

2015 • 2016 • 2017 • 2018

EMPLOYERONE 4 YEAR REVIEW

A LOOK BACK

Four years of EmployerOne Survey data has given us important insights into employers' experiences throughout Bruce, Grey, Huron and Perth. In nearly all reporting areas, respondents' concerns and challenges have remained relatively constant or, in some cases, have increased over time. While giving us critical benchmark data for the region, these findings are also reinforcing a worrying labour market picture in which the majority of employers are struggling to find enough employees with the necessary skills to support their business needs.

This report highlights the most important trends from the EmployerOne Survey, in an effort to help us understand demand-side labour market changes over time.

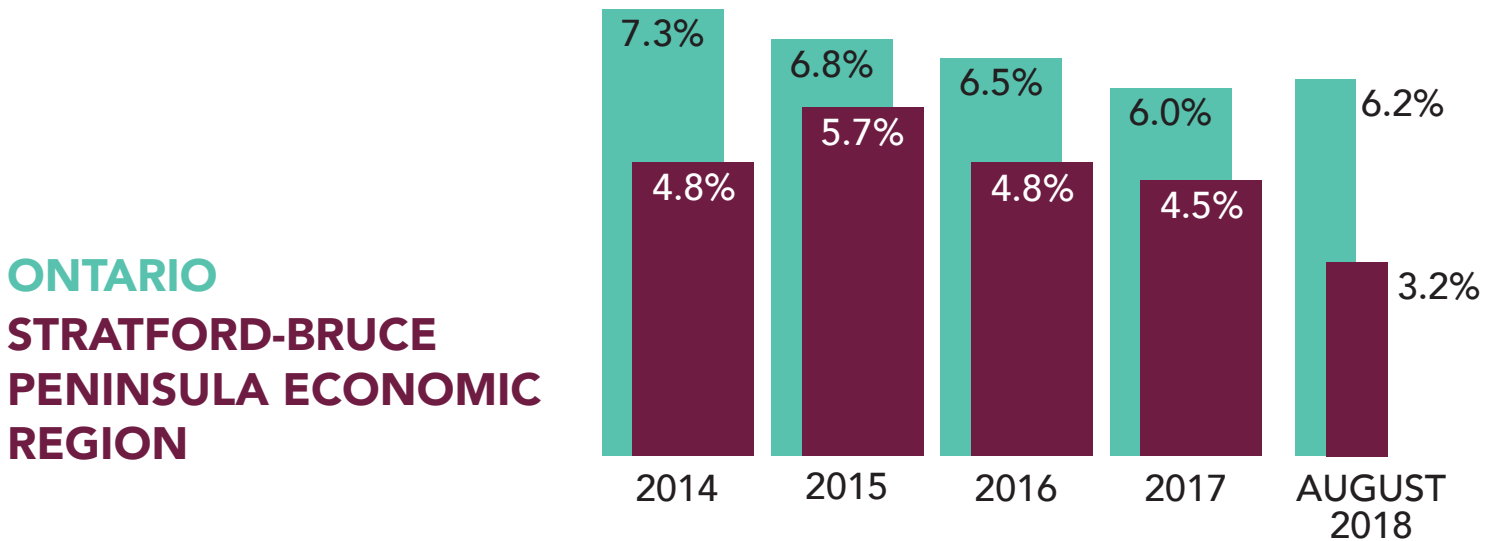
The following themes are prominent in four years of EmployerOne data:

- Employers are largely dissatisfied with the quality of available workers; the particular skills that are lacking tend to be “soft skills” rather than educational background or specific work experience
- Approximately half of employers struggle to fill positions each year, primarily due to lack of applicants
- Employers recruit new employees primarily through word of mouth, with social media increasing (and, correspondingly, newspaper ads decreasing) as a recruitment tool over time
- A higher percentage of employers are expanding their recruitment beyond the four county area, which can likely be attributed to the extremely low availability of workers in the local region

We recognize that these data represent an incomplete understanding of the labour market because it captures only the perspective of employers. Between July and October 2018, we are conducting a survey of workers and job seekers across the four county region in order to address the lack of research on the supply-side of the labour market. For more information about this project, and how you can participate, please refer to our website (www.planningboard.ca) or contact sarah@planningboard.ca.

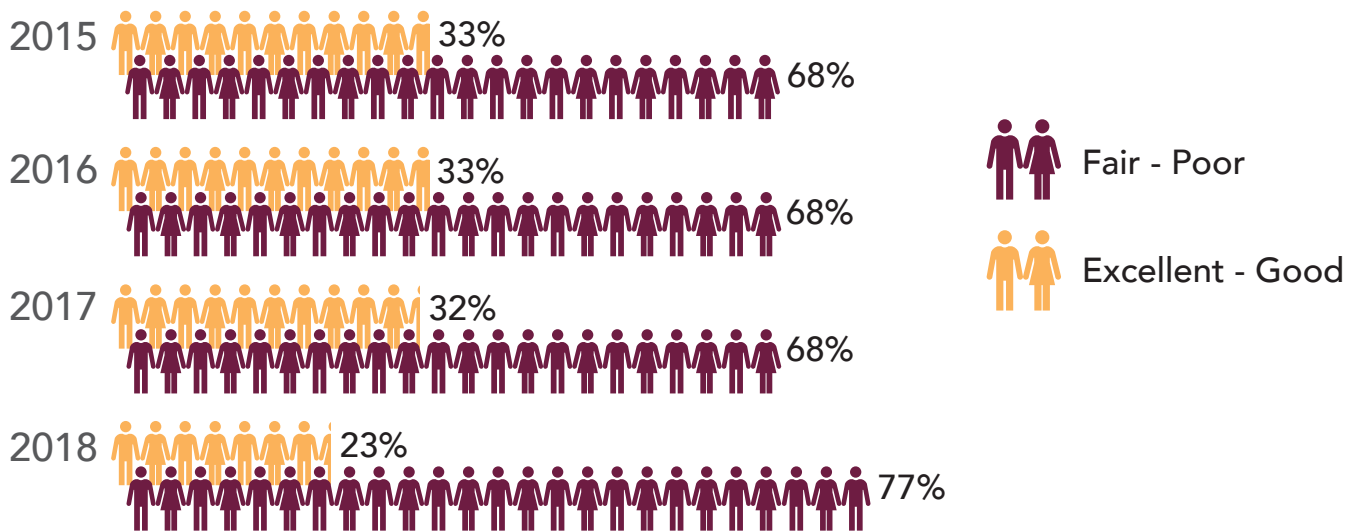
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

During the last four years, the unemployment rate in the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula economic region (covering the four county area) has been lower than that of Ontario, pointing to ongoing challenges with labour supply in our region. In July 2017, the unemployment rate was 2.9%, dropping to its lowest level since 2001; the Ontario average for the same month was 6.4%. At the time of this report, the local unemployment rate was 3.2%, compared to the Ontario rate of 6.2% (August 2018).



AVAILABILITY OF QUALIFIED WORKERS

During the first three years of the EmployerOne survey, we saw very little change in the way employers rated the availability of qualified workers. However, in 2018 a higher percentage of employers rated the workforce as Fair or Poor, compared to the previous three years. This suggests that employers' assessment of the quality of the workforce is deteriorating.



* Totals do not always equal 100% due to rounding

TOP 3 METHODS OF RECRUITMENT

Word of mouth is consistently the top recruitment method used by employers. However, in the last two years of the survey, newspaper ads have disappeared from the “top 3” methods, as employers appear to be moving increasingly to online options for job postings, including opportunities to advertise through social media.

2015

Word of mouth
 Online job boards/postings
 Newspaper Ads

2016

Word of mouth
 Newspaper Ads
 Online job boards/postings

2017

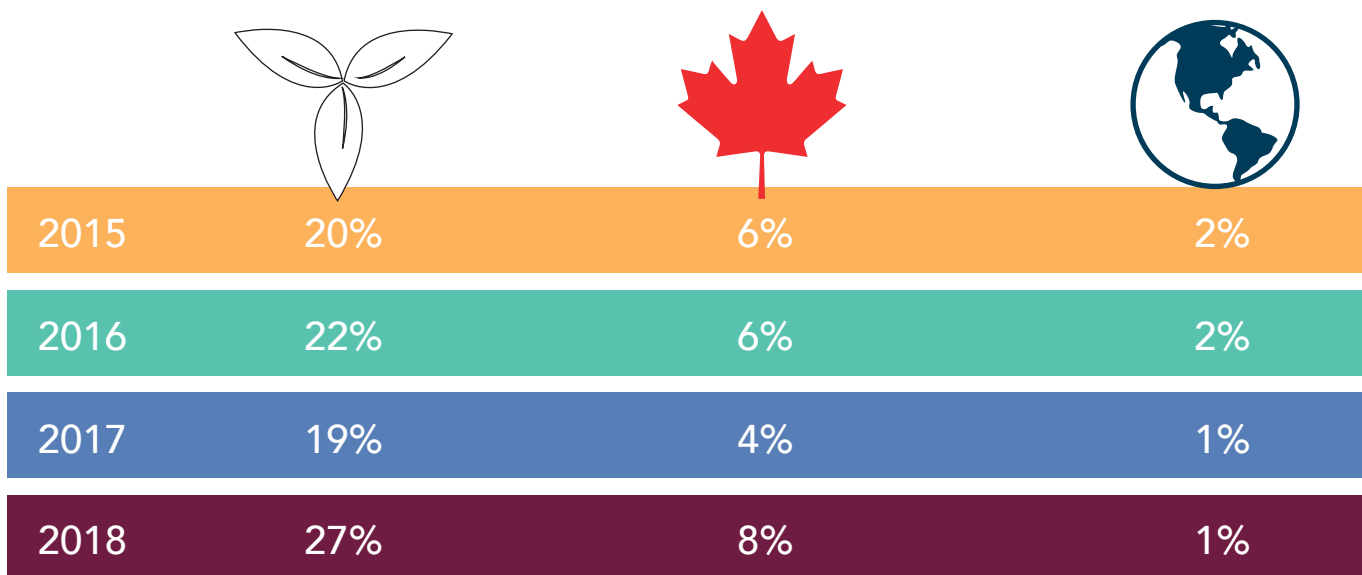
Word of mouth
 Online job boards/postings
Social media    

2018

Word of mouth
 Online job boards/postings
Social media    

RECRUITMENT REGIONS

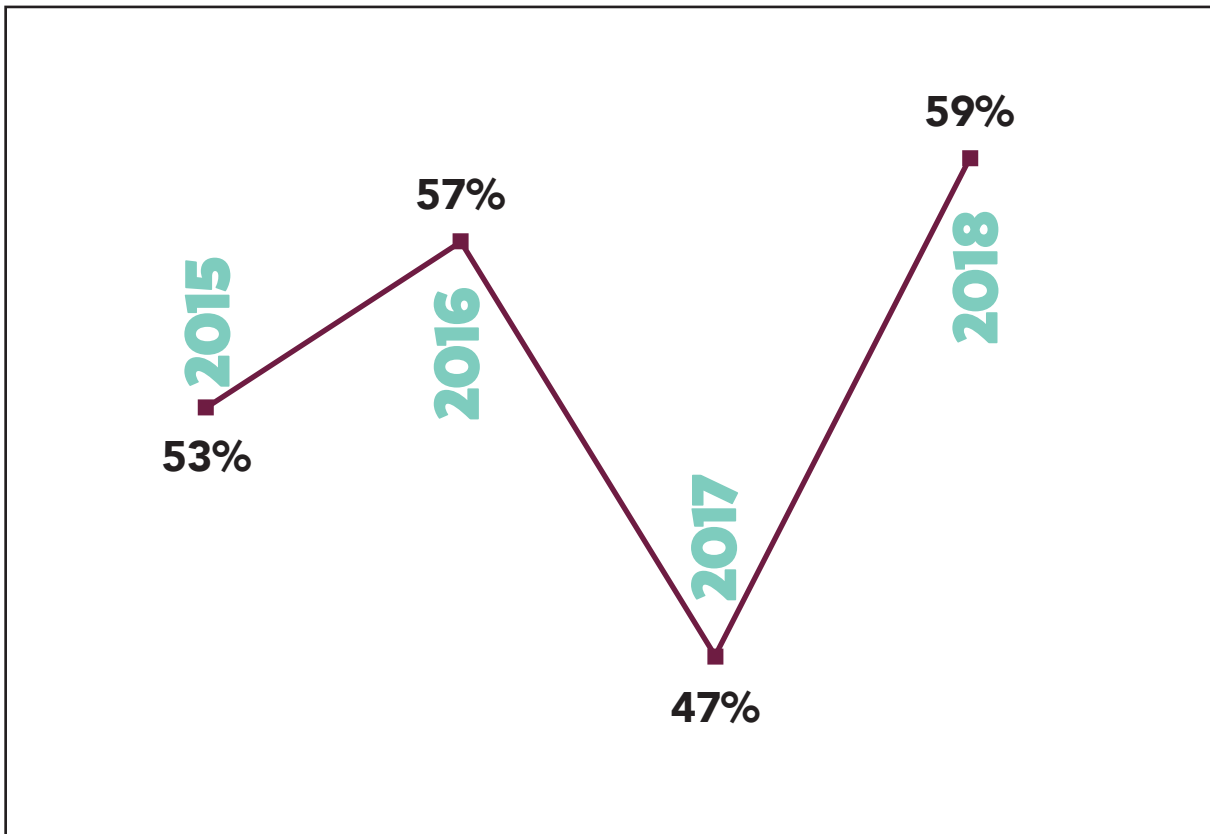
Despite the chronically low availability of local workers, the majority of employers continue to recruit within the local region. However, in 2018, we saw an increase in the percentage of employers who reported recruiting elsewhere in Ontario, and throughout Canada.



HARD-TO-FILL POSITIONS

The percentage of employers reporting that they had hard-to-fill positions during the previous year has ranged from a low of 47% in 2017 to a high of 59% in 2018. In every survey year (except 2017), over half of employers reported that they spent more time than anticipated looking for needed workers. In all reporting years, the number one reason positions were hard to fill was “not enough applicants.” This finding may be one outcome resulting from our economic region’s comparatively low unemployment. The top competencies employers are seeking in hard-to-fill positions continue to emphasize the need for soft skills in the workplace. In 2018, the Planning Board will be undertaking a project to highlight key soft skills necessary for success in various occupations in our top employment sectors. For information about this project, please see our website (www.planningboard.ca) or contact sarah@planningboard.ca.

PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS REPORTING HARD-TO-FILL POSITIONS



TOP 3 COMPETENCIES EMPLOYERS ARE LOOKING FOR
...in Hard-to-Fill Positions

2015   

Work ethic, dedication, dependability

Customer service

Teamwork, interpersonal abilities

2016   

Work ethic, dedication, dependability

Self-motivated/ability to work with little supervision

Technical

2017   

Work ethic, dedication, dependability

Self-motivated/ability to work with little supervision

Teamwork, interpersonal abilities

2018   

Work ethic, dedication, dependability

Self-motivated/ability to work with little supervision

Teamwork, interpersonal abilities



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