

study: springs labor is plentiful

companies looking to move here shouldn't fear job saturation, edc-funded study says

By wAyNE hEILMAN
The gAZeTTe

Nearly 66,000 people living within a 50-mile radius of Colorado Springs are underemployed and would take a better job if one were available, according to a new study conducted by a Dallas-based labor market research firm.

When combined with more than 35,000 unemployed residents and another 5,000 people who would come out of retirement or return to work for the right job, the study found a potential labor pool of 106,600 for employers looking to add staff. The study was completed last month by The Pathfinders, a Dallas economic development and corporate site selection consulting firm, by interviewing 700 households and 18 businesses.

The Colorado Springs Regional Economic Development Corp. commissioned the study to combat growing concerns about labor availability. Corporate site selection consultants and companies considering opening call centers and customer service operations have expressed concerns that the Springs area is saturated with such operations. The Pikes Peak Workforce Center and Colorado Technical University cosponsored the \$24,000 study.

"While Colorado Springs has a great pool of labor for (the call center) industry, some employers may feel that the market may be too saturated to position themselves as the preferred employer in the market," said Brian Allen, a research analyst in labor analytics for the Phoenix office of CB Richard Ellis Inc. "Our clients are generally looking for areas with a low saturation of other call centers in their same industry."

Labor availability is the biggest issue for any economic development project, and "if it is perceived that a region does not meet a company's work force requirements, then they will not even consider the region," said David White, EDC's executive vice president of marketing. The report already has helped the nonprofit recruiting group convince two companies that the Springs can meet their work force needs, he said. He declined to name the prospects.

The study shows the Springs has plenty of available labor for incoming

— employers because they typically hire workers who are underemployed and seeking a better job that would pay about \$2 an hour more than their current jobs, Dianne White, vice president of The Pathfinders, said during a press conference Thursday at the Cheyenne Mountain Resort about the report's findings.

The 66,000 underemployed residents make up 10.6 percent of the population and include workers whose skills and experience are not fully used in their current jobs, are making less than others with similar experience and education or are working less than full time. The area's supply of underemployed people is similar to other areas of the nation, said David Brandon, senior vice president of Dallas-based Site Selection Group.

The area's pool of underemployed workers are "reasonably well-educated with solid experience for many of the industries" that EDC is trying to recruit to the Springs, Brandon said. That pool includes 18,500 former information technology workers, most of whom have engineering and system analysis experience, as well as former workers in the manufacturing sector, the study found.

"These workers stayed here and were willing to work for lower wages because of the lifestyle of this region," Brandon said. "Colorado Springs has a reasonable likelihood of attracting employers for those workers because there are many projects out there in the marketplace, especially for companies from California, that find the lifestyle here matches their expectations."

**THE
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO
AREA
LABOR AVAILABILITY REPORT**

September, 2008

**Compiled and Prepared by
THE PATHFINDERS**



Dallas, Texas

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INTRODUCTION

The Pathfinders has employed its experience in workforce assessments for corporate site-selection clients and civilian workforce assessments for the Department of Defense in locations that faced military base closures to produce this evaluation of the Colorado Springs, Colorado area workforce. The information presented in this report has been developed independently of the client, and the client has not influenced the findings.

The Pathfinders functions as a site-selection consultant to many of America's largest corporations, including companies such as AT&T, DuPont, Celanese, 3M Corporation, IMC Global, Singapore Aerospace, AIG, UPS, and Lockheed Martin. The question that most often drives the search for a new business location is whether the candidate location has the workforce needed, and a workforce analysis has been a key component of the site searches conducted for these clients. Senior human resources executives from among corporate clients assisted in refining this methodology and report format. Companies making location decisions based upon these surveys have reported that when staffing actually began, the numbers reported by The Pathfinders proved to be accurate.

In a poll of its corporate clients, The Pathfinders found that those clients' experiences suggest that new hires for new operations typically do not come from the ranks of the unemployed. Instead, these clients and other companies staff a new operation principally with individuals who are working but who desire better jobs and who appear to possess the skills, education, and experience to qualify them for those better jobs. By that definition, those individuals can be considered "underemployed" and are identified as such in this report. The type of quality employer that the Colorado Springs region is attempting to attract will typically hire people who come from this group. As a consequence, The Pathfinders was retained to quantify the extent to which underemployment exists in the area, as well as to document the cost, skills, experience, and education of that hidden workforce. This report represents the objective and professional view of The Pathfinders with regard to workforce availability, cost, skills, and quality that a new employer can expect in the Colorado Springs region.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The Colorado Springs area, referred to in this report as the “labor shed”, has a household population of approximately 1,129,600 and a civilian labor force of approximately 621,500.
- The labor shed has a pool of approximately 35,600 unemployed persons who are actively seeking work.
- A new employer will be able to attract employees from an additional pool of about 65,900 workers. These individuals are currently employed and have indicated an interest in changing jobs.
- These potentially available workers are referred to in this report as the “underemployed” because they appear to possess the skills, experience, and education to qualify them for the pay rates at which they would take a new job.
- The desired pay rates of these underemployed workers are reasonable when compared to their existing pay rates. The median current pay rate of the underemployed workers is \$16.40 per hour, and the median desired pay rate of the underemployed workers is \$18.74 per hour.
- About 25% of the underemployed workers would take a new job for \$11.97 per hour or less. At the upper end, the 25% most qualified and experienced will command more than \$25.59 per hour.
- Roughly 5,100 people, neither employed nor actively seeking work, might re-enter the workforce for the proper job.
- In total, the Colorado Springs area has approximately 106,600 available workers for new or expanding businesses.



METHODOLOGY

Published government statistics report wages and employment for the entire workforce of an area, even though most of that workforce has no interest in changing jobs. This report, prepared by The Pathfinders, includes data on those people in the area who desire to change jobs and who would be potential candidate workers for a new employer. As opposed to average wages, this report quantifies the number of those workers available for an employer in various wage ranges. Also included as potential workers are the unemployed who are actively seeking work and that segment of individuals who might consider re-entering the workforce for a good job.

The first step in assessing the workforce of the Colorado Springs area was to determine the boundaries of the area to be assessed. To accomplish this task, The Pathfinders applied the same reasoning that would be used during a site search for a corporate client considering the area as a potential location. The Colorado Springs survey area includes those locations from which workers might be drawn to a new employer and is referred to in this report as the “labor shed”. This labor shed is an approximate 50-mile radius around Colorado Springs and includes Douglas, El Paso and Teller Counties and portions of Elbert, Fremont, Jefferson, Lincoln, Park and Pueblo Counties in Colorado.

Once the labor shed was identified, a random sample of telephone numbers of qualified respondents in the labor shed was obtained for use in the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing or CATI system.

The Pathfinders then conducted telephone interviews with individuals throughout the Colorado Springs region. Those individuals were proportionally stratified across age, household income, and zip codes. The purpose of these interviews was to ascertain availability for work with a new employer; determine desired pay rates; and, collect information on such factors as age, education, commuting patterns, experience, and skills.



The data obtained as a result of those interviews enabled The Pathfinders to apply and employ a proprietary methodology that accurately determined the existence of underemployment as defined in the introduction.

The Pathfinders applied a proprietary process to the analysis of the data to correct for invalid responses. For example, those persons indicating they would take a new job but also indicating the desire for increased or decreased pay that is unreasonable are not counted in the results.

This process considers that to be counted as underemployed, an individual must be currently employed full-time and willing to take another job at a pay rate commensurate with personal skills, education, and experience.

Current pay alone is not the qualifying factor for underemployment status in this study. Individuals, for example, making \$7.50 per hour, possessing no high school degree or skills, and being in the workforce for less than one year may consider themselves to be underemployed but are not considered to be so in this report. On the other hand, education, skills, and experience may qualify the person making \$22.00 per hour as truly underemployed.

Irrespective of the fact that the methodology employed is scientifically proven to produce such results, it is perhaps even more important to note that companies making location decisions based upon these surveys have reported that when staffing actually began, the numbers reported by The Pathfinders proved to be accurate.



ASSESSMENT OF THE WORKFORCE

The Colorado Springs area labor shed has a household population of approximately 1,129,600. The civilian labor force numbers approximately 621,500, and the labor shed contains approximately 35,600 unemployed people who are actively seeking work.

The results of this assessment determined that approximately 65,900 workers can be defined as underemployed: those individuals who are currently working but would take a better job if offered by a new or existing employer and who appear to possess the skills, education, and experience to qualify them to do so. Further, the results suggest that an additional 5,100 people who are not currently employed or actively seeking work would consider re-entering the workforce. In total, the Colorado Springs area has approximately 106,600 available workers for new or existing employers.

AVAILABLE WORKERS

Number of underemployed workers	65,900
Number of unemployed persons who are actively seeking work	35,600
Number of persons who are not working, but would consider re-entering the workforce	5,100
Total Number of Workers Available for Employers	106,600

The reader is cautioned that, while the number of underemployed workers identified in the region, as well as their skills, experience, education, and costs, is accurate, all of those individuals may not be acceptable candidates for an employer. Their previous work records, stability, integrity, intelligence, appearance, and other factors are not considered in this report.



These underemployed workers might also be termed “upgraders”. They desire to move into an upgraded job and appear to possess the skills, education, and experience to enable them to do so. The pay rates they expect to achieve range from under \$10.00 to over \$30.00 per hour. The following data represent the desired pay rates of the underemployed individuals in the labor shed. Many workers expressed their wage requirements in weekly, monthly, or annual terms, but all wage figures in this report are presented in hourly rates. Selected conversions may add perspective to the hourly rates. Figures presented below are rounded and based on a 40-hour workweek.

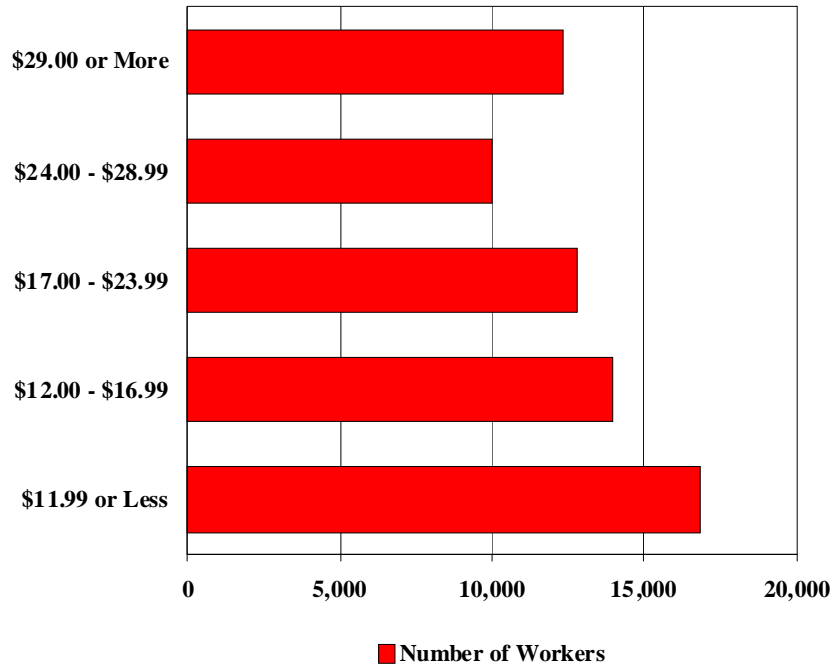
CONVERSION CHART

Hourly	Weekly	Monthly	Annually
\$ 10.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 1,733.00	\$ 20,800.00
\$ 12.00	\$ 480.00	\$ 2,080.00	\$ 24,960.00
\$ 14.00	\$ 560.00	\$ 2,427.00	\$ 29,120.00
\$ 16.00	\$ 640.00	\$ 2,773.00	\$ 33,280.00
\$ 18.00	\$ 720.00	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 37,440.00
\$ 20.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 3,467.00	\$ 41,600.00
\$ 22.00	\$ 880.00	\$ 3,813.00	\$ 45,760.00
\$ 24.00	\$ 960.00	\$ 4,160.00	\$ 49,920.00
\$ 26.00	\$ 1,040.00	\$ 4,507.00	\$ 54,080.00
\$ 28.00	\$ 1,120.00	\$ 4,853.00	\$ 58,240.00
\$ 30.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 5,200.00	\$ 62,400.00
\$ 32.00	\$ 1,280.00	\$ 5,547.00	\$ 66,560.00
\$ 34.00	\$ 1,360.00	\$ 5,893.00	\$ 70,720.00



DESIRED WAGE RATES PER HOUR BY RANGE

65,900 Underemployed Workers



NUMBER OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS AVAILABLE

AT SPECIFIC WAGE RATES PER HOUR (rounded)

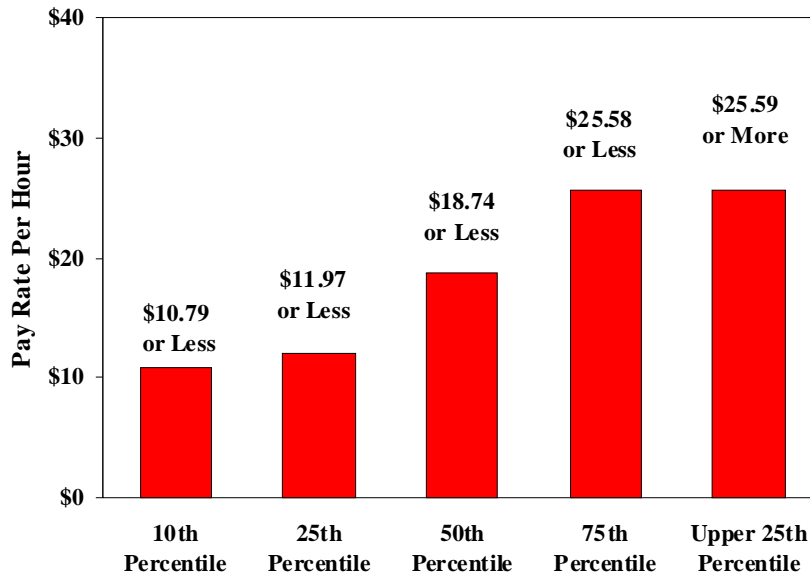
<u>\$10.99 or Less</u> 8,400	<u>\$11.00 - \$11.99</u> 8,400	<u>\$12.00 - \$12.99</u> 2,800	<u>\$13.00 - \$13.99</u> 1,400	<u>\$14.00 - \$14.99</u> 2,800
<u>\$15.00 - \$15.99</u> 4,200	<u>\$16.00 - \$16.99</u> 2,800	<u>\$17.00 - \$17.99</u> 100	<u>\$18.00 - \$18.99</u> 2,800	<u>\$19.00 - \$19.99</u> 2,800
<u>\$20.00 - \$20.99</u> 4,200	<u>\$21.00 - \$21.99</u> 2,800	<u>\$22.00 - \$23.99</u> 100	<u>\$24.00 - \$24.99</u> 4,200	<u>\$25.00 - \$25.99</u> 2,800
<u>\$26.00 - \$26.99</u> 100	<u>\$27.00 - \$27.99</u> 100	<u>\$28.00 - \$28.99</u> 2,800	<u>\$29.00 - \$29.99</u> 1,400	<u>\$30.00 or More</u> 10,900



Utilizing the desired wage information as illustrated in the preceding charts, the following conclusions can be drawn concerning the underemployed workers in the Colorado Springs area:

- 10% of the underemployed workers will require \$10.79 per hour or less to change jobs.
- 25% of the underemployed workers will require \$11.97 per hour or less to change jobs.
- 50% of the underemployed workers will require \$18.74 per hour or less to change jobs.
- 75% of the underemployed workers will require \$25.58 per hour or less to change jobs.
- The upper 25% of the underemployed workers will require wages beginning at \$25.59 per hour and extending upward to over \$30.00 per hour. These are the most qualified and experienced workers.

DESIRED WAGE RATES BY PERCENTILE

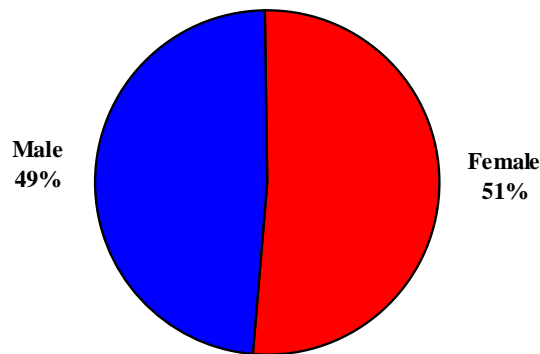


CHARACTERISTICS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

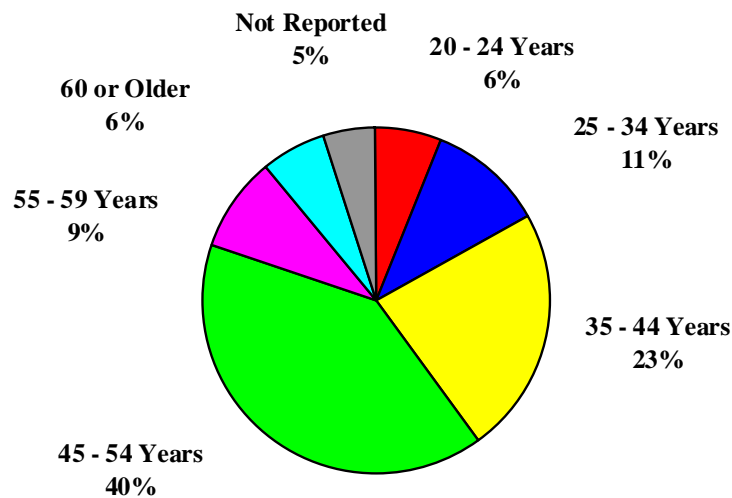
The Colorado Springs Area Labor Shed

The following charts provide information on various characteristics of the underemployed workers in the labor shed. **As these data relate solely to those individuals in the labor shed who are underemployed, they will vary from data representative of the population as a whole.**

UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS - GENDER

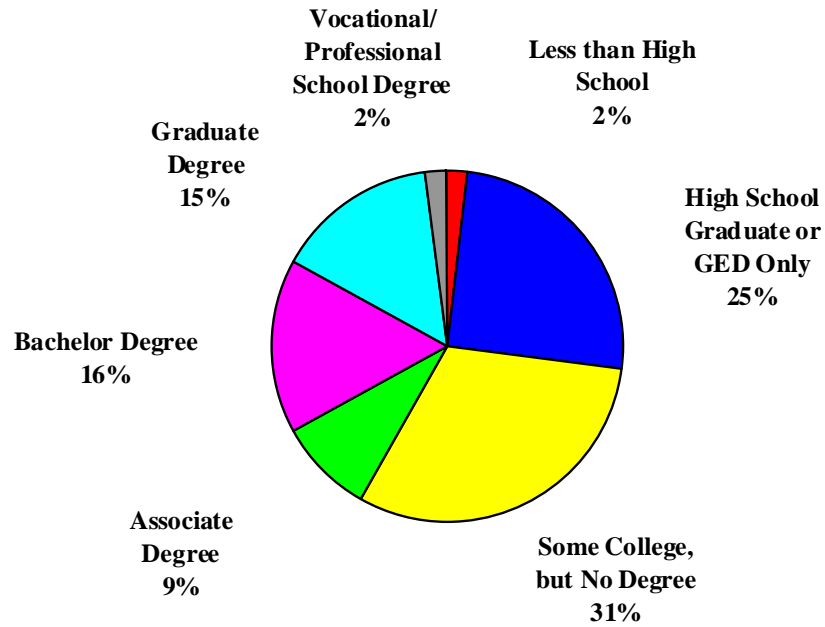


UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS - AGE



CHARACTERISTICS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

EDUCATION

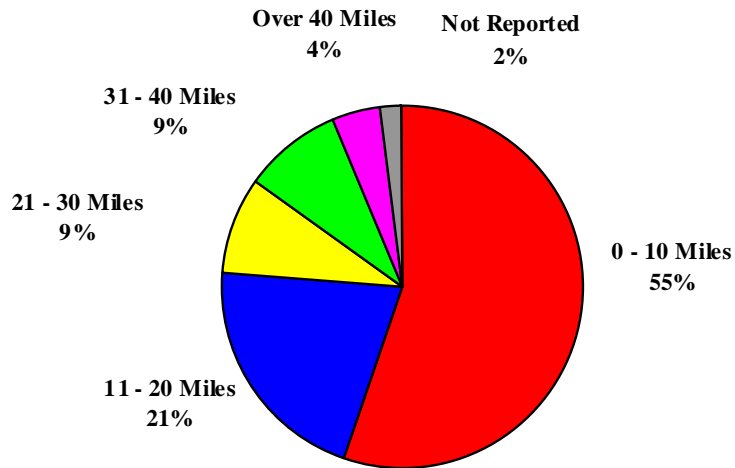


LENGTH OF TIME IN CURRENT JOB

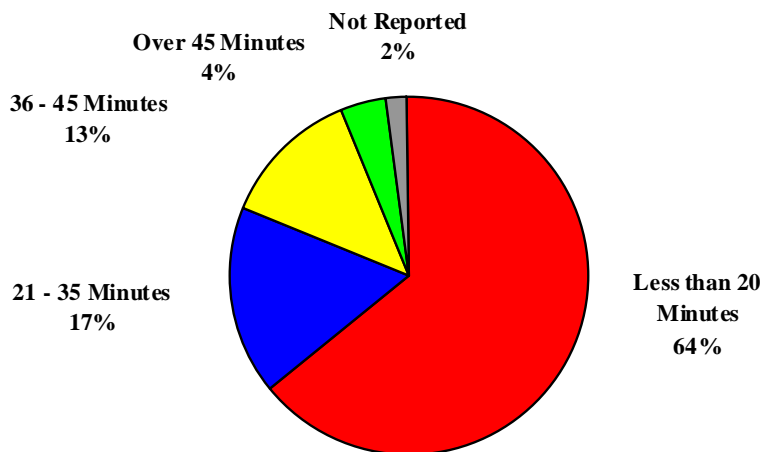


CHARACTERISTICS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

CURRENT COMMUTE DISTANCE

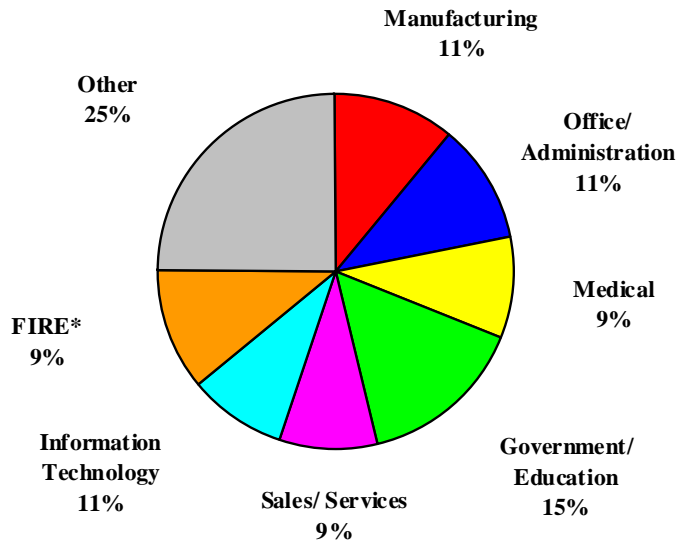


CURRENT COMMUTE TIME



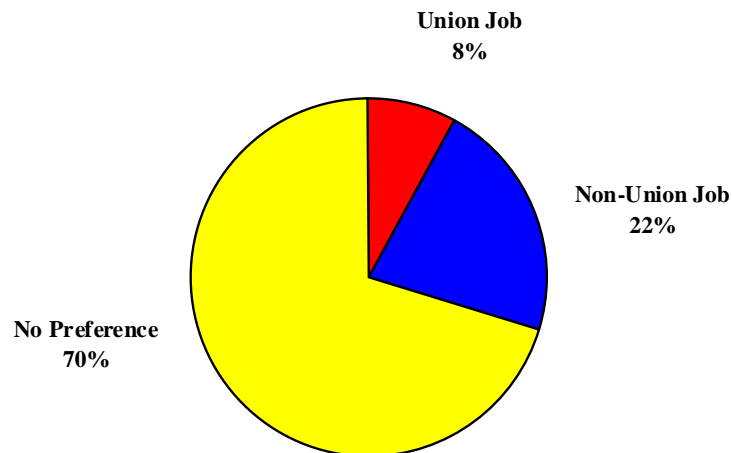
CHARACTERISTICS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

CURRENT SECTOR OF EMPLOYMENT



* FIRE – Finance/Insurance/Real Estate

UNION PREFERENCE



EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS – UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

The Colorado Springs Area Labor Shed

The experience and skills categories used in this report are designed to provide accurate workforce data for employers which fall into one or more of the following four broad groups:

- manufacturing, assembly, fabrication or other industrial operations;
- back office, data processing, call centers, information technology, customer service or sales operations;
- distribution or transportation operations; and,
- biotechnology, pharmaceuticals or medical research operations.

The experience and skills categories are purposefully similar in order to present the most accurate worker availability for operations in one of those four groups.

An employee in the front office of a manufacturing operation will be considered to have “manufacturing” experience but may only have “office” skills. Someone with “manufacturing” experience may not have “manufacturing” skills, but could have “materials handling” skills if they work in shipping or receiving. “Sales and customer service” experience crosses many other experience and skills categories and ideally would be possessed by anyone with customer contact to any degree.

The similarities between the skills and experience categories are designed to ensure inclusiveness considering the multitude of tasks and job titles present in most business, government and institutional operations. Additionally, what may appear to some observers as redundancy is, in reality, a proven mechanism to cross-check the validity of responses and to identify the degree to which workplace and professional competencies are truly transferable to new positions and employers.



EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS**The Colorado Springs Area Labor Shed****65,900 Underemployed Workers**

Experience Category*	Total Number of Persons Experienced**	Percentage of Total Underemployed	Average Number of Years of Experience
Customer Service	47,400	72%	7
Office Operations	43,500	66%	11
Sales	37,600	57%	7
Warehouse/Distribution/Transportation	34,900	53%	9
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	28,300	43%	10
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	23,700	36%	8
Telecommunications	23,700	36%	7
Call Center	18,500	28%	5
Information Technology	18,500	28%	8
Medical/Health Sciences	12,500	19%	9

* **Individuals polled may have experience in more than one job classification.**

** **Rounded**

Survey results further indicate that in the information technology category, experience relating to the sub-categories of information technology engineering and systems analysis exists among the underemployed workers in the labor shed, as evidenced in the table on the following page.



Experience Category*	Total Number of Persons Experienced**
Information Technology	18,500
Information Technology Engineering	14,200
Systems Analysis	15,200

* **Individuals polled may have experience in more than one job category.**

** **Rounded**

Of the 18,500 underemployed workers who are experienced in information technology, 77% or 14,200 individuals, indicated experience in information technology engineering, including network engineering, software development engineering, cyber security engineering, test engineering or other related engineering.

Further, 82% or 15,200 underemployed workers, have systems analysis or systems architecture experience.



EMPLOYMENT SKILLS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS**The Colorado Springs Area Labor Shed****65,900 Underemployed Workers**

Skills*	Total Number of Persons Skilled**	Percentage of Total Underemployed
Office Operations	42,200	64%
Information Technology	34,900	53%
Warehouse/Materials Handling	31,000	47%
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	29,700	45%
Technician/Quality Assurance	26,400	40%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	22,400	34%
Telecommunications	22,400	34%
Medical/Health Sciences	11,200	17%
Electronics/Engineering	9,900	15%

* **Individuals polled may have skills in more than one job classification.**

** **Rounded**

Survey results further indicate that in the information technology category, skills relating to the sub-categories of information technology engineering and systems analysis exist among the underemployed workers in the labor shed, as evidenced in the table on the following page.



Skills Category*	Total Number of Persons Skilled**
Information Technology	34,900
Information Technology Engineering	26,500
Systems Analysis	22,300

* **Individuals polled may have skills in more than one job category.**

** **Rounded**

Of the 34,900 underemployed workers who are skilled in information technology, 76% or 26,500 individuals, indicated skills in information technology engineering, including network engineering, software development engineering, cyber security engineering, test engineering or other related engineering.

Further, 64% or 22,300 underemployed workers, have systems analysis or systems architecture skills.



FACTORS AFFECTING JOB DESIRABILITY
The Colorado Springs Area Labor Shed
65,900 Underemployed Workers

In an effort to identify those factors most important to the Colorado Springs underemployed workers relative to consideration of an employer's desirability, the surveyed individuals were asked to rate the following job factors on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being "extremely important" and 1 being "not important". The table below presents the ratings for each factor.

Factor	5 Extremely Important	4 Very Important	3 Important	2 Somewhat Important	1 Not Important
Salary	53%	23%	13%	5%	6%
Location	40%	36%	12%	6%	6%
Insurance Benefits	55%	21%	17%	1%	6%
Retirement Benefits	64%	22%	12%	1%	1%
Physical Working Environment	30%	23%	34%	5%	8%
Paid Training Programs	38%	38%	15%	7%	2%
Flexible Work Schedule	43%	28%	21%	4%	4%
Opportunity for Advancement	49%	32%	13%	2%	4%
Financial Stability of the Company	68%	21%	9%	1%	1%
Reputation of the Company	43%	28%	21%	4%	4%



In the table below, the factors are presented in order by “extremely important”. Bear in mind that the scores should be viewed in relation to each other. In other words, respondents ranked opportunity for advancement as more “extremely important” as a job factor than paid training programs, although such a ranking does not mean that workers in the Colorado Springs area consider paid training programs to be unimportant in their evaluation of new job opportunities.

Factor	Extremely Important
Financial Stability of the Company	68%
Retirement Benefits	64%
Insurance Benefits	55%
Salary	53%
Opportunity for Advancement	49%
Flexible Work Schedule	43%
Reputation of the Company	43%
Location	40%
Paid Training Programs	38%
Physical Working Environment	30%



INTEREST IN TRAINING COURSES
The Colorado Springs Area Labor Shed
65,900 Underemployed Workers

A component was added to this survey which was designed to determine possible interest in training courses on the part of the underemployed workers in the Colorado Springs workforce. In the table that follows, it should be noted that many of the respondents indicated interest in more than one program, therefore, the percent total will not equal 100.

Type of Training Course	Number of Persons	Percentage
Computer Software Applications	22,400	34%
Computer Programming	17,100	26%
Human Resources	17,100	26%
Computer Maintenance or Repair	15,200	23%
Health Care	15,200	23%
Real Estate or Insurance	11,200	17%
Technical Trades	9,900	15%
Construction Trades	8,600	13%
Lab Operations	8,600	13%
Industrial Machine Operations	7,200	11%
Auto or Maintenance Mechanics	7,200	11%
Commercial Vehicle Operations	2,600	4%
Restaurant/Retail Management	2,600	4%
GED or Basic Reading, Writing, Arithmetic	1,300	2%



UNEMPLOYED WORKERS

The Colorado Springs Area Labor Shed

This report documents two groups of unemployed individuals in the Colorado Springs area labor shed who would be available workers for a new or expanding business. The groups are classified as:

- Individuals who are actively seeking work
- Individuals who are considering re-entering the workforce

Published statistics document 35,600 unemployed workers in the labor shed who are actively seeking work. However, this number could possibly be higher since some of these potential workers may not be counted on the rolls of the state unemployment agencies.

Furthermore, the results of this survey suggest that an additional 5,100 people, who are not currently employed or actively seeking work, would consider re-entering the workforce. In total, the Colorado Springs area has approximately 40,700 unemployed individuals who are potential workers for a new or expanding employer.

UNEMPLOYED AVAILABLE WORKERS

Number of unemployed persons who are actively seeking work	35,600
Number of persons who are not working, but would consider re-entering the workforce	5,100
Total Number of Unemployed Workers Available for Employers	40,700

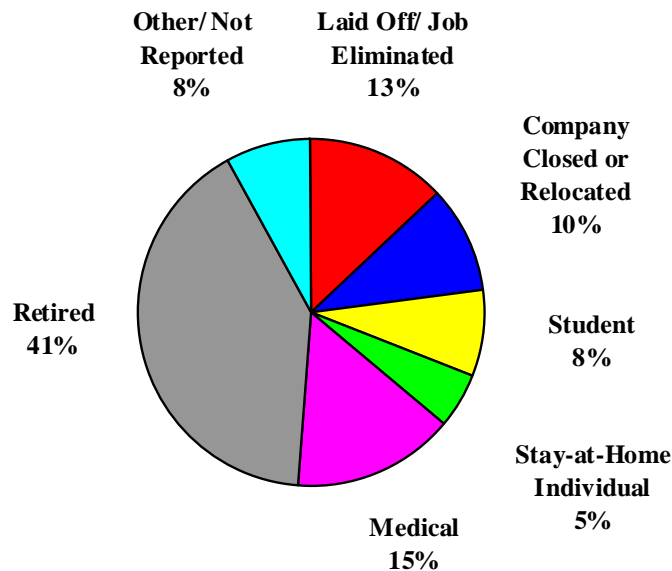


As stated previously, all of those individuals may not be acceptable candidates for an employer. Their previous work records, stability, integrity, intelligence, appearance, and other factors are not considered in this report.

Of the 5,100 individuals who would consider returning to the workforce, approximately 62% of them are female, and the group as a whole is five years older on average than the underemployed.

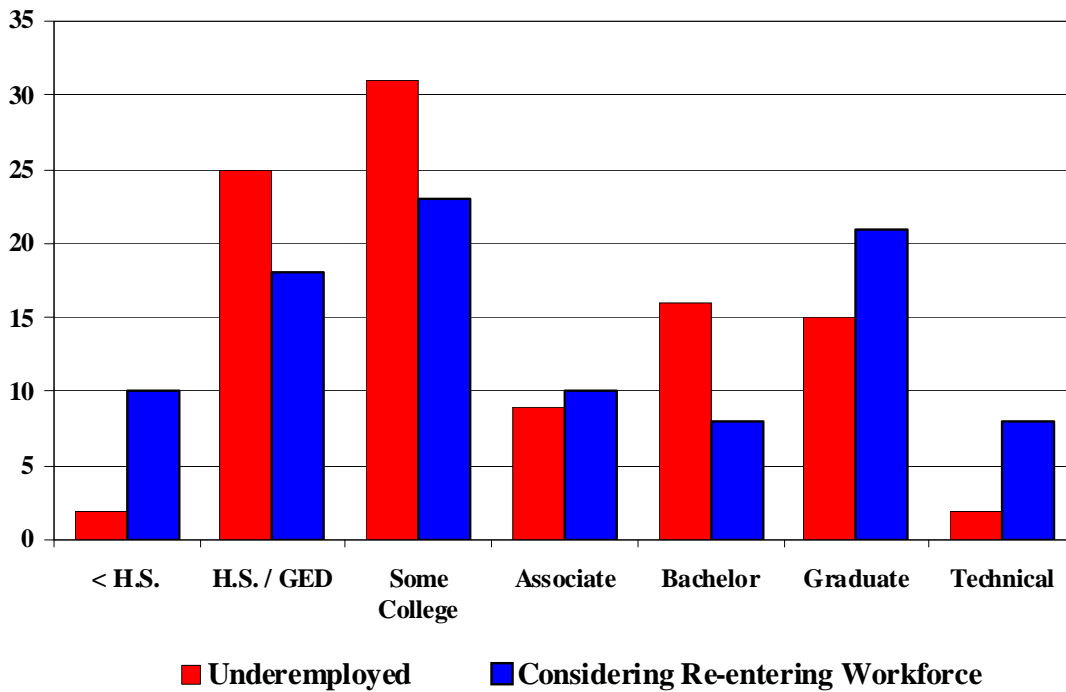
Survey results indicate that 41% of these potentially available workers are retired, and 23% are currently unemployed due to company closures, relocations, lay-offs or job eliminations. Survey findings also indicate that 5% of them are stay-at-home individuals and 8% are students. The remaining 23% of those who would consider returning to the workforce indicated their current unemployment status was due to medical-related conditions or other reasons. These findings are illustrated in the pie chart below.

REASONS FOR CURRENT UNEMPLOYMENT
5,100 Individuals Considering Re-Entering the Workforce



The education of this additional group of potential workers roughly mirrors that of the underemployed members of the workforce, albeit with somewhat higher concentrations of “Less than High School”, “Graduate Degree” and “Professional/Technical Degree”. Also noted is a slightly higher incidence of “Associate Degree” than that of the underemployed workers in the labor shed.

EDUCATION LEVELS Underemployed Individuals / Individuals Considering Re-entering Workforce



This group of available workers exhibits competitive measures of experience and skills in the areas of information technology/telecommunications; medical/health care; and, manufacturing.

The wages required by this group to re-enter the workforce are only slightly less than those of the underemployed, with \$17.25 per hour as the median. The lower quartile would take \$10.25 or less, and the upper quartile desires \$24.10 per hour or more.



With regard to desirability factors when considering whether or not to re-enter the workforce, the 5,100 potential workers in the labor shed rated financial stability of the company as the leading factor, much the same as the underemployed workers.

FACTORS AFFECTING JOB DESIRABILITY

5,100 Individuals Considering Re-Entering the Workforce

Desirability Factor	Extremely Important
Financial Stability of the Company	62%
Insurance Benefits	56%
Retirement Benefits	54%
Paid Training Programs	51%
Salary	49%
Opportunity for Advancement	44%
Reputation of the Company	44%
Location	44%
Flexible Work Schedule	41%
Physical Working Environment	33%



INTEREST IN TRAINING COURSES

5,100 Individuals Considering Re-Entering the Workforce

The training interests of the 5,100 individuals in the labor shed who would consider returning to the workforce closely resemble those of the underemployed. Human resources, health care, and computer-related courses appear to have the most appeal for both groups.

Type of Training Course	Number of Persons	Percentage
Computer Software Applications	1,700	33%
Computer Programming	1,700	33%
Human Resources	1,700	33%
Health Care	1,400	28%
Computer Maintenance or Repair	1,300	26%
Real Estate or Insurance	800	15%
Industrial Machine Operations	800	15%
Lab Operations	700	13%
Auto or Maintenance Mechanics	500	10%
Technical Trades	400	8%
Construction Trades	400	8%
Commercial Vehicle Operations	300	5%
Restaurant/Retail Management	300	5%
English as a Second Language	200	3%

Please note that the determinations for this segment of the workforce have a larger statistical variance than that for the underemployed.



EMPLOYERS' VIEWS OF THE THE COLORADO SPRINGS AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

In developing a profile of existing workers in the Colorado Springs region, The Pathfinders considered such factors as labor availability, productivity, unionization, attitudes, costs, and education. The analysis was based upon interviews conducted with senior management and human resources professionals from companies located in the labor shed. Each of these companies operated in the industrial, commercial, or service sectors. The interview sampling was sufficiently large to make valid workforce judgments.

As determined from the employer interviews, the table below reflects various methods used to recruit workers in the Colorado Springs region and the percent of employers utilizing that method. Many use more than one method, therefore, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

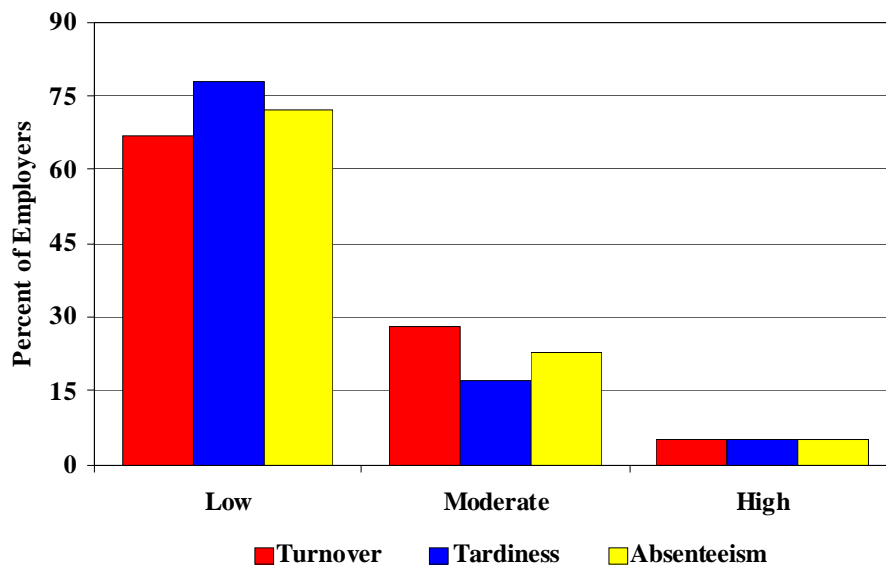
Recruiting Method	% of Employers
Internet	61%
Newspaper Ads	50%
State Agency	34%
Word of Mouth	33%
Referrals	28%
Recruiters	28%
Staffing/Temp Service	22%
Walk-Ins	11%
Colleges/Tech Schools	11%
Job Fair	11%



Employers with operations in other regions of the United States were asked to compare their experiences in those other areas with their experiences in the Colorado Springs region. Of those employers who had operations elsewhere, 82% stated that their Colorado Springs area operations were comparable to or better than the operations in other locations in terms of profitability and production. This is indicative not only of good management but also of a productive workforce.

Based upon the experience of The Pathfinders in evaluating labor forces in numerous locations, a definite correlation between productivity, absenteeism, tardiness, turnover, and substance abuse appears to exist. That correlation goes beyond the fact that an absent worker is obviously unproductive. Rather, those factors are indicative of an employee’s attitude toward the job. The chart below shows the percent of employers rating for turnover, tardiness and absenteeism in the Colorado Springs region.

**PERCENT OF EMPLOYERS RATING
THE COLORADO SPRINGS AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE**

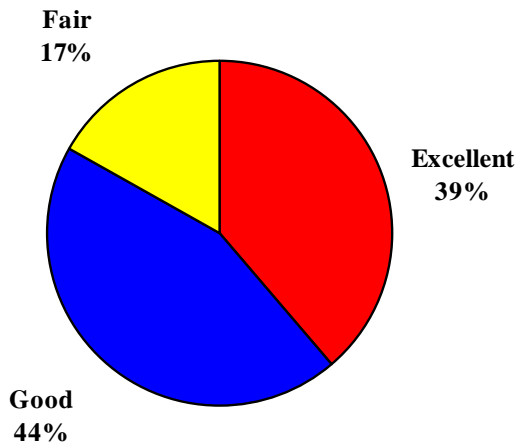


Additionally, in the Colorado Springs region, 67% of the employers interviewed stated their companies tested for substance abuse, primarily pre-employment. Collectively, substance abuse within the individual companies’ workforces was reported as very low.

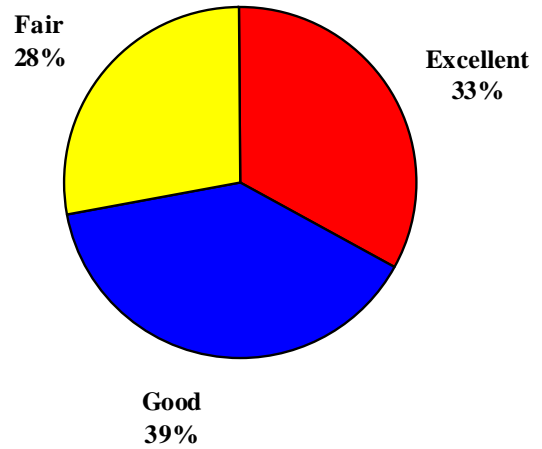


In consideration of all factors, 83% of the employers in the Colorado Springs area rated the productivity of the workforce as “Good” to “Excellent”. Worker reliability received high marks from 72% of the employers.

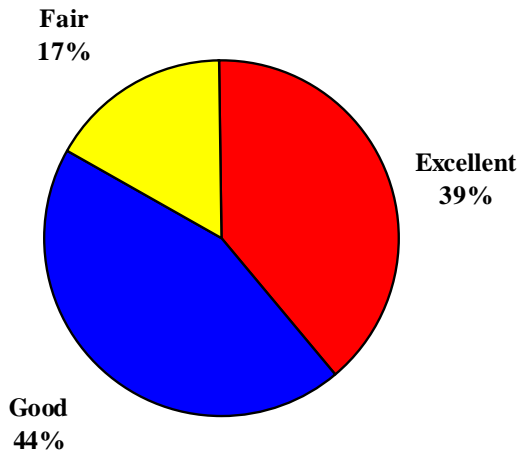
WORKER PRODUCTIVITY



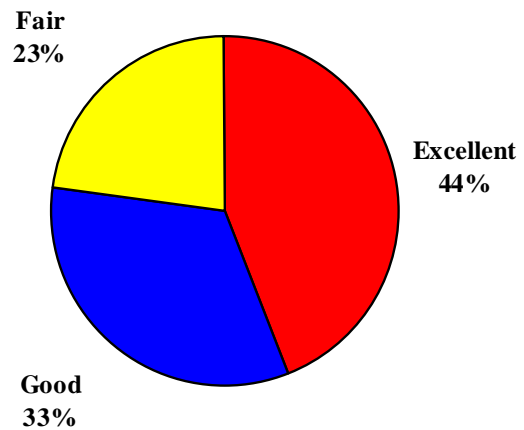
WORKER RELIABILITY



WORKER ATTITUDES

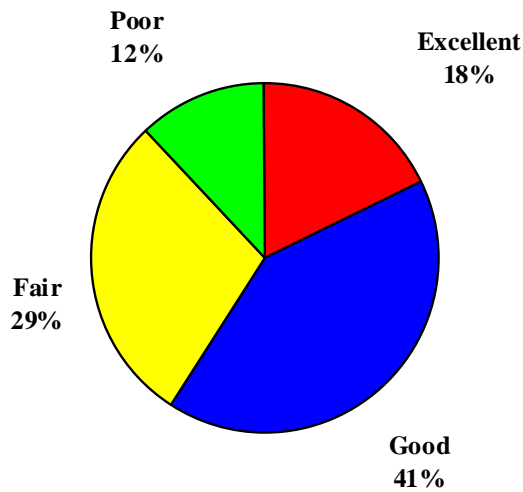


WORKER TEAMWORK SKILLS

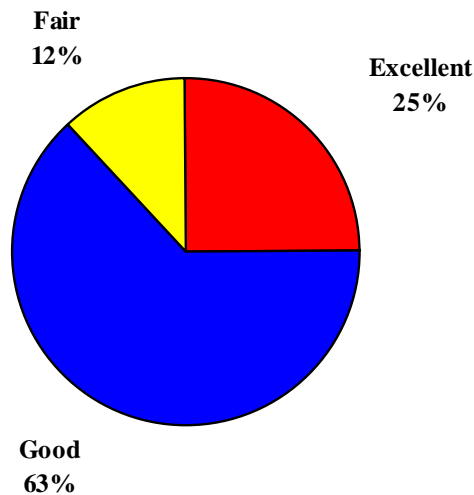


The educational competencies of employees are additional factors used to evaluate an area’s labor force. In the Colorado Springs area, 59% of the employers interviewed rated the local public schools as “Excellent” or “Good”, and 88% of the employers rated the local community colleges and technical schools as “Excellent” or “Good”.

LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

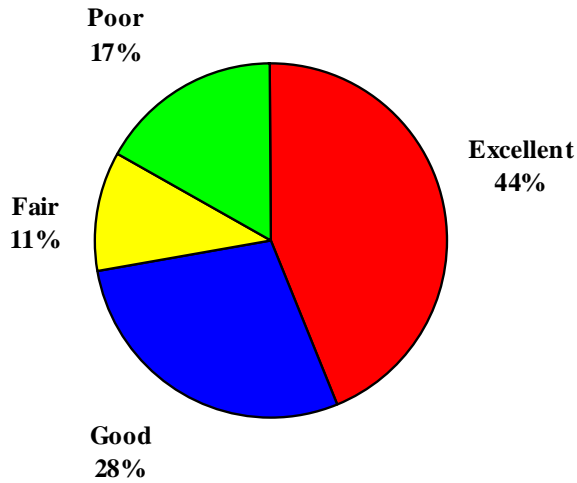


LOCAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND TECH SCHOOLS

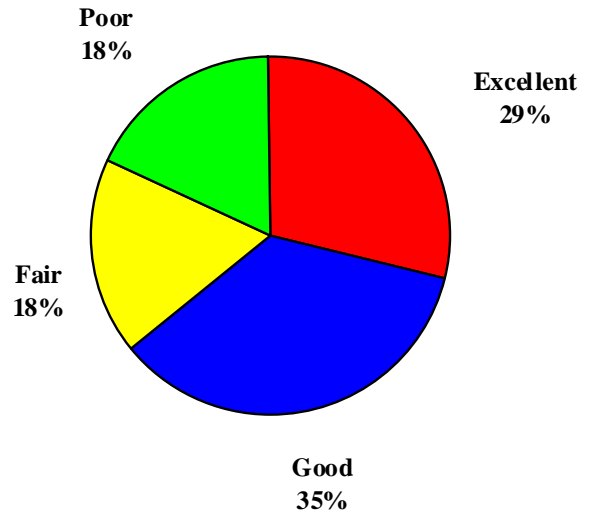


Further, employers gave the following ratings to their employees relative to competency in basic skills and entry level skills.

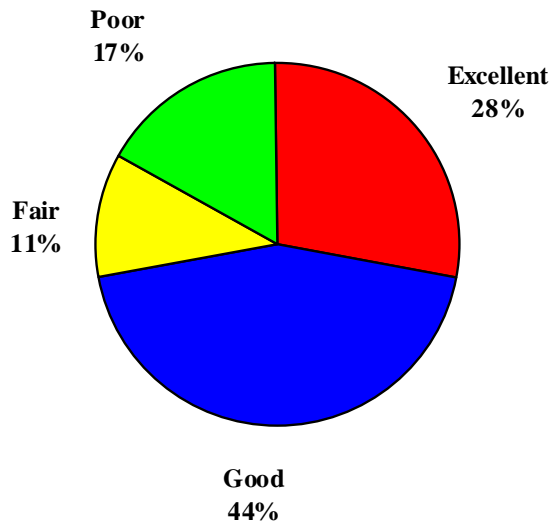
READING SKILLS



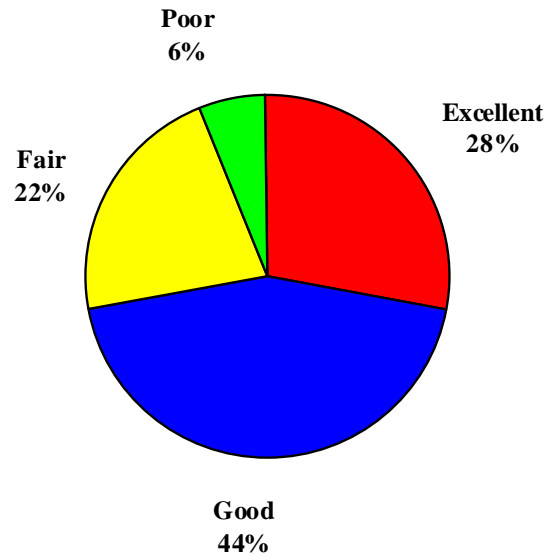
WRITING SKILLS



MATH SKILLS

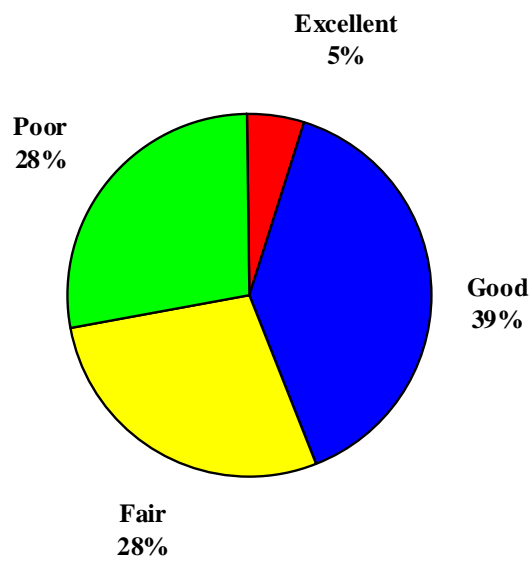


ENTRY LEVEL SKILLS

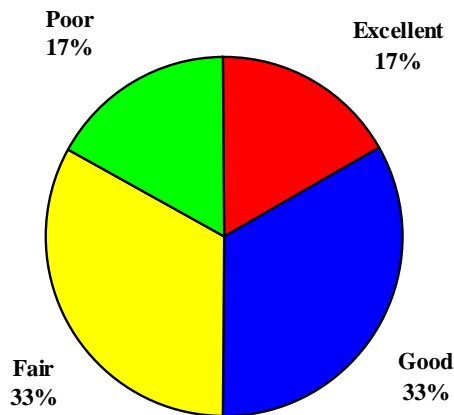


A common employer complaint relates to the shortage of skilled and technical workers. These workers are in great demand and difficult to find in the vast majority of locations. Of the companies in the labor shed interviewed, 44% considered skilled worker availability to be “Excellent” or “Good”, while 28% considered it to be “Fair”. The availability of technical workers in the labor shed was rated “Excellent” or “Good” by 50% of the interviewed companies and “Fair” by 33%.

SKILLED WORKERS AVAILABILITY

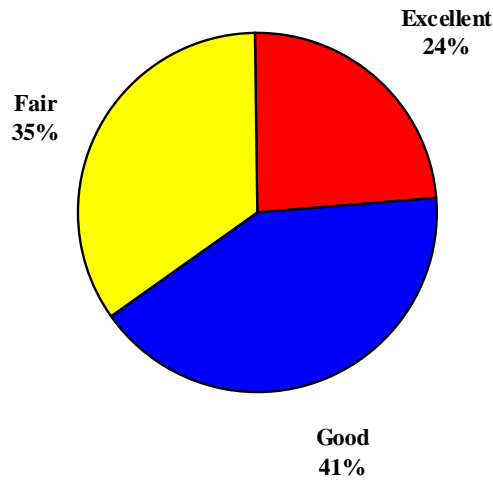


TECHNICAL WORKERS AVAILABILITY

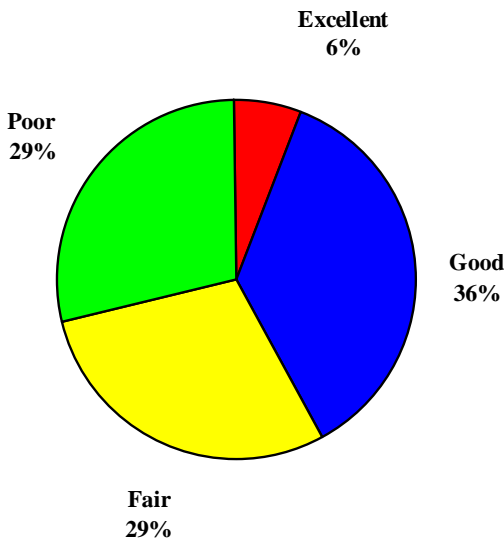


Although in most locations the availability of unskilled labor is sufficient, the availability of professional workers is often akin to that of skilled and technical workers, wherein the supply is not available to meet the demand. Of the companies in the labor shed interviewed, 65% considered unskilled worker availability to be “Excellent” or “Good”, while 35% considered it to be “Fair”. The availability of professional workers in the labor shed was rated “Excellent” or “Good” by 42% of the interviewed companies and “Fair” by 29%.

UNSKILLED WORKERS AVAILABILITY



PROFESSIONAL WORKERS AVAILABILITY



COMPARISONS OF EMPLOYERS RATINGS

TOTAL WORKFORCE

The Colorado Springs Area Labor Shed /

Locations Previously Surveyed

In the course of workforce surveys, local employers are asked to rate their workers on a number of factors. Those factors include: worker productivity; worker reliability and attitudes; reading/writing/calculations competency; teamwork skills; entry level skills; availability of skilled workers; availability of unskilled workers; availability of technical workers; and, availability of professional workers. Local employers are asked to rate each factor either “Excellent”, “Good”, “Fair”, or “Poor”.

The purpose of these interviews and ratings is not only to determine how local employers rate their workers but also to provide a means for comparing local ratings to those of all locations surveyed during the past eighteen months. Such comparison will enable you to assess your employers’ ratings of their workers in contrast to the body of thousands of employer ratings recorded in that period.

The following charts present the comparative results for each factor. They compare the percentages of the Colorado Springs area employers who rated their workers “Excellent”, “Good”, “Fair”, or “Poor” on each factor with the “Highest” rating of that factor in all areas surveyed in the last eighteen months and the “Median” rating for that factor in all areas surveyed during that time. As a result, the “Highest” and “Median” ratings do not add to 100%.

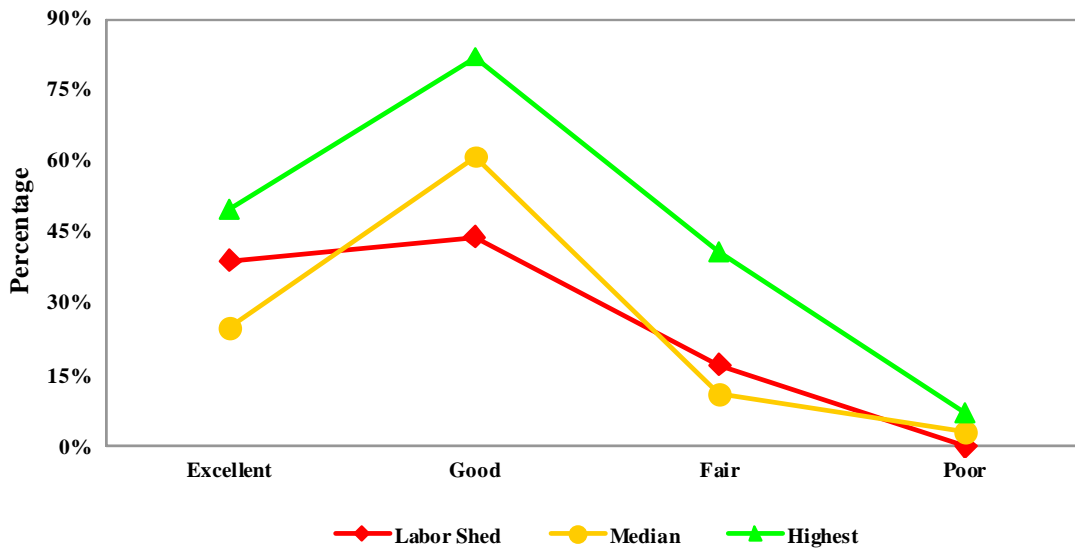
For example, 39% of the Colorado Springs area employers rated “Worker Productivity” as “Excellent”. Of all the locations surveyed during the last eighteen months, the “Median” for that rating is 21%, and the “Highest” rating recorded in the “Excellent” category is 50%. The same comparison applies for each of the other factors. In these charts, the Colorado Springs area is shown as “Labor Shed”.



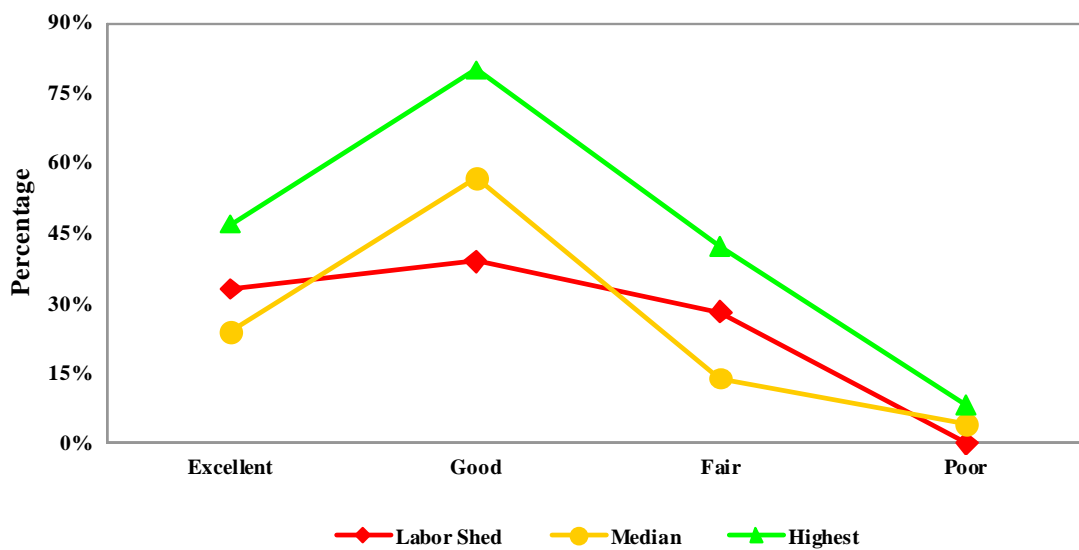
COMPARISON OF EMPLOYER RATINGS

The Colorado Springs Area / Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

Worker Productivity



Worker Reliability



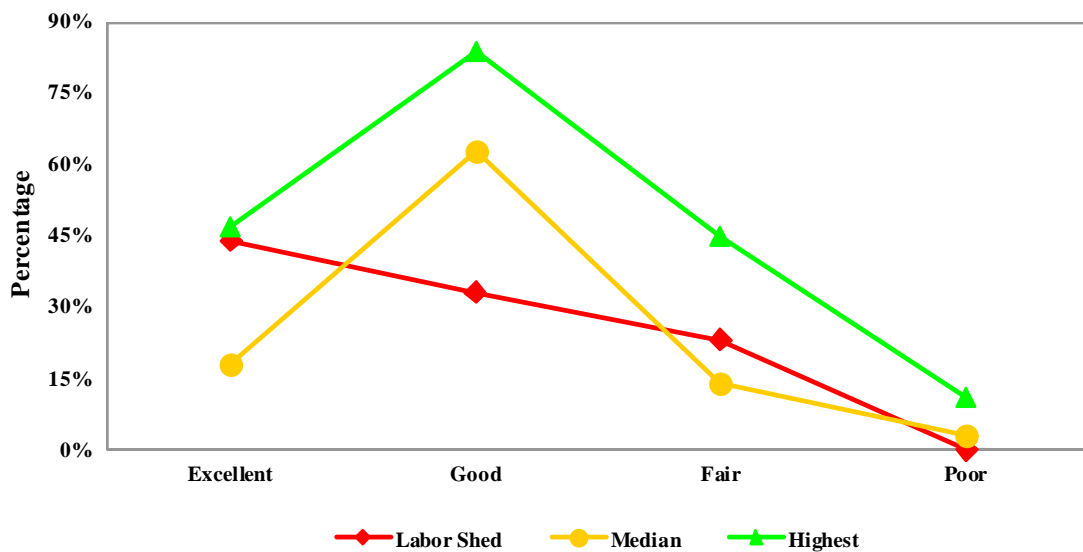
COMPARISON OF EMPLOYER RATINGS

The Colorado Springs Area / Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

Worker Attitudes



Worker Teamwork Skills



COMPARISON OF EMPLOYER RATINGS

The Colorado Springs Area / Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

Worker Reading Competency



Worker Writing Competency



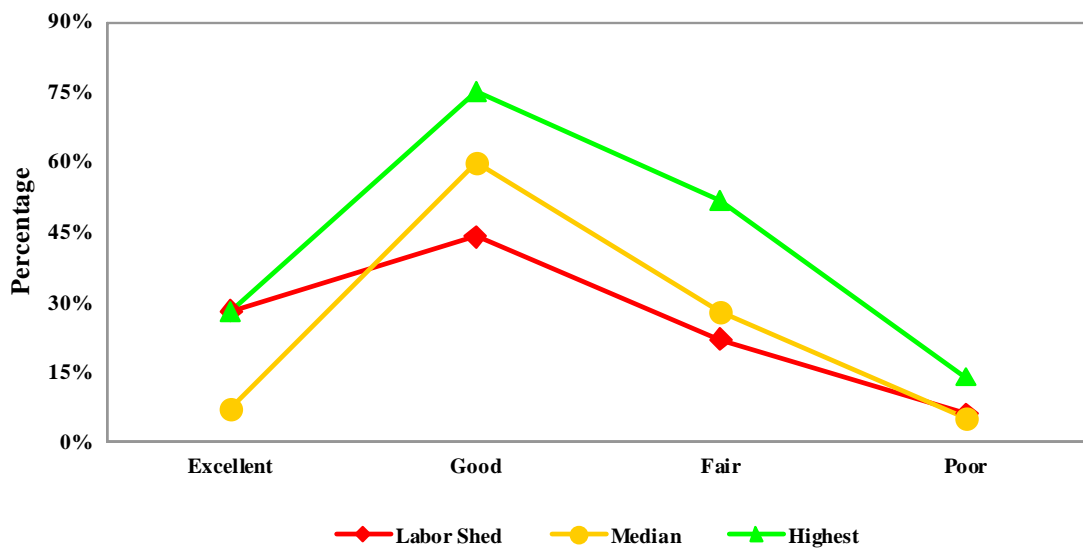
COMPARISON OF EMPLOYER RATINGS

The Colorado Springs Area / Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

Worker Calculations Competency



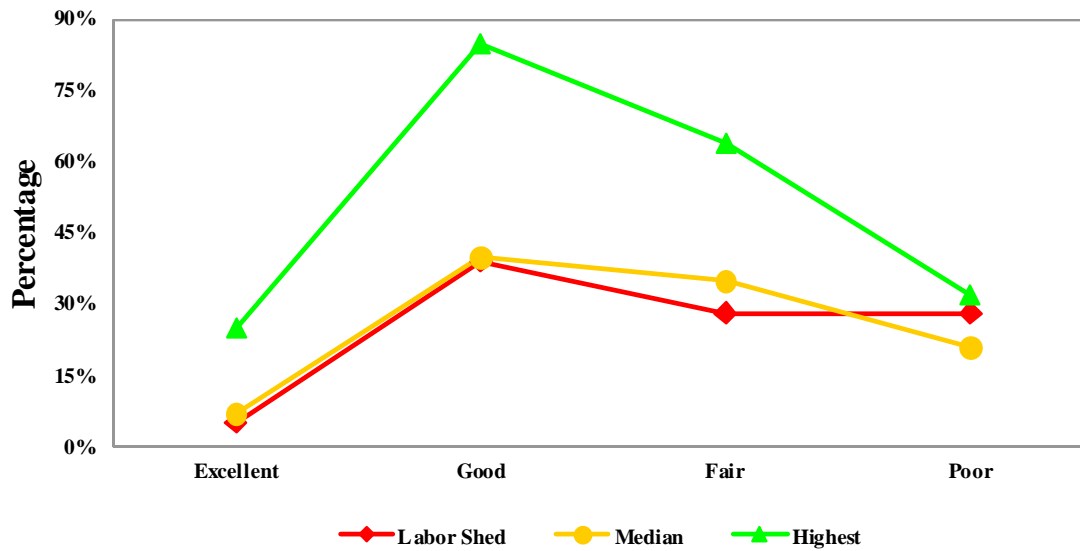
Worker Entry Level Skills



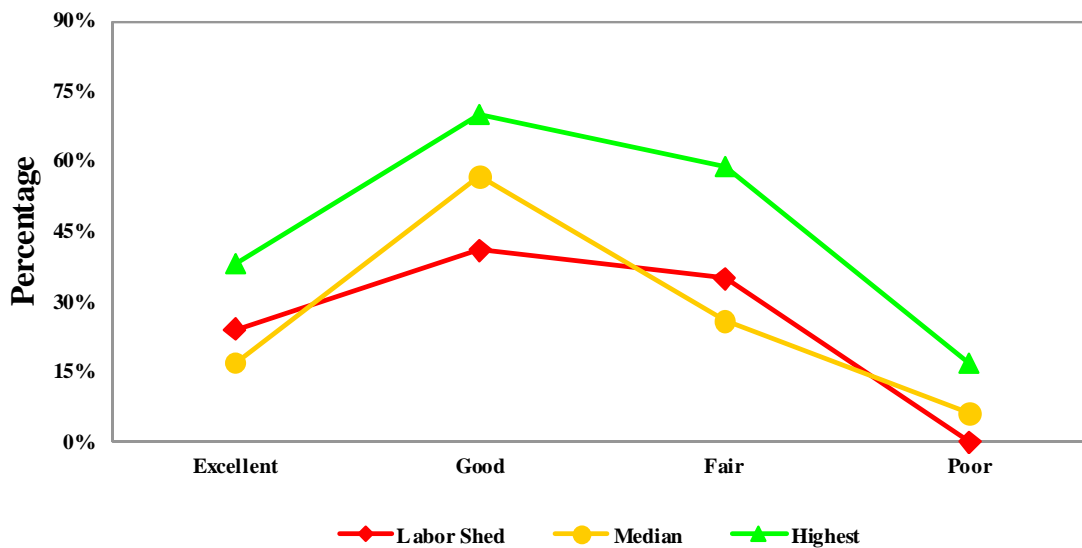
COMPARISON OF EMPLOYER RATINGS

The Colorado Springs Area / Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

Availability of Skilled Workers



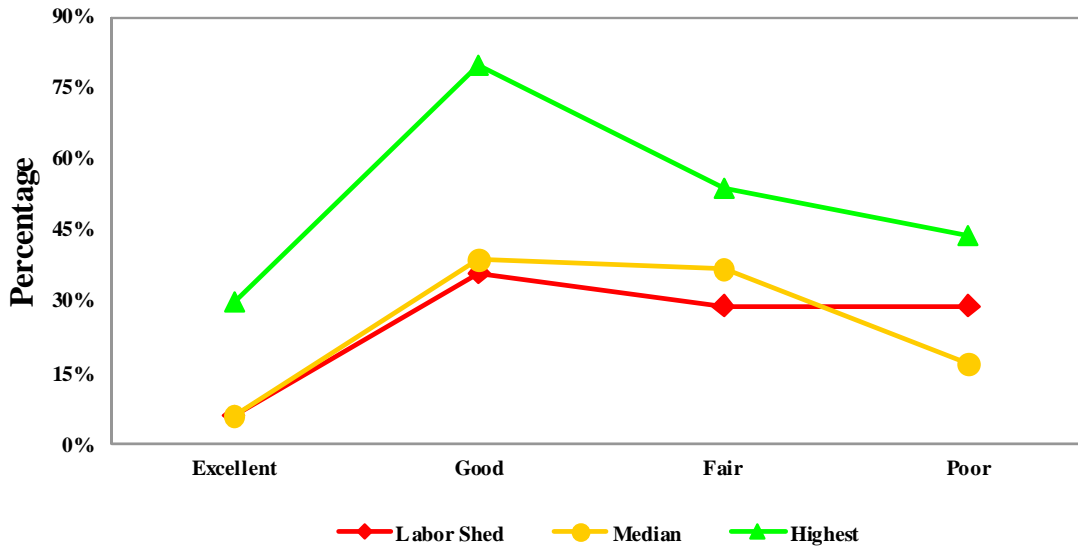
Availability of Unskilled Workers



COMPARISON OF EMPLOYER RATINGS

The Colorado Springs Area / Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

Availability of Professional Workers



Availability of Technical Workers



NATIONAL COMPARATIVE OBSERVATIONS

As a matter of course in site-selection projects, The Pathfinders evaluates published government workforce statistics. Those statistics, however, depict the entire workforce while only a minority segment of those workers will be considered for or have an interest in new jobs with a company. The characteristics of the select, underemployed workforce group represented in this report may vary significantly from the workforce as a whole as reported in published government data.

Accordingly, the information presented in the workforce report for the Colorado Springs region covers those members of the workforce who are, by virtue of their underemployment, potential candidates for new jobs. Existing employers, or new employers recruited to the Colorado Springs region, typically will not depend heavily on the unemployed to staff a new operation or to fill vacancies in existing operations caused by turnover or expansions. Companies look to the ranks of people who are already employed but are seeking to better themselves. Those individuals in that category who appear to possess the education, skills, and experience to merit a better job are classified as underemployed.

The workforce report issued by The Pathfinders documents the availability of underemployed workers as well as the skills, experience, education, and costs of individuals in that hidden workforce in the Colorado Springs region. This section of the report provides a comparison of the characteristics of the labor shed's underemployed workforce with the underemployed workforces in other communities previously surveyed throughout the nation. A prospect company considering the Colorado Springs region as a location will judge its workforce on a comparative basis. This section of the report will allow local economic development professionals to view the region's workforce in relation to others across the country.

The comparative data for other locations used in the following charts and tables reflect information accumulated over the past eighteen months. The Pathfinders maintains a continuing database of over 600 surveyed counties and communities and more than 30 million workers.



Locations Used In Comparative Analysis (Partial Listing)

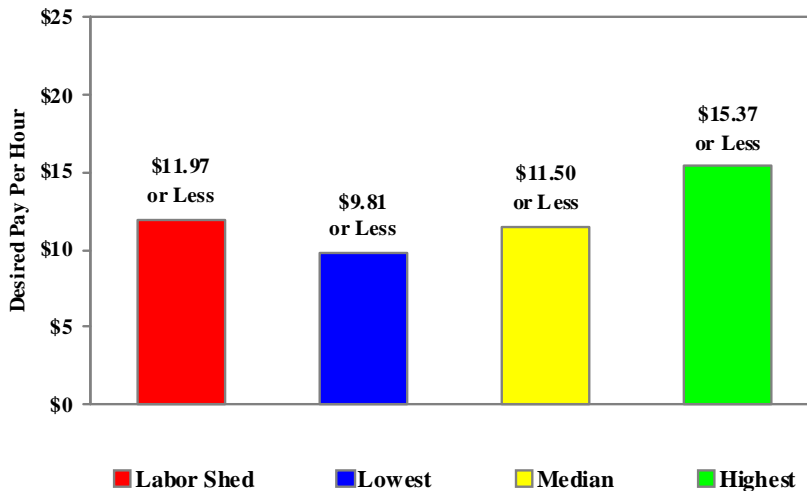
In the various charts which follow this page, this labor shed is compared with others for the purpose of making the data meaningful. In the charts, figures for this labor shed are shown alongside the “lowest”, “median” and “highest” figures from other workforce surveys conducted by The Pathfinders. The comparisons are with communities and counties representing both larger and smaller and those similar in size to this labor shed. They are also scattered throughout the nation, and a partial listing of locations from which the “low”, “median” and “high” data reported are derived includes:

Albany, NY	Cullman County, AL	Laramie, WY	Rockford, IL
Albuquerque, NM	Culpeper County, VA	Larimer County, CO	Salem, IL
Allegany County, MD	Danville, IL	LaSalle, IL	San Marcus, TX
Amarillo, TX	Daytona Beach, FL	Lea County, NM	Scranton, PA
Anderson, IN	Decatur, AL	Lebanon, KY	Seneca County, NY
Ardmore, OK	Eastern Shore, MD	Lee’s Summit, MO	Shasta County, CA
Ashland, KY	Elizabethtown, KY	Lexington, KY	Shreveport, LA
Atascadero, CA	Evansville, IN	Lincoln County, NE	Sikeston, MO
Atlanta, GA	Fairfield County, OH	Long Island, NY	Silver City, NM
Auburn, AL	Fargo, ND	Longview, TX	Spartanburg, SC
Baldwin County, AL	Fauquier County, VA	Louisville, KY	Spokane, WA
Bay County, FL	Fulton County, KY	Madison, SD	Springfield, IL
Bedford, TX	Grant County, NM	Meridian, MS	Sullivan County, NY
Beeville, TX	Grant County, WA	McDowell County, NC	Sumter County, SC
Binghamton, NY	Grays Harbor, WA	Mobile, AL	Syracuse, NY
Birmingham, AL	Greene County, NY	Mohawk Valley, NY	Tallahassee, FL
Boone County, IN	Grenada, MS	Monroe County, NY	Taylor, TX
Bowie, TX	Harrison County, IN	Montgomery, AL	Terre Haute, IN
Bryan/College Station, TX	Hazleton, PA	Moorhead, MN	Tioga County, NY
Buffalo, NY	Henderson, KY	Muncie, IN	Tipton County, IN
Bullitt County, KY	Hendricks County, IN	New Braunfels, TX	Tupelo, MS
Cambridge, MD	Hernando County, FL	New York City, NY	Tuscaloosa, AL
Cape Girardeau, MO	Hillsdale County, MI	Obion County, TN	Ulster County, NY
Casper, WY	Hudson Valley, NY	Ontario County, NY	Vermillion County, IN
Catawba County, NC	Huntsville, AL	Oswego County, NY	Vineland, NJ
Centralia, IL	Hutto, TX	Owsley County, KY	Warren County, VA
Champaign County, IL	Independence, MO	Panama City, FL	Wasatch County, UT
Cheyenne, WY	Indianapolis, IN	Pensacola, FL	Watertown, SD
Cleveland County, NC	Jackson, MS	Pierre, SD	Weld County, CO
Clinton, SC	Jackson County, MO	Polk County, NC	Wilkes-Barre, PA
Columbia, SC	Jay County, IN	Ponca City, OK	Williamsport, PA
Conroe, TX	Kalamazoo, MI	Prescott Valley, AZ	Winnebago County, IL
Corpus Christi, TX	Lake Havasu, AZ	Reno, NV	Yankton, SD



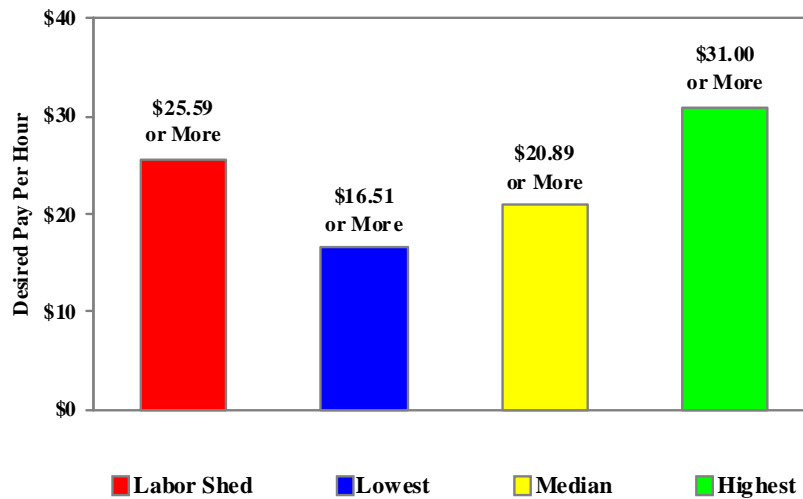
The workforce report documented the number of underemployed workers in the labor shed who would be available for an employer at various pay rates ranging from \$10.00 per hour or below to \$30.00 per hour or above and who appear to have the skills, experience, and education to justify the desired pay rates. The chart below shows that 25% (lower quartile) of the underemployed workers in the labor shed would take a new job for \$11.97 per hour or less. In locations surveyed over the past eighteen months, the lowest desired pay rate in the lower quartile of underemployed workers was \$9.81 per hour or less, the median \$11.50 or less, and the highest desired pay rate was \$15.37 per hour or less.

COMPARISON OF DESIRED WAGES (per hour)
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS - LOWER QUARTILE
The Colorado Springs Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months



Those underemployed workers in the upper quartile have more education, better skills, and greater experience. Yet based on current pay rates, they are considered to be underemployed. In the labor shed, the underemployed individuals in the upper 25% desire \$25.59 per hour or more. In locations surveyed over the past eighteen months, the lowest desired pay rate in the upper quartile of underemployed workers was \$16.51 or more, the median \$20.89 or more, and the highest was \$31.00 per hour or more.

COMPARISON OF DESIRED WAGES (per hour)
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS - UPPER QUARTILE
The Colorado Springs Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months



The following charts compare the percentages of underemployed workers in the Colorado Springs region who have experience in various fields of employment with the percentages of underemployed workers in locations surveyed over the past eighteen months who have the same type of experience. In the charts, the Colorado Springs region is referred to as “labor shed”.

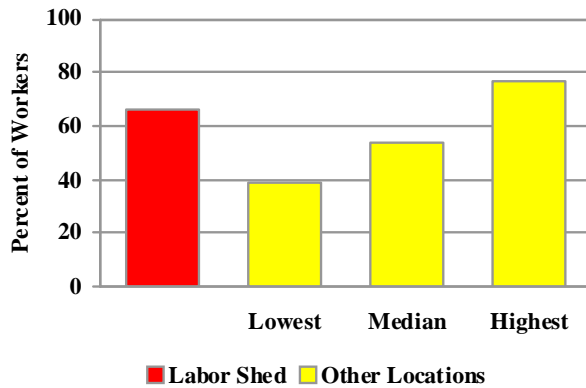
The experience charts are followed by skills charts, which compare the percentages of underemployed workers in the Colorado Springs region who possess various types of employment skills with the percentages of underemployed workers in locations surveyed over the past eighteen months who possess the same skills. In the charts, the Colorado Springs region is referred to as “labor shed”.



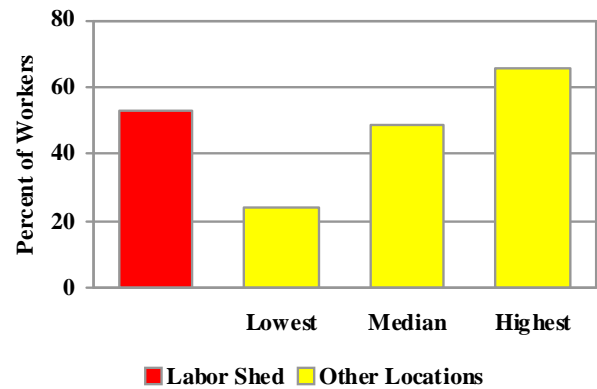
COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

**The Colorado Springs Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**

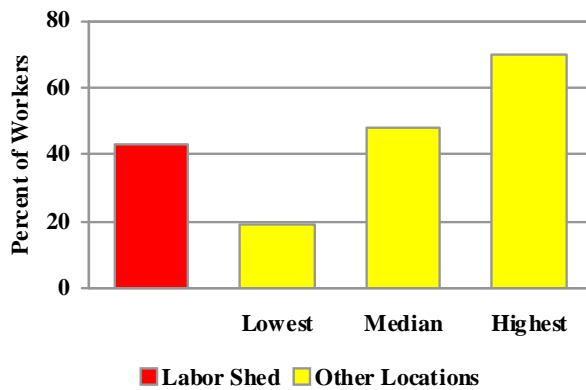
OFFICE



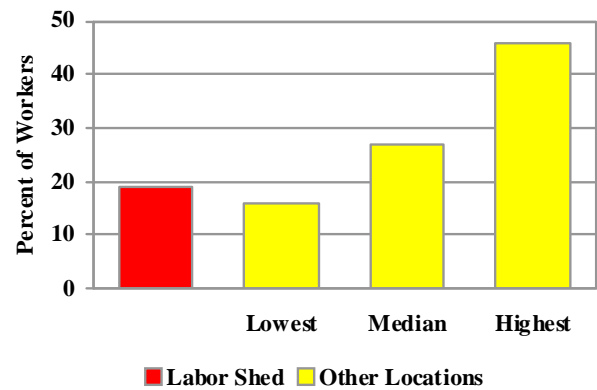
**WAREHOUSE / DISTRIBUTION /
TRANSPORTATION**



**MANUFACTURING / ASSEMBLY /
FABRICATION**



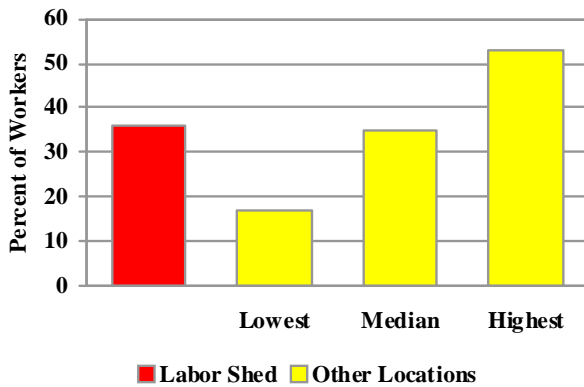
**MEDICAL /
HEALTH SCIENCES**



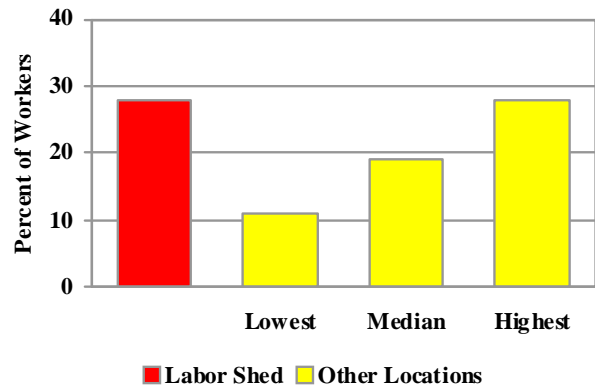
**COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS**

**The Colorado Springs Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**

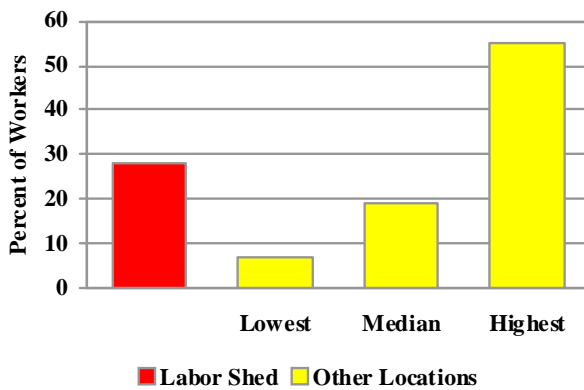
**MAINTENANCE /
INSTALLATION / REPAIR**



CALL CENTER



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

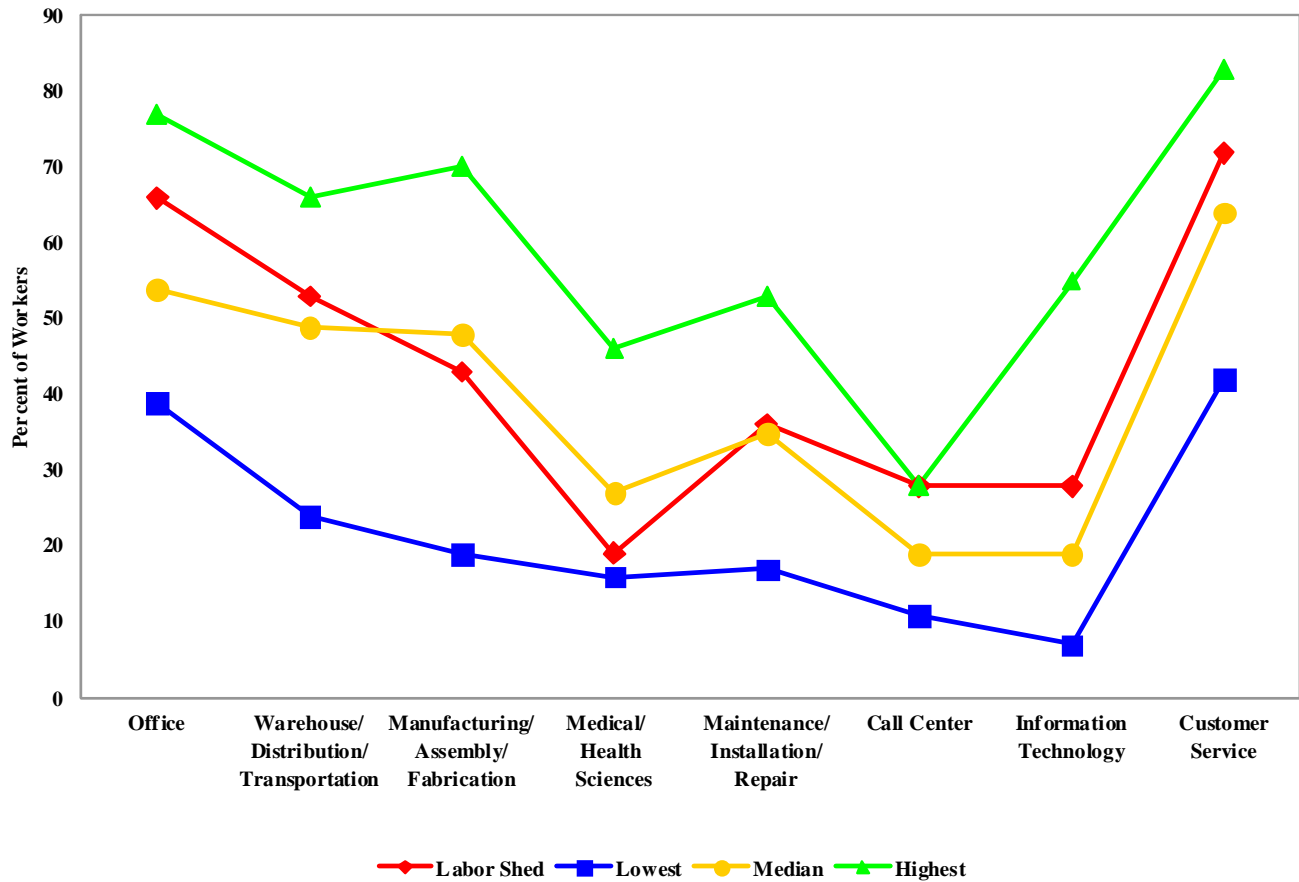


CUSTOMER SERVICE



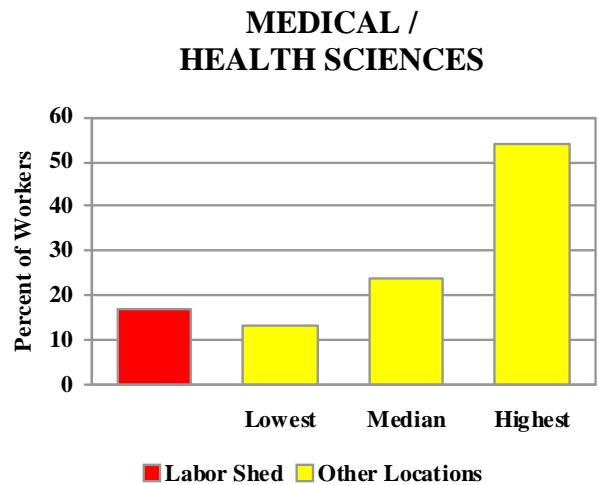
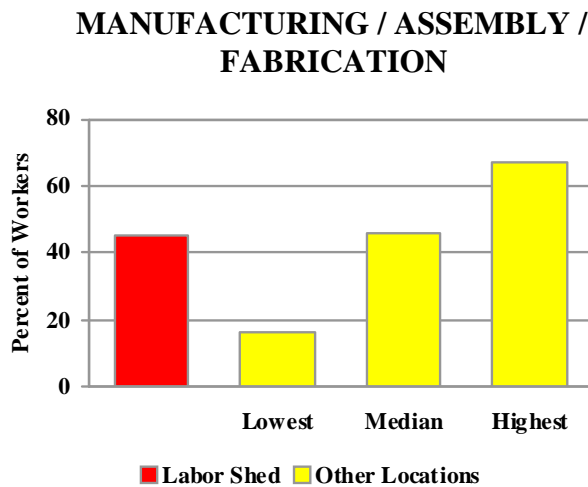
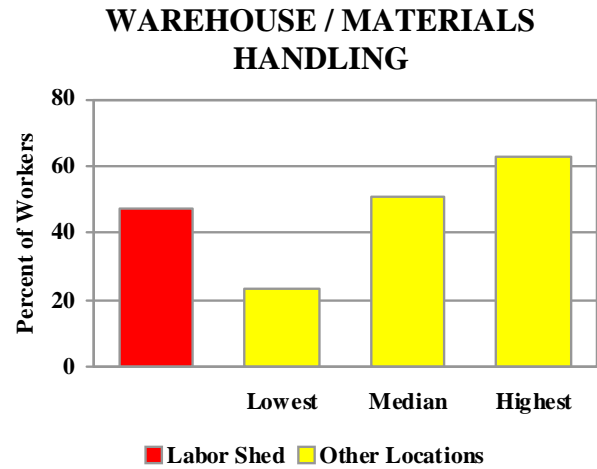
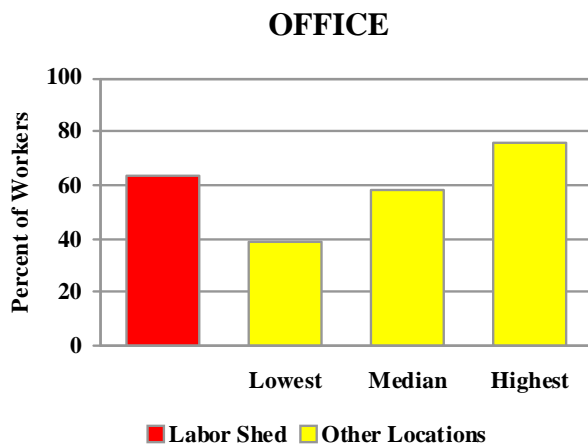
**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS**

**The Colorado Springs Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**



COMPARISON OF SKILLS UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

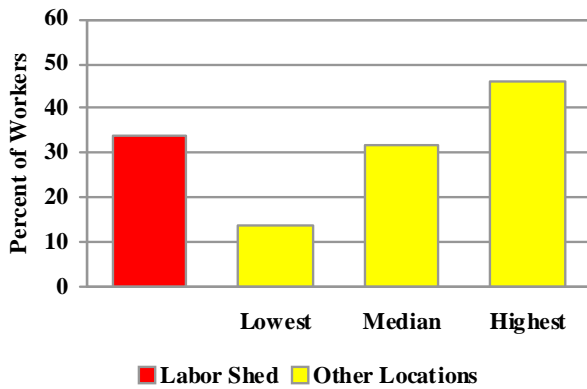
The Colorado Springs Area / Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months



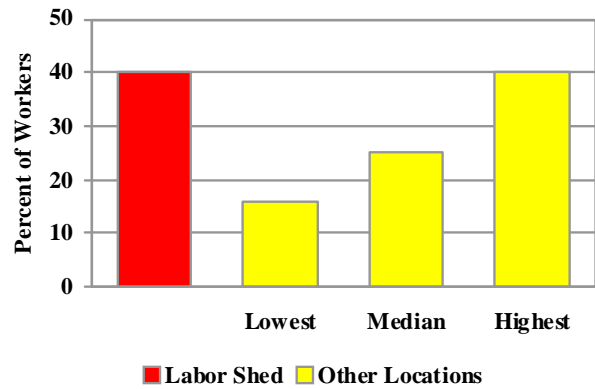
COMPARISON OF SKILLS UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

The Colorado Springs Area / Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

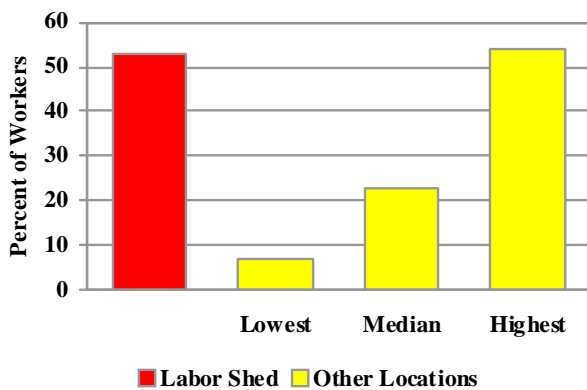
**MAINTENANCE /
INSTALLATION / REPAIR**



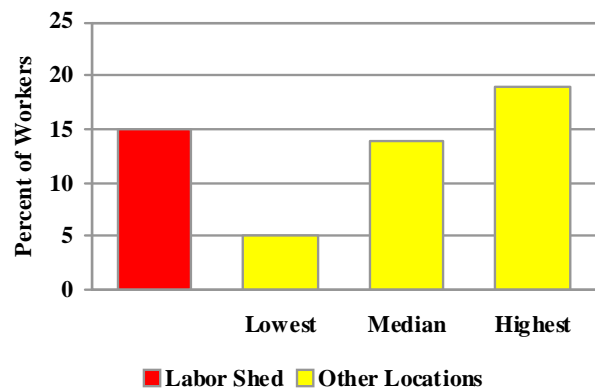
**TECHNICIAN / QUALITY
ASSURANCE**



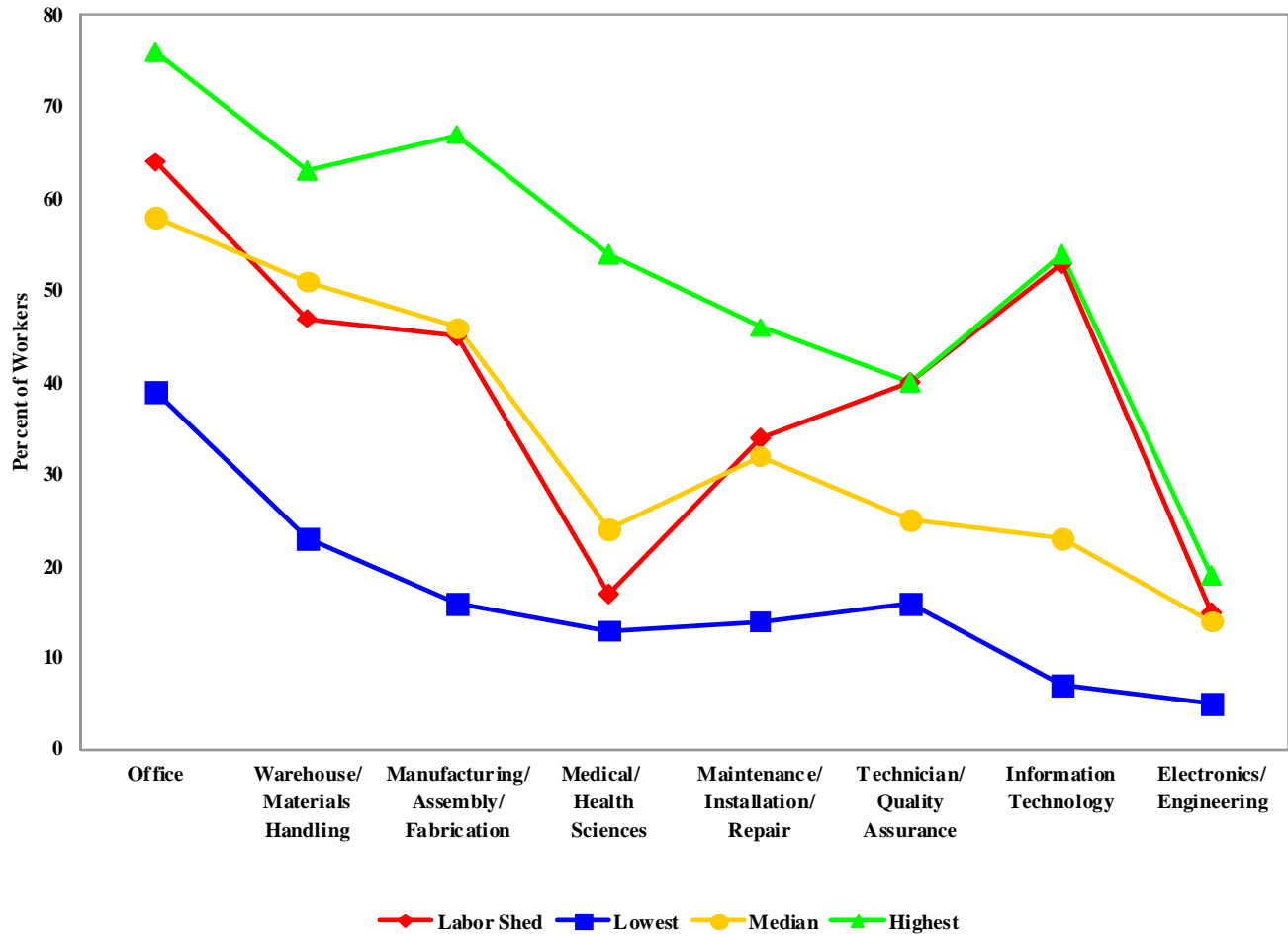
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



ELECTRONICS / ENGINEERING



**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF SKILLS
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS
The Colorado Springs Area /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**



CLOSING REMARKS

The foregoing report represents an assessment of the underemployment that exists in the Colorado Springs region. It includes a set of important interlocking measurements of the number of underemployed workers, their cost, skills, experience, education, reliability, productivity, and other related factors. The information allows the economic development professional and the site-selection team to view the area in comparison to other locations.

Attention should be given to the “Employers’ Views of the Colorado Springs Area Total Workforce” section of this report in which local employers’ views of the characteristics of local workers are compared with employers’ views in other locations where the identical questions have been asked in identical fashion.

Similarly, attention should be given to the final section of this report, “National Comparative Observations”, which compares, employing an identical methodology, the costs, experience, and skills of local underemployed workers with those underemployed workers in locations surveyed by The Pathfinders over the past eighteen months.

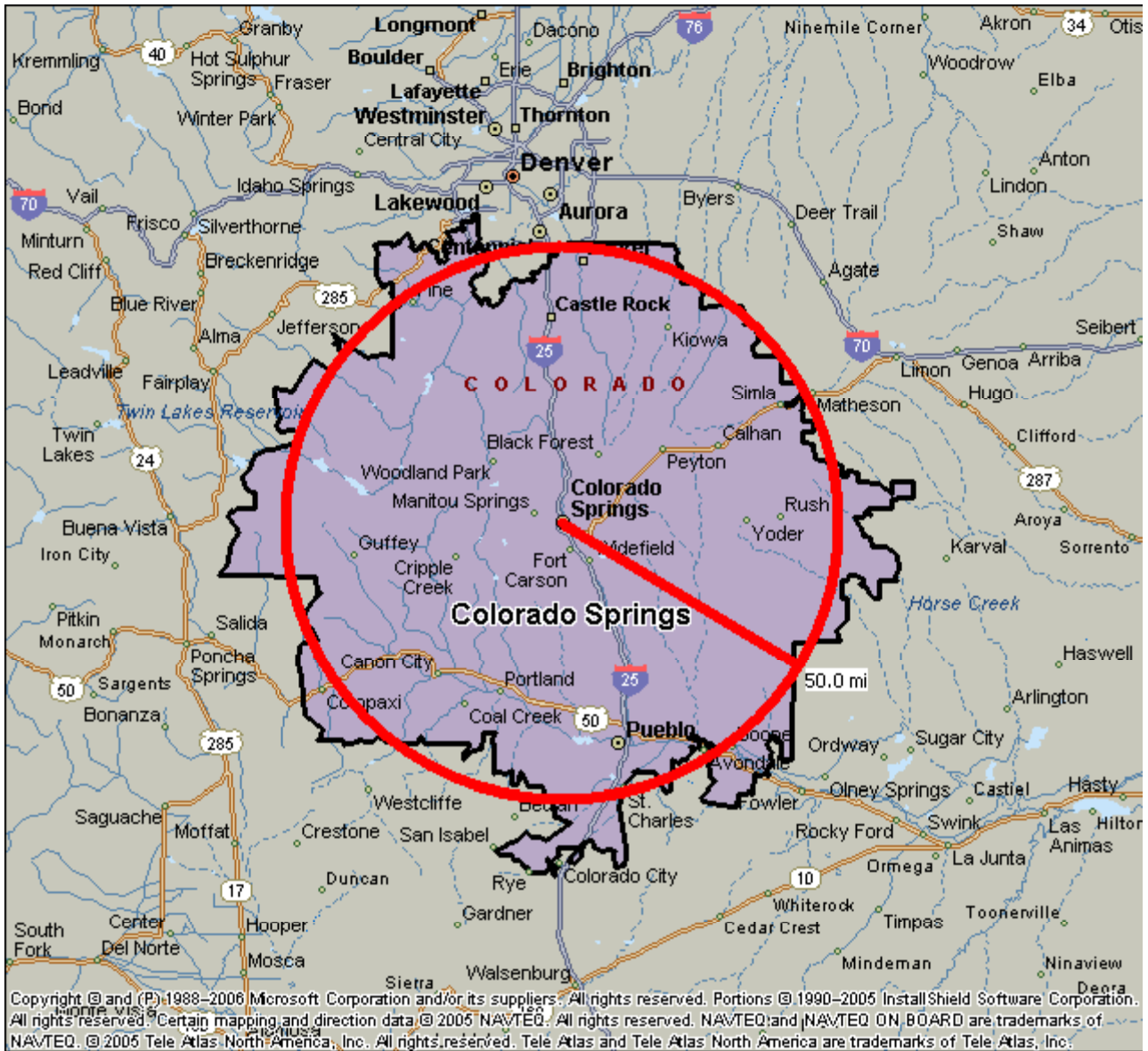
While the number of underemployed workers in the Colorado Springs region, including their cost, skills, and experience, is the focus of this report, the data should be interpreted in a comparative perspective just as the corporate site selector will in deciding among competing locations.

For Informational Purposes:

The Colorado Springs Area Civilian Workforce	621,500
Largest Workforce Surveyed by The Pathfinders	5,000,000
Median Workforce Surveyed by The Pathfinders	165,050
Smallest Workforce Surveyed by The Pathfinders.....	3,350



MAP OF COLORADO SPRINGS LABOR SHED





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**THE
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO AREA
EMPLOYER INTERVIEWS**

**Supplement to
LABOR AVAILABILITY REPORT**

September, 2008

**Compiled and Prepared by
THE PATHFINDERS**



Dallas, Texas

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EMPLOYERS' VIEWS AND OPINIONS

THE COLORADO SPRINGS AREA TOTAL WORKFORCE

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Colorado Springs labor availability survey project, The Pathfinders conducted interviews with senior management and human resources professionals of companies located in the region. Each of these companies operated in the industrial, commercial, or service sectors. The employers interviewed consisted of both union and non-union operations; companies new to the area and long-standing companies; and, companies ranging in size from 10 employees to over 1,900.

The purpose of these interviews was to determine area employers' opinions of the Colorado Springs area workforce in terms of such factors as productivity and availability and also to ascertain views on skills gaps, training needs, hiring projections and other issues related to workforce development.

Some of the data collected from these interviews was presented in the Colorado Springs Labor Availability Report and will be used in the business recruitment and sales efforts of local and regional economic development officials. These data appear in this supplement as well in order to present the information in its entirety. Data relating to workforce development issues were not included in the Labor Availability Report as this information is not intended to be used with prospects. It is presented in this supplement.

It should be noted that the opinions expressed herein are those of the employers who were interviewed during the course of this project and may not necessarily reflect the opinions of all Colorado Springs employers. Further, all attempts were made to convey the views of the employers interviewed. However, in some cases, answers were combined that appeared to be similar in nature and substance.



COMPARISONS WITH OTHER REGIONS

Employers with operations in other regions of the United States were asked to compare their experiences in those other areas with their experiences in the Colorado Springs region. Of those employers who had operations elsewhere, 82% stated that their Colorado Springs area operations were comparable to or better than the operations in other locations in terms of profitability and production.

HIRING PROJECTIONS

Over 60% of the interviewed employers in the Colorado Springs area indicated plans to increase workers over the next twelve months, with the total projected number of new workers reported to be over 1,400. Most often mentioned in the job positions to be hired were engineers, followed by technical workers. As determined from the employer interviews, job positions to be hired over the next twelve months include:

- Assembly Workers
- Chemists
- Customer Service Representatives
- Direct Labor
- Engineers / Mechanical Engineers
- Group Leaders
- Information Technical Specialists
- Manufacturing Workers
- Sales Persons
- Technical Workers



RECRUITMENT METHODS

The table below reflects various methods used to recruit workers in the region, as reported by the interviewed employers, and the percent of employers utilizing that method. Many use more than one method, therefore, the percentages will not add up to 100%. As noted, the recruitment methods mentioned most frequently were internet and newspaper.

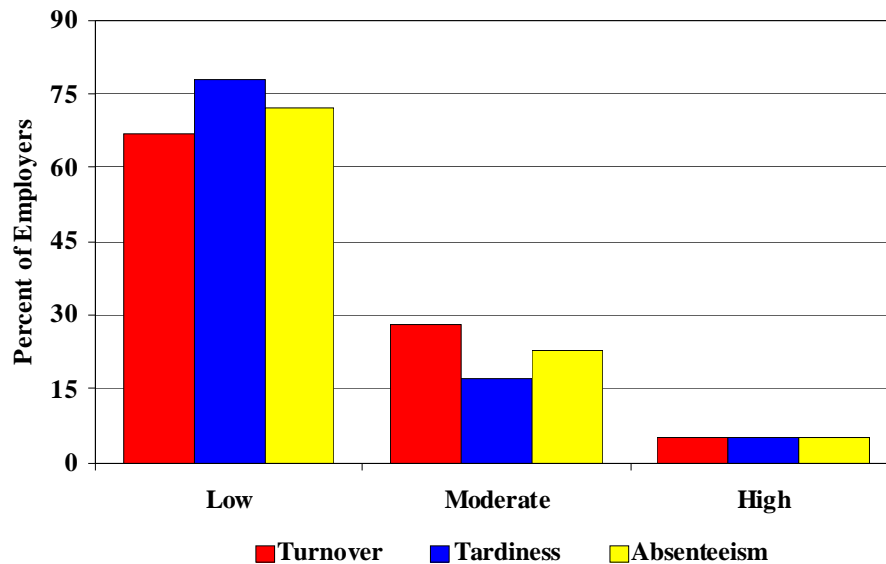
Recruiting Method	% of Employers
Internet	61%
Newspaper Ads	50%
State Agency	34%
Word of Mouth	33%
Referrals	28%
Recruiters	28%
Staffing/Temp Service	22%
Walk-Ins	11%
Colleges/Tech Schools	11%
Job Fair	11%



TURNOVER / TARDINESS / ABSENTEEISM / SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Based upon the experience of The Pathfinders in evaluating labor forces in numerous locations, a definite correlation between productivity, absenteeism, tardiness, turnover, and substance abuse appears to exist. That correlation goes beyond the fact that an absent worker is obviously unproductive. Rather, those factors are indicative of an employee’s attitude toward the job. The chart below shows the percent of employers rating for turnover, tardiness and absenteeism in the Colorado Springs region.

PERCENT OF EMPLOYERS RATING

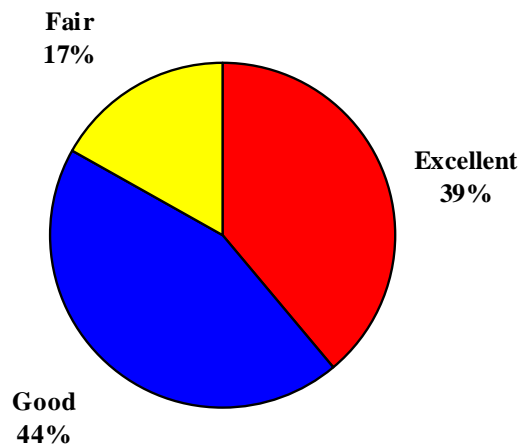


Additionally, in the Colorado Springs region, 67% of the employers interviewed stated their companies tested for substance abuse, primarily pre-employment. Collectively, substance abuse within the individual companies’ workforces was reported as very low.

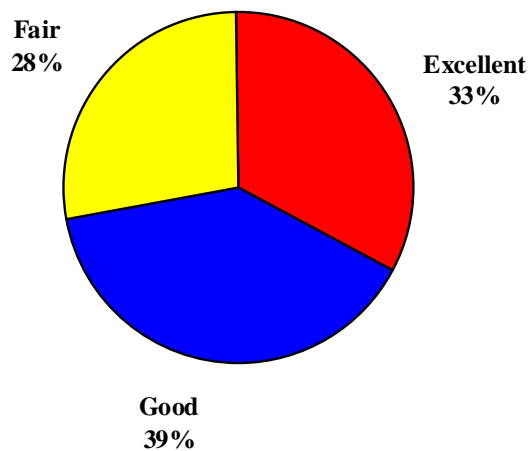
PRODUCTIVITY / AVAILABILITY

In consideration of all factors, 83% of the employers in the Colorado Springs area rated the productivity of the workforce as “Good” to “Excellent”. Worker reliability received high marks from 72% of the employers.

WORKER PRODUCTIVITY

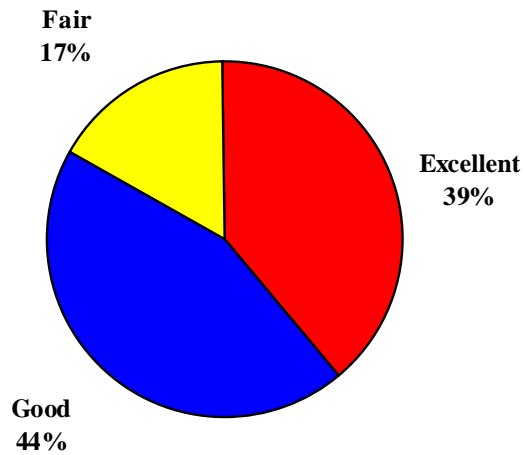


WORKER RELIABILITY

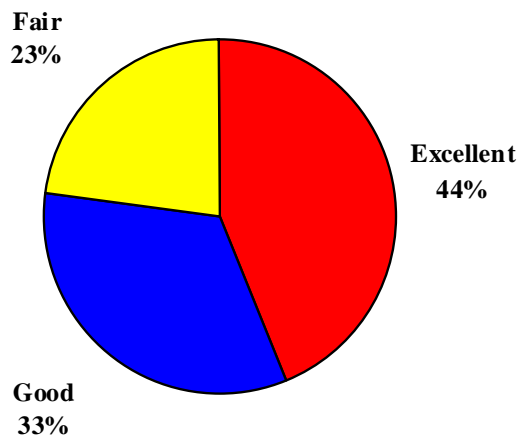


The Colorado Springs area workforce was also rated highly in terms of attitudes and teamwork.

WORKER ATTITUDES

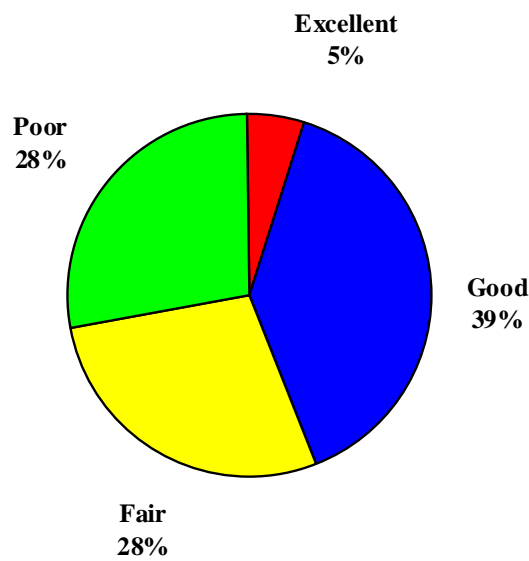


TEAMWORK SKILLS

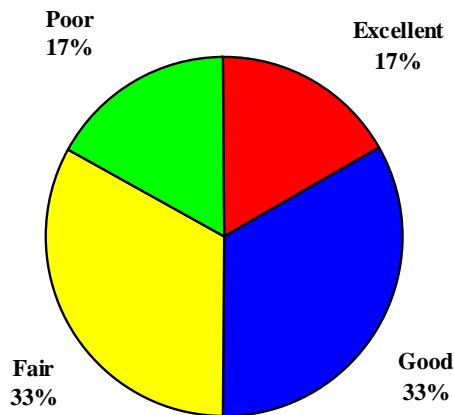


A common employer complaint relates to the shortage of skilled and technical workers. These workers are in great demand and difficult to find in the vast majority of locations. Of the companies in the labor shed interviewed, 44% considered skilled worker availability to be “Excellent” or “Good”, while 28% considered it to be “Fair”. The availability of technical workers in the labor shed was rated “Excellent” or “Good” by 50% of the interviewed companies and “Fair” by 33%.

SKILLED WORKERS AVAILABILITY

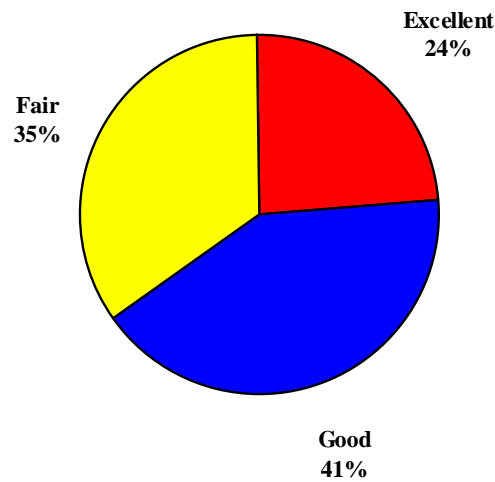


TECHNICAL WORKERS AVAILABILITY

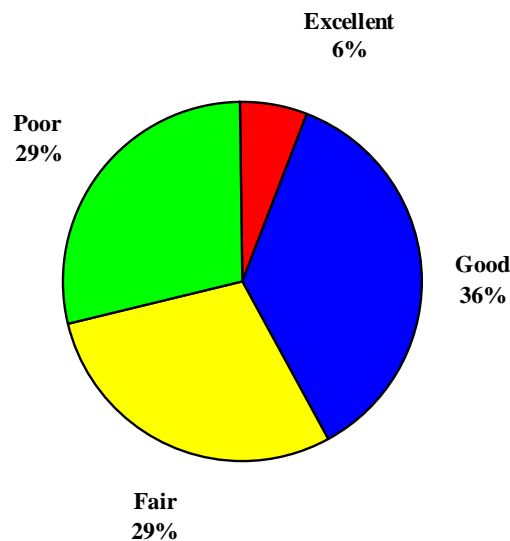


Although in most locations the availability of unskilled labor is sufficient, the availability of professional workers is often akin to that of skilled and technical workers, wherein the supply is not available to meet the demand. Of the companies in the labor shed interviewed, 65% considered unskilled worker availability to be “Excellent” or “Good”, while 35% considered it to be “Fair”. The availability of professional workers in the labor shed was rated “Excellent” or “Good” by 42% of the interviewed companies and “Fair” by 29%.

UNSKILLED WORKERS AVAILABILITY



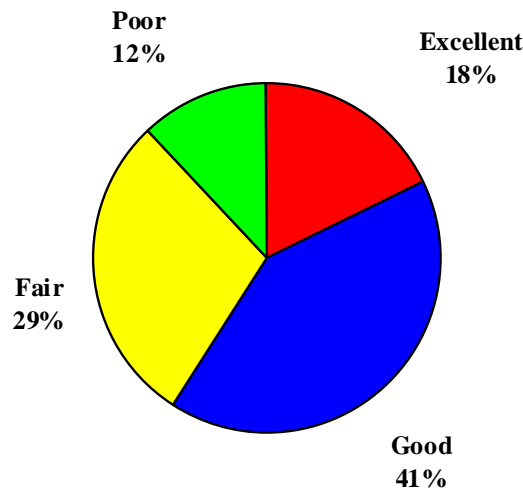
PROFESSIONAL WORKERS AVAILABILITY



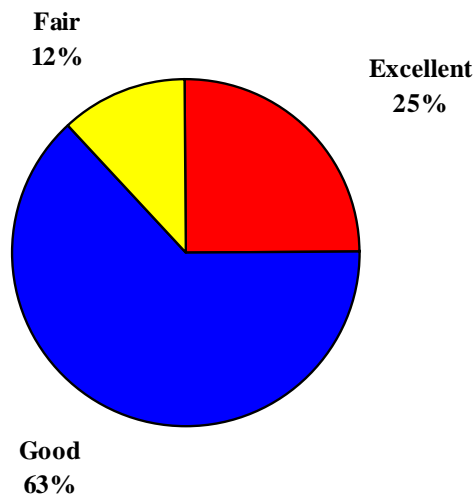
EDUCATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

The educational competencies of employees are additional factors used to evaluate an area's labor force. In the Colorado Springs area, 59% of the employers interviewed rated the local public schools as "Excellent" or "Good", and 88% of the employers rated the local community colleges and technical schools as "Excellent" or "Good".

LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

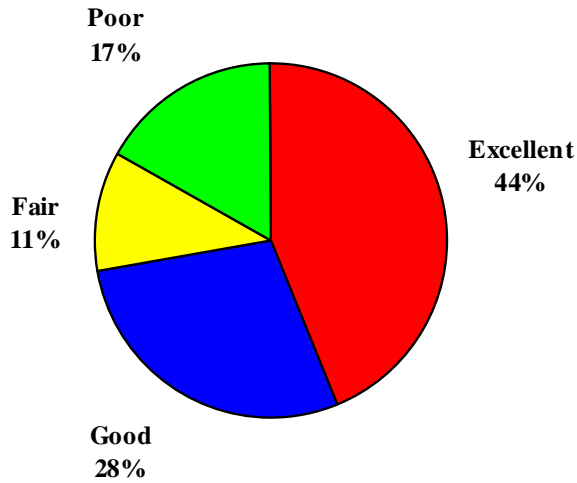


LOCAL COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND TECH SCHOOLS

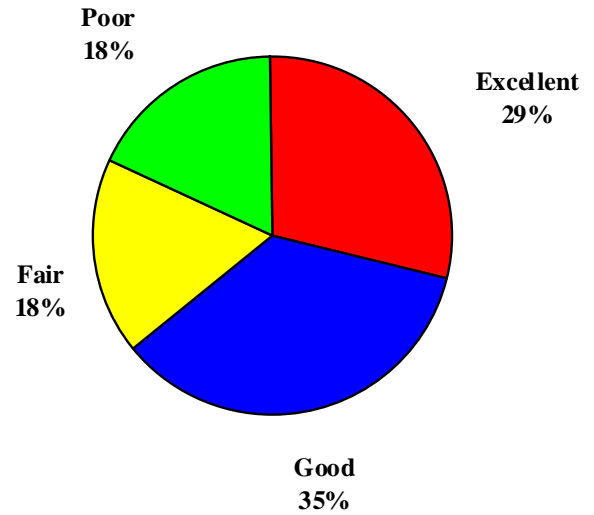


Further, employers gave the following ratings to their employees relative to competency in basic skills and entry level skills.

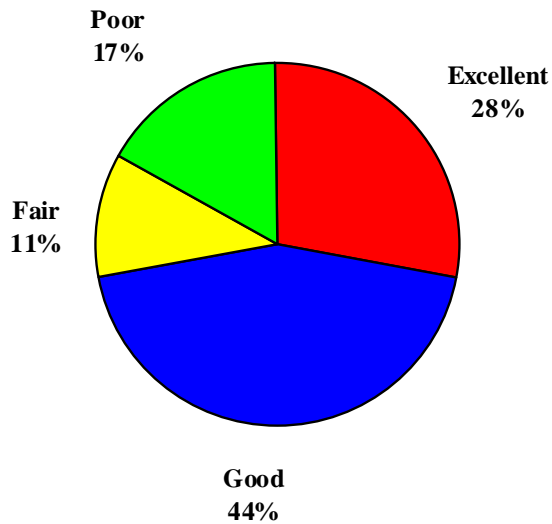
READING SKILLS



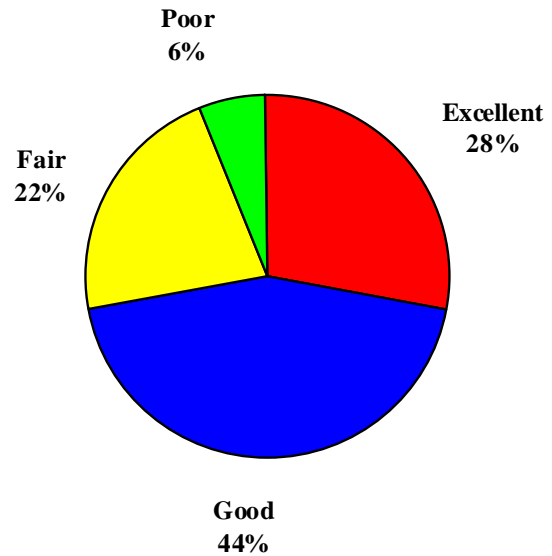
WRITING SKILLS



MATH SKILLS



ENTRY LEVEL SKILLS



The employers were further interviewed as to gaps that, in their opinions, appeared to exist in the local area educational offerings that affected area workers. 76% of the employers responded to this question. Please note that some employers reported multiple gaps, so the percentages will not equal 100%. With respect to high schools' offerings, the employers interviewed offered the following observations concerning gaps:

Gaps in Local High Schools' Offerings	% of Employers
Basic Skills / Comprehension Courses	47%
Technical / Vocational Courses	18%
Work Ethics / Life Skills / Job Readiness Skills Courses	18%
Computer Skills Courses	6%
None	24%

Concerning gaps in local community colleges and technical schools, although over half the interviewed employers were of the opinion that no gaps existed, other employers did cite certain areas. Several of the employers indicated they would like to see more manufacturing skills classes offered. Employers also mentioned working with these institutions on placement programs.

Gaps in Local Community Colleges and Tech Schools' Offerings	% of Employers
Technical / Vocational / Industry-Specific Courses	19%
Job Readiness Skills Courses	13%
Basic Skills Courses	13%
Placement Programs	13%
Computer Courses / Specialized Software	12%
None	56%



WORKFORCE SKILLS NEEDS

Employers in the Colorado Springs region were asked to give their opinions concerning the skills they felt were most needed in the area workforce. Technical skills and work ethics, including such factors as common sense and basic work skills, were reported as being the top two needs in the workforce. Many of these employers expressed multiple needs, therefore, the percentages will not equal 100%.

Skills Needed	% of Employers
Technical, including Machining and Welding	33%
Work Ethics	33%
Basic Reading / Writing / Math	28%
Computer	28%
Professional, including Engineering and Management	28%

OPINIONS ON IMPROVING WORKFORCE QUALITY

Colorado Springs area employers were asked to offer, in their opinions, ways in which the quality of the area's workforce could be improved. 94% of the employers responded to this question, with the overwhelming opinion being that more vocational/training classes needed to be offered by the area educational providers. Related comments included more focus on small business; assistance for kids to go on to trade school or college; and expanding the university presence.

Other suggestions provided by the interviewed employers on ways to improve area workforce quality included establishing a more diverse industry base; better training for high school students; better overall education; and, better marketing of the area.



WORKFORCE TRAINING NEEDS

Further, local employers were interviewed about training needs in their current operations. These appear to somewhat mirror the skills needed in the area workforce as a whole, with manufacturing skills being the highest reported training need for the employers. Training in assembly, machining, management/supervisory and technical skills were mentioned specifically, as well as process and lean manufacturing.

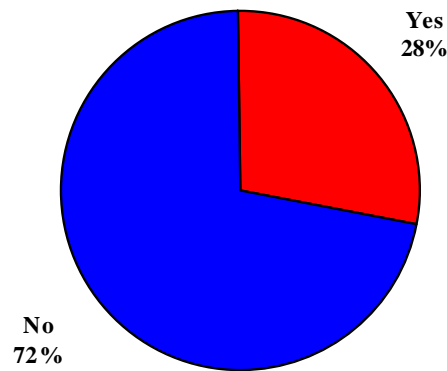
Current Training Needs	% of Employers
Assembly / Machining / Manufacturing	41%
Management / Supervisory	30%
Technical	18%
Computer / Programming	12%
Engineering	12%
Customer Service	6%
Call Center Experience	6%

In terms of training needs in the next five years, the majority of the employers interviewed stated their needs would more than likely stay the same. Some, however, did report that the advances in technology and automation would change their training needs.



WORKFORCE STRATEGIES

The employers in the Colorado Springs region who were interviewed during this project were asked if they were implementing any strategies to prepare for the expected loss in the workforce over the next three to five years due to the expected large retirements of the “baby boomers”. As indicated below, 72% said they were not currently implementing any such strategies; however, 28% responded that specific strategies were in place to deal with this particular issue.



Some of the strategies that are being implemented by the 28% of respondents who are preparing for this expected occurrence are listed below.

- Leadership preparedness
- Training more young people
- Using interns from colleges
- Downsizing
- Specialized training
- Succession planning

WORKFORCE BARRIERS

The employers in the Colorado Springs area who were interviewed during this project were also asked to give their opinions on what kinds of barriers, if any, existed in the area that interfered with getting good workers. 33% responded there were none; 67% said they do encounter problems.

As indicated in the table below, issues relating to transportation were reported by almost half of the responding employers.

Barrier	% of Employers
Transportation / Traffic Issues / Roadway Limitations	49%
Dependent Care	25%
Availability of Labor	17%
Lack of Competition	17%
Military Presence	8%
Roadway Limitations	8%
Right-Wing Image	8%

Concerning the military presence, it was stated this was both a plus and a minus. Employers commented that they have a large pool of great workers available to them, but these workers are only in the area for two to three years.



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