



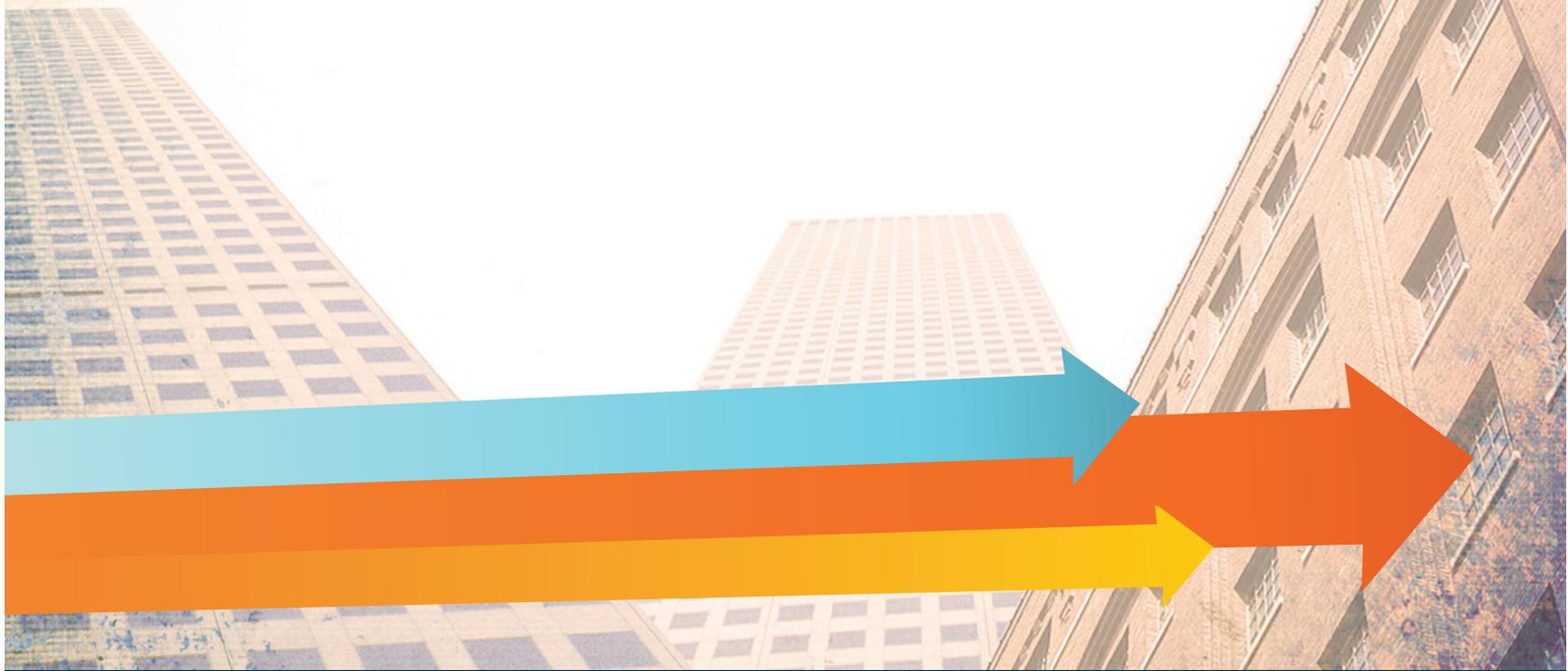
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State of the Workforce Event

**2015 State of the Workforce Survey
Executive Summary**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Results from the 2015 State of the Workforce Survey are based on 368 completed online surveys of businesses and educational institutions within the seven-county Ozark Region (Greene, Taney, Christian, Webster, Polk, Dallas, and Stone). Survey results have a +/- 5% margin of error at the 95% confidence interval. The Ozark Region Workforce Investment Board (WIB), in partnership with the Missouri Career Center, sponsored the survey.

With assistance from the WIB and the Missouri Career Center, the survey was designed, administered, and analyzed by **Opinion Research Specialists, LLC** of Springfield, Missouri. Survey findings are summarized below.

Survey Participants Identified by Sector and Number of Employees

- The majority of organizations participating in the survey were for-profit (63%), followed by nonprofit/community-based organizations (15%), educational institutions (13%), and governmental entities (9%).
- 51% of participating organizations had less than 50 employees (full-time and part-time), 26% had between 50 and 199 employees, and 23% had 200 or more employees. Organizations ranged in size from one employee to 13,000 employees.

Skill Deficiencies of Job Applicants

- Communication skills (written, verbal, and nonverbal) as well as job-specific knowledge/technical skills were the most frequently identified skill deficiencies of job applicants (each mentioned by nearly 50% of survey respondents).
- Personal hygiene and appearance of job applicants was a major concern among 35% of organizations surveyed.

Employee Improvement Needed

- More than 85% of respondents indicated that “most” or “some” of their current employees needed improvement in the areas of problem solving, time management, critical thinking/decision making, and leadership.

Jobs/Positions Requiring a STEM Background

- 71% of respondents reported that at least some of their jobs/positions required employees to have a background in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.

Occupational Fields of Greatest Demand in the Next Five-to-Ten Years

- The top three occupational fields that organizations will look to recruit from over the next five-to-ten years are business, management, and administration; marketing, sales, and service; and information technology/computer science.

Impact of the Affordable Care Act on Employment Levels

- As a consequence of the Affordable Care Act, 18% of those surveyed said the number of full-time employees in their organization would decrease, while 20% said the number of part-time employees (< 30 hours) would increase.

Impact of the Affordable Care Act on Employer Provided Health Insurance

- 9% of those surveyed said the number of employees offered health insurance through their organization would increase as a result of the Affordable Care Act, while 13% said the ACA would lead to a decrease. A majority (56%) did not think the ACA would have a significant impact on this issue one way or the other.

Benefits and Training Opportunities Offered to Full-Time Employees

- More than half of the organizations surveyed said their full-time employees were offered one or more of the following benefits: paid vacations/holidays, medical insurance, retirement plans, and professional development/training opportunities.

Organizational Hiring Plans

- Between 25% and 30% of organizations planned to hire additional full-time and/or part-time employees over the next **12 months**, while 6% to 12% anticipated layoffs.
- Between 40% and 50% of organizations planned to hire additional full-time and/or part-time employees over the next **three-to-five years**, while 6% anticipated layoffs.

Evaluating Graduates Hired From Area Educational Institutions

- 77% of organizations surveyed had recently hired graduates from one or more area colleges/universities and 84% rated the overall level of preparation of these graduates as satisfactory.
- 53% of organizations had recently hired graduates from one or more area community colleges or vocational/technical schools and 82% rated the overall level of preparation of these graduates as satisfactory.
- 61% of organizations had recently hired graduates from one or more area high schools and 60% rated the overall level of preparation of these graduates as satisfactory.

Evaluating Overall Performance of Area Schools

- 58% of respondents rated area schools favorably in terms of providing students with the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in today's workforce.

Partnering with Area Schools

- 35% of organizations surveyed said they were currently working with area schools (high school, community colleges, universities) to design curriculum and/or training programs to help develop the skills necessary for students to succeed in their industry.
- Of those not currently partnering with areas schools, about 60% expressed some level of interest in doing so with community colleges or universities, and 46% with area high schools.

Impact of Community Quality of Life in Attracting/Retaining Employees

- 79% considered the quality of life in their community to be a strength with respect to attracting and retaining workers in their organization – 12% considered it a weakness.

Employee Retirements

- Overall, organizations expected about 3% of their workforce to retire in the next 12 months, 6% in three years, and 10% in five years.
- Educational institutions were the most likely sector to face retirements.