

When asked about training delivery preferences, the second most frequently mentioned method used by employers (after hands-on training - 82%) is classroom or instructor-led training on site (71%). Forty-eight percent

Chart #1: Reasons Cited for Difficulty Filling Vacant Positions In Last Year



Chart #2: Continuing Education Required

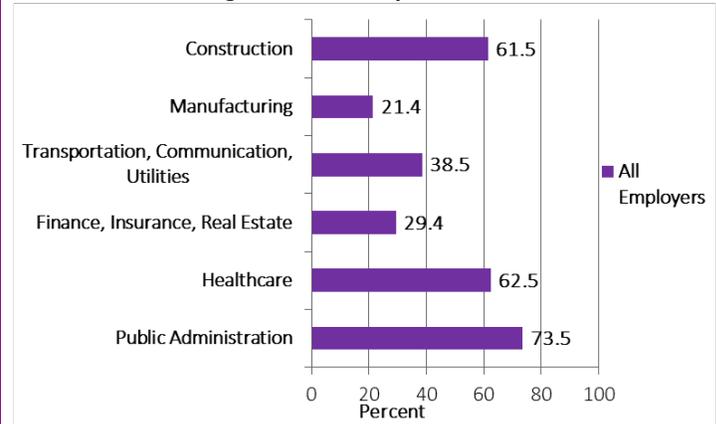
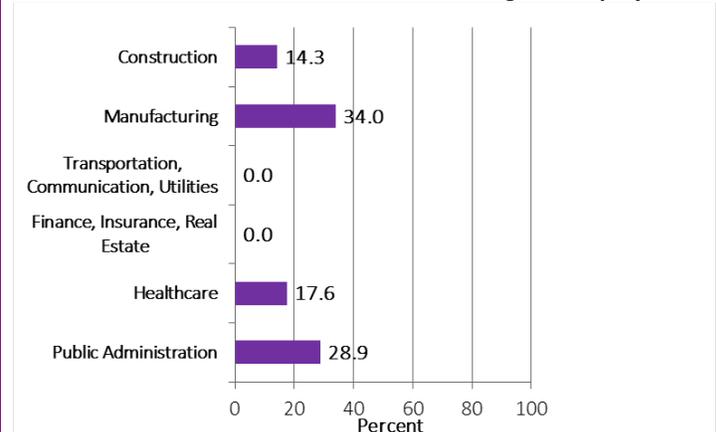


Chart #3: Plan to Contract Out Future Training For Employees



use computer-based training modules for individuals; forty-six percent use web-based training; forty-four percent use off-site classroom or instructor-led training.

Employers are offering tuition reimbursement to their employees (see Chart #4). However, survey results indicate that tuition reimbursement dollars are going unused.

Two-thirds of the respondents consider PSC a resource for employers, but the College does not have top-of-mind awareness as a provider of outside training. When asked about future use of Prairie State educational opportunities the following areas were identified:

- Non-credit short-term career/vocational certificates
- Credit certificates and AAS degrees
- Associate degrees transferring to Bachelor's degrees

Interest in collaborating with Prairie State was strongest in the public administration industry, followed by the manufacturing industry, and then healthcare. Overall, the opportunity to *participate in the College's activities to educate students about future jobs* was of highest interest, followed by *providing internship and apprenticeship opportunities*. See Chart #5 for details.

The employers were favorable about the prospect of hiring Prairie State graduates. Overall, 77% (on the low side) to 89% (high side) of employers by industry group would consider hiring a graduate of Prairie State College. Of the employers who indicated that they have hired a PSC graduate, 100% were satisfied or very satisfied with the employee.

A small group, comprised of Vice Presidents and Deans from CED and Academic Affairs, met to discuss the survey results, focusing on areas for improvement. Four actions were recommended to President Winfree and Cabinet, and will be implemented:

1. Create and enhance communications and marketing to local employers.
2. Expand/re-envision our Career Placement Center, including increasing efforts to develop student internships and externships.
3. Increase efforts to develop student apprenticeships.
4. Reach out to businesses who indicated a desire for further contact with PSC, including those who indicated an interest in the survey results.

Chart #4: Educational Incentives Offered to Employees

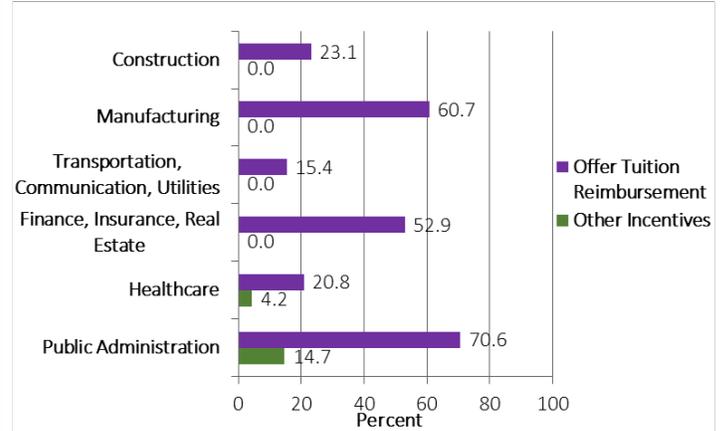


Chart 5: Collaboration with Prairie State College

