

Employee Survey 2018



We asked.
You answered.



Four County
Labour Market Planning Board
Serving Bruce Grey Huron Perth



Ontario

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The views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Ontario.

Background and Introduction

Between July 1 and October 1, 2018, the Four County Labour Market Planning Board conducted an anonymous and confidential survey of employees and job seekers throughout Bruce, Grey, Huron and Perth counties. Our goal was to collect valuable supply-side labour market information which has been limited in past research and is necessary for understanding the complex labour market issues facing our region. After four years of EmployerOne Survey¹ data, we have reliable information about the major challenges facing employers: An ongoing lack of available workers, difficulties with employees meeting workplace expectations (particularly soft skills), and chronic hard-to-fill positions in all key sectors.

What has been absent in our ongoing conversations with employers are the experiences and challenges faced by those who are working, or struggling to find work, in our communities. Given that the climate for employers is one in which they cannot find enough workers to meet labour demand, why would anyone be struggling to find employment? What are the barriers preventing job seekers from securing work? Why are individuals quitting jobs? What do people value most in the workplace? These are some of the questions we sought to answer with our most recent survey. This survey is not exhaustive; it was designed to gather information about key labour market themes. This report is intended as a first step towards future research. It gives us a starting point for understanding experiences in the workplace from the perspective of those who are employed or looking for work in our region.

Concerns that were frequently raised in this survey focused on interpersonal relationships: Both employees and job seekers mentioned respect, trust, and empathy as key characteristics of positive workplaces and management. Feeling valued in the workplace and having sufficient time and resources to complete tasks were considerations that came up repeatedly. Employers who understand work-life balance and show compassion during personal emergency situations – or occasional flexibility to meet family obligations – were the things people said were most important to them. These *human connections* create loyalty between employees and employers, and also appear to be critical factors when employees are considering leaving a job.

This report is broken down as follows: Since responses often varied considerably depending on age, type of work, employment status, and use of skills in the workplace, an analysis of results based on different variables will be presented throughout this report. These snapshots capture key variables and provide insight into how responses differ based on selected criteria. Each snapshot includes a short narrative and an infographic summarizing key findings. These snapshots can be independently accessed and downloaded from our website (www.planningboard.ca).

Snapshots

Age: Three snapshots focusing on respondents in different age categories were created because age is often correlated with the level of workplace experience, and being new to or established in the workplace may have an impact on workplace experiences and perceptions.

Type of Work: This is a comparison between those whose primary job is full-time and those whose primary job is part-time, contract or seasonal.

Unemployment: A snapshot was created around unemployment because the experiences and barriers of those who are currently without work may differ from those who are employed. There is no comparative group for this snapshot.

Self-Employment: This snapshot was created based on a separate survey that respondents could access if they wished to complete the Employee Survey but were not employees. There is no comparative group for this snapshot.

Long-Term Job Seekers: A snapshot was created comparing long-term job seekers – those who have been looking for work for over a year – with those who are seeking (new) employment but have been looking for work for a shorter period of time.

Voluntary Job Leavers: A snapshot was created comparing voluntary job leavers – those who quit a job during the last year – with those who did not quit a job during the last year.

High, Medium and Low Skills Use: A snapshot was created comparing employed respondents who feel they use their skills in the workplace at least 75% of the time vs. those who use skills about 50% of the time vs. those who use skills 25% of the time or less.

General Observations

Overview

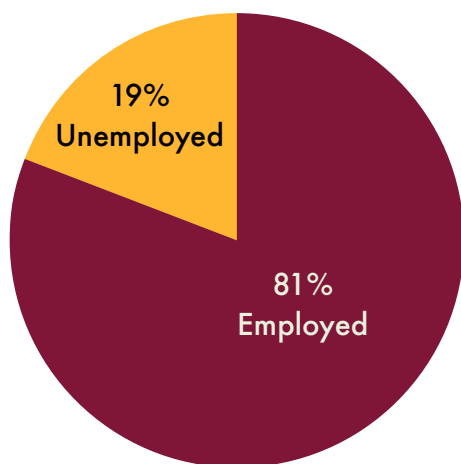
The Employee Survey was comprised of 14 questions. There were a total of 758 responses to the survey with a 92% completion rate. Information presented in this report includes all responses to any given question or parameter. All questions were optional and incomplete surveys were not excluded. Additionally, 43 self-employed individuals responded to a separate survey. While this was not the focus of our project, if self-employed individuals were interested in participating they were redirected to an alternate survey on self-employment. These responses are only included under the Snapshot on Self-Employment (pp. 24-25).

Demographics and Employment Status^{*}

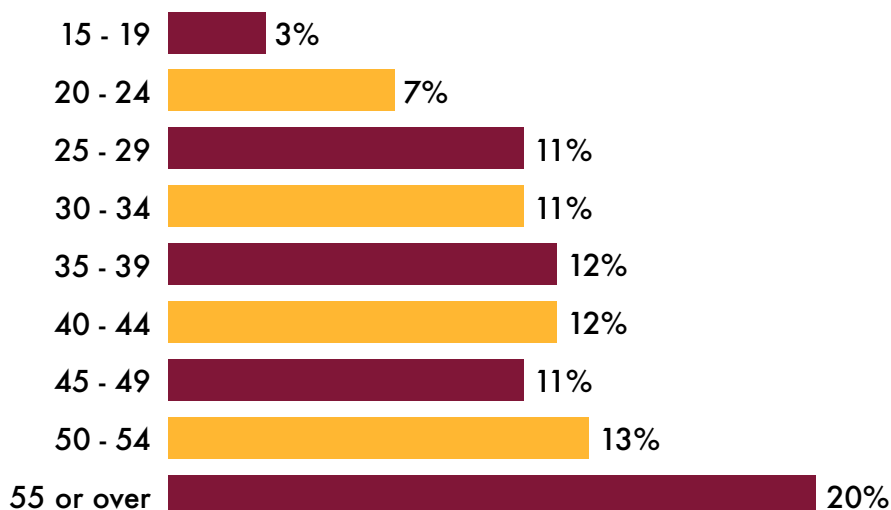
Although the survey was anonymous, respondents were asked to identify their age, their employment status, and, if employed, the number of jobs and types of jobs (full-time, part-time, contract, seasonal) held. Additionally, those who indicated that they did not have full-time work were asked if they would prefer to be employed full-time.

These demographic characteristics can be broken down as follows: The majority of respondents (81%) are currently employed. The largest demographic group that responded to the survey was 55 years of age or older (20%), while respondents were relatively evenly distributed throughout the remaining age cohorts, though slightly fewer youth (under 25 years) responded than those in other age brackets. The majority of respondents who are employed hold only one job (80%) and the majority of those (73%) indicated that a full-time position is their primary or only employment.

Employment Status

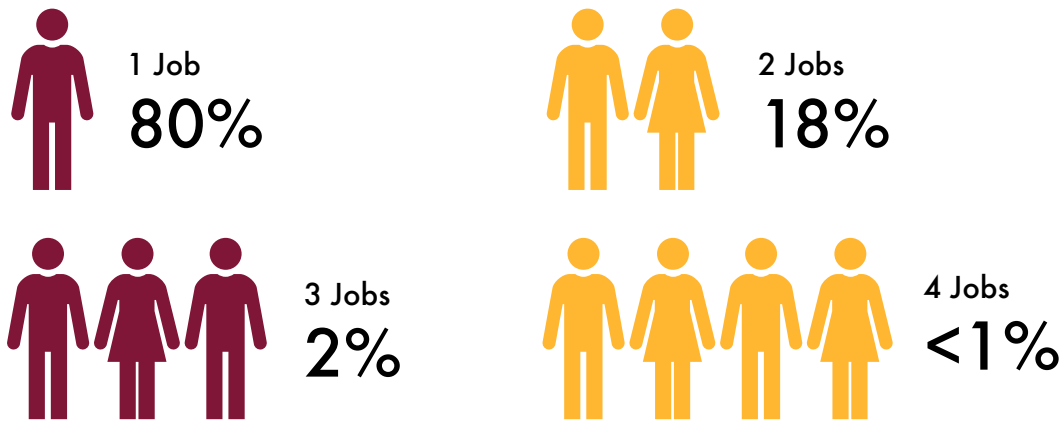


Age

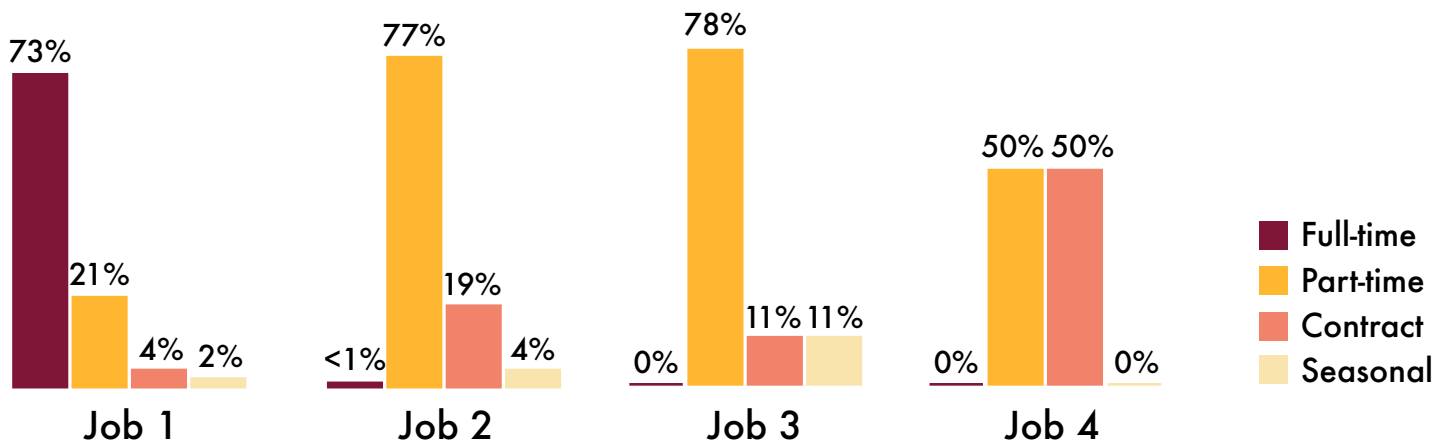


^{*}Represents respondents to survey

Number of jobs held by survey respondents who are employed:



Type of employment held by survey respondents who are currently employed:



66% of those who do not currently hold a full-time job indicated they would prefer one, while 34% of respondents are content without full-time positions. There are many reasons for which individuals may not choose full-time employment: Non-full-time work may be appealing to individuals with caregiver responsibilities, people wishing to stay in the workforce without the pressures of a full-time job, or those who are pursuing educational opportunities.

66% of those who
DO NOT HOLD
A FULL-TIME JOB
indicated they would prefer one

Job Seekers and Job Leavers

Job Seekers

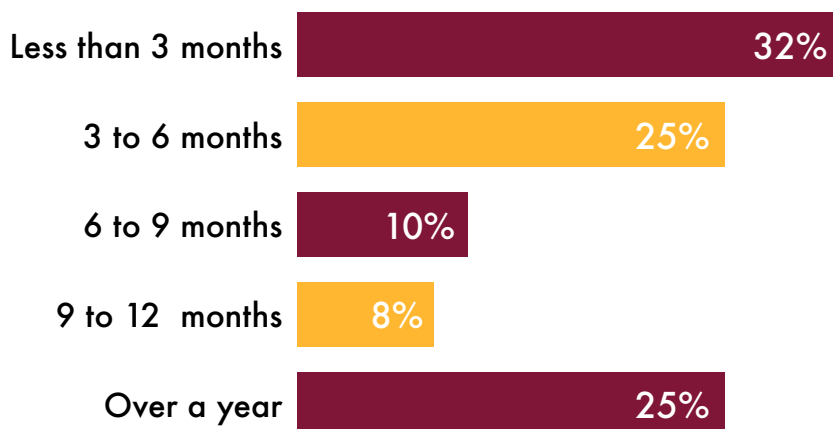
Anyone who responded to questions about job seeking activities during the last year has been classified as a job seeker. Job seekers represented 285 respondents and include both those who are employed (58%) and unemployed (42%). Survey questions pertaining to job seeking activities include methods used to find new employment, and length of time respondents have been searching for work.

When asked how they are looking for work, job seekers most frequently reported using the following methods:



This corresponds with the most recent EmployerOne survey in which employers reported the same top three methods² when looking for new employees. This suggests that there is alignment between how job seekers are looking for work and how employers are advertising for new employees.

In our most recent EmployerOne survey, 59% of employers reported that they had difficulty filling at least one position during the previous year, and 29% reported spending over a year trying to fill these positions. In our current survey, when asked how long they have been looking for work, about a third of job seekers reported that they have been looking for less than three months, while a quarter have spent over a year looking for a job.



The fact that 25% of job seekers have been struggling to find employment for over a year is important for at least two reasons: First, research shows that the longer an individual is unemployed, the harder it may be for them to successfully obtain work.³ Second, given that a high percentage of employers have spent over a year trying to fill available positions, and a similar percentage of respondents to our current survey have spent over a year looking for work, there is a disconnect between job seekers

and potential employers. As mentioned earlier, this disconnect does not appear to be between how employers are advertising for available positions and how job seekers are looking for new opportunities. Instead, other factors may be impacting job seekers. Additional factors mentioned by survey respondents included: transportation and housing challenges, mismatches between skills or educational background and available positions, and salary levels of available positions.

Job Leavers

Anyone who responded to questions about job leaving activities during the last year has been classified as a job leaver. Job leavers represented 244 respondents and include both those who are employed (71%) and unemployed (29%). Survey questions pertaining to job leaving activities include the reasons for which respondents who voluntarily left a job within the last year chose to do so.

The most recent EmployerOne Survey reported that 47% of workplace separations resulted from employees quitting positions; however, data from employers does not tell us *why* employees chose to leave their jobs. In response to this, for the current survey, we asked respondents to identify their reasons for leaving employment.

The most frequently reported reasons were as follows:

I experienced harassment or bullying	37%
My schedule was unpredictable	31%
I found a different job that paid more	26%*
I was not using my skills/experience/education/training in my work	26%*
There were no opportunities for variety at work (i.e., learning new things, moving into a different role)	26%*
I was not given enough hours	25%
I had health concerns (including mental health) that required me to leave my job	24%
There was no grievance process for addressing concerns in the workplace	22%

Total does not equal 100% because respondents were asked to select up to three responses
*Tied for third most frequent response

While slightly over a quarter of voluntary job leavers reported leaving because they found another higher paying job, respondents to our survey raised several reasons unrelated to pay for which they left their jobs. 37% of respondents experienced harassment or bullying which was the most frequently reported reason, and, potentially related to this, 22% reported that there was no grievance process for addressing concerns in the workplace. Recently released Statistics Canada data found that: “In Canada, 19% of women and 13% of men aged 15 to 64 reported that they experienced at least one type of harassment in the workplace in the past 12 months.”⁴ Other significant reasons for leaving included unpredictable scheduling, underutilizing one’s skills in the workplace, lack of variety, not being given enough hours, and the need to leave due to health concerns.

Workplace Satisfaction

Understanding the factors⁵ that influence job satisfaction is important for understanding employee retention and attrition in the workplace. Frequently advertising, hiring, and training staff can be time-consuming and costly, particularly for small employers with limited resources.

When asked which factors are most important when staying in a job, the following were most frequently identified by survey respondents:

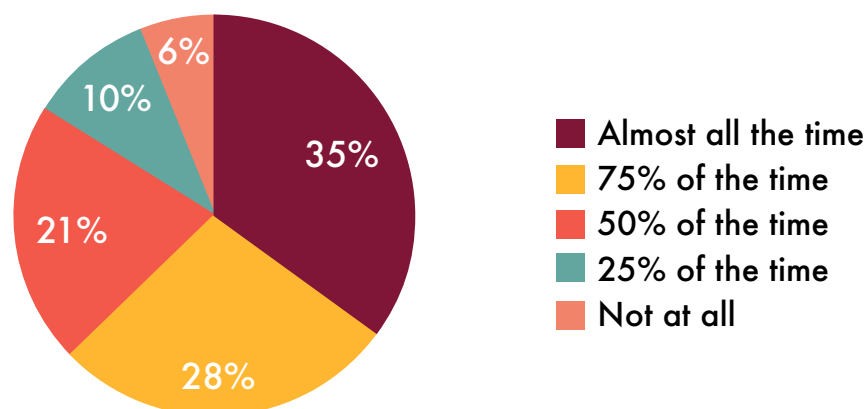
- Being treated with respect and dignity
- Positive relationships with my coworkers and supervisors
- Feeling my role is valued and my work is recognized by my supervisors/coworkers
- Personal satisfaction (i.e., taking pride in my work and knowing I have accomplished something each day)
- Regular increases in salary and/or benefits

While regular increases in salary and/or benefits was cited as the fifth most important factor when staying in a job, the top four reasons focused on respect, interpersonal relationships, value, and a sense of accomplishment. Survey respondents overwhelmingly identified relationships with others and feeling like their contributions are valued as criteria that correlate most strongly with positive workplace experiences.

Use of Skills

Skills use may or may not be an important factor when looking for or staying in a job, and may or may not be related to job satisfaction. Additionally, not being able to use one's skills and experience at work may or may not be a contributing factor to why someone decides to quit a job.

When asked about the extent to which employees feel their skills are a good match for their jobs, a significant majority (63%) indicated that they are presently using their skills/experience/training/education at least 75% of the time. Only 6% of respondents indicated that they never use their skills at work. This suggests that the majority of people are currently in employment situations that align – at least somewhat – with their skills and experience.



When asked how important it is for individuals to use their skills at work, almost all (93%) indicated that this is either extremely important or somewhat important, suggesting that working in an environment where one's skills and experience are being used is a necessary consideration for most people when evaluating their employment situations. As mentioned earlier, of those who quit a job during the previous year, 26% responded that not using their skills at work was a contributing factor in their decision to leave.

Key Comments from Respondents

Survey respondents were asked to share the most important thing they would like us to know about working or looking for work in the four county area.⁶ Nearly half of respondents gave feedback. These comments provide key insight into areas of research that could be further explored, but were not part of the original survey. The following five comments were mentioned most often and are listed in order of frequency:

Income

OVER 20% 
of comments mentioned
SALARY, PAY OR WAGES

Over 20% of comments mentioned salary, pay and wages. Specifically, these survey respondents feel they are not being paid enough to cover living expenses and/or feel they should earn more based on their education and experience. Additionally, many respondents identified high costs associated with housing, transportation and childcare as significant financial stressors or barriers towards employment.

Since respondents were not asked to select the sector in which they work, nor their level of education, a further breakdown of these comments cannot be undertaken. However, living wage reports published by the United Way⁷ identify a living wage for all four counties that is significantly higher than the minimum wage, suggesting that individuals earning minimum wage in our region are likely to be struggling financially.

Respect, Value, and Work-Life Balance

17% of respondents who
shared comments
EXPRESSED CONCERNS
around work-life balance

17% of respondents who shared comments expressed concerns around work-life balance. They all reported wanting to work with positive and supportive supervisors and coworkers who are appreciative of their workplace contributions. Feeling valued and respected as an individual – who is more than just an employee – was also mentioned

frequently. Additionally, having a manageable workload, with clear workplace expectations and a defined separation between work and home life, was mentioned by many as a key factor in workplace enjoyment.

Discrimination

THE MAJORITY
of comments about
DISCRIMINATION
were mentioned by
Older Workers

The majority of comments about discrimination were mentioned by older workers who discussed age discrimination either in the workplace or during the hiring process. Discrimination based on health concerns (including mental health) or disabilities was also raised by respondents. Some respondents reported losing out on advancement opportunities, not being considered for additional hours at work, or losing their jobs because of health issues. A smaller percentage of respondents reported discrimination based on gender or discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Limited Professional Opportunities

Many respondents mentioned a lack of professional positions in the area. Some referred to limited opportunities for advancement in small companies, or very few openings for highly skilled professionals. Additionally, many individuals who have moved to the area referred to challenges networking locally with other highly skilled and highly educated peers. Many respondents also reported difficulties trying to enter the local labour market for the first time, particularly in small industries with only a few local employers.

Many respondents
mentioned a **LACK** of
PROFESSIONAL
positions in the area

Limited Training and Advancement Opportunities

Limited advancement opportunities
were mentioned by many respondents
AS LIMITATIONS
in rural communities

Insufficient training and/or limited advancement opportunities were mentioned by many respondents as limitations in rural communities and within smaller organizations. These comments do not align with information collected from employers. In the most recent EmployerOne survey, 72% of employers told

us they had supported training during the previous year. There may be a mismatch between what employers are offering as training opportunities and what employees would like to learn. Without further inquiry, it is difficult to determine the cause of this disconnect.

Snapshot on Younger Workers

158 respondents identified as younger workers, based on the following criteria: 29 years old was chosen as the benchmark for identifying younger workers because 29 is the cut-off for eligibility for Employment Ontario (EO)⁸ services geared towards youth (i.e., Youth Job Connection, Summer Company). Census Canada often includes anyone up to 34 as youth.⁹ However, for our analysis, we have not included the 30-34 age bracket, as the survey results from individuals in this demographic did not differ considerably from those who were 29 years old and under, and we have aligned our definition of youth with eligibility for EO youth services.

Key Findings Compared to Middle-Aged and Older Workers



- Most frequently reported holding more than one job
- Younger workers and middle-aged workers who do not currently have full-time work were more likely than older workers to report that they would prefer a full-time position
- Were the least likely to report that they have been looking for work for over a year
- Were the only age cohort to report “I was not given enough hours” as a top reason for quitting employment

YOUNGER WORKERS SURVEY RESPONDENTS

80%

ARE EMPLOYED



20%

ARE UNEMPLOYED



29%



hold more than one job

58%

use their skills
75%+ OF THE TIME
in the workplace

17%

have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

91% *feel it is*

**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**

to use their skills in the workplace



83%

would prefer
A FULL-TIME JOB

Top 3 JOB SEEKING METHODS

for respondents who are currently looking for work

YOUNGER WORKERS

Online job boards
Word of mouth
Social Media



Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when looking for a job

YOUNGER WORKERS

Pay or salary
Hours of work
Ability to use skills



Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when staying in a job

YOUNGER WORKERS

Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors
Personal satisfaction
Being treated with respect and dignity



Top 3 REASONS INDIVIDUALS QUIT

a job within the last year

YOUNGER WORKERS

Not given enough hours
Schedule was unpredictable
Found a different job that paid more



Snapshot on Middle-Aged Workers

447 respondents identified as middle-aged workers, based on the following criteria: Middle-aged workers include those who are older than the maximum age for Employment Ontario youth services (29 and under), yet younger than the qualifying age for Employment Ontario older worker services (55 and over). Workers between the ages of 30 and 54 have, thus, been characterized as middle-aged workers for this report.

Key Findings Compared to Younger and Older Workers



- Middle-aged workers and younger workers who do not currently have full-time work were more likely than older workers to report that they would prefer a full-time position
- Were the most likely to report “work that I find meaningful” as a top factor when looking for a job
- Were the most likely to report “regular increases in salary and/or benefits” as a top factor when staying in a job

MIDDLE-AGED WORKERS SURVEY RESPONSES

83%

ARE EMPLOYED



17%

ARE UNEMPLOYED



18%



hold more than one job

62%

use their skills
75%+ OF THE TIME
in the workplace

29%

have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

93% *feel it is*

**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**

to use their skills in the workplace



78%

would prefer
A FULL-TIME JOB

Top 3 JOB SEEKING METHODS

for respondents who are currently looking for work

MIDDLE-AGED WORKERS

Online job boards
Word of mouth
Social Media



Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when looking for a job

MIDDLE-AGED WORKERS

Pay or salary
Hours of work
Work that is meaningful



Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when staying in a job

MIDDLE-AGED WORKERS

Being treated with respect and dignity
Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors
Regular increases in salary and/or benefits



Top 3 REASONS INDIVIDUALS QUIT

a job within the last year

MIDDLE-AGED WORKERS

Experienced harassment or bullying
Schedule was unpredictable
Not using skills



Snapshot on Older Workers

149 survey respondents identified as older workers, based on the following criteria: 55 and older has been used as the benchmark for determining which respondents are classified as older workers because Employment Ontario services for older workers (such as the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers) are geared towards individuals between the ages of 55 and 64.

In the Stratford-Bruce Peninsula Economic Region, the labour participation rate for 55-64 year olds is 2.3% lower than the Ontario average.¹⁰ As worker age increases, most individuals have accumulated more workplace experience and frequently have higher earnings than their younger colleagues. The age of workers and job seekers may also make them vulnerable to discrimination. While there was no mention of discrimination in the survey questions or response choices, comments about age discrimination were frequently mentioned by respondents in this age group, as noted earlier.

According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission, “the term ‘ageism’ refers to two concepts: a socially constructed way of thinking about older persons based on negative attitudes and stereotypes about aging, and a tendency to structure society based on an assumption that everyone is young, thereby failing to respond appropriately to the real needs of older persons.”¹¹ In 2014, *The Globe and Mail* published an article¹² about lawsuits related to age discrimination in Canada in which employment lawyers reported an increase in age-related discrimination cases resulting from the elimination of mandatory retirement and, correspondingly, older workers staying in the workforce longer than before. The Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario reported that, of discrimination-related claims in 2012-2013 (the last year for which data is publicly available), 15% were related to age discrimination.¹³

In May 2018, *The Globe and Mail* cited a study in which “roughly 25 percent of employees make judgments about their coworkers’ and supervisors’ abilities to do their job based on their age alone.”¹⁴ Several studies¹⁵ confirm that unfavourable perceptions and beliefs about older workers’ abilities negatively impact their ability to both remain employed and to secure new employment opportunities, as compared to younger workers. In 2016, *Canadian Human Resources Reporter* cited a study¹⁶ suggesting that age discrimination may begin as early as mid-forties.

Despite the positive value older workers bring to the labour market,¹⁷ many feel they have experienced discrimination in the workplace. Widespread research points to age as a potential employment obstacle, particularly for those who find themselves searching for work later in their careers.¹⁸ Labour relations and Canadian law associations have also published on age discrimination, in an effort to educate both employees and employers,¹⁹ and popular news outlets have focused on this issue in recent years.²⁰

Key Findings Compared to Younger and Middle-Aged Workers




- Were the only age cohort to report “newspaper ads” as a top job seeking method
- As respondents’ age increased, the percentage who reported using their skills in the workplace at least 75% of the time also increased
- Were less likely than younger or middle-aged workers to report that they would prefer a full-time job

OLDER WORKERS SURVEY RESPONDENTS

79% 
ARE EMPLOYED

21% 
ARE UNEMPLOYED

19% 
hold more than one job

48% *would prefer*
A FULL-TIME JOB

27% 
have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

71% *use their skills*
75%+ OF THE TIME
in the workplace

94% *feel it is*
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

Top 3 JOB SEEKING METHODS for respondents who are currently looking for work

OLDER WORKERS

Online job boards
Word of mouth
Newspaper ads



Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS when looking for a job

OLDER WORKERS

Pay or salary
Hours of work
Ability to use skills



Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS when staying in a job

OLDER WORKERS

Being treated with respect and dignity
Feeling role is valued and work is recognized
Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors



Top 3 REASONS INDIVIDUALS QUIT a job within the last year

OLDER WORKERS

Experienced harassment or bullying
Had health concerns (including mental health) that required leaving a job
Found a different job that paid more*
Not using skills*
No grievance process for addressing concerns in the workplace*




*Tied for third most frequent response

Snapshot on Type of Work

Workers who identified full-time work as their primary or only type of employment represented 434 respondents. Workers who identified part-time, seasonal or contract positions as their primary or only type of employment represented 164 respondents.

- Key Findings*
- Non-full-time workers were more likely than full-time workers to hold more than one job
 - Non-full-time workers were more likely than full-time workers to use social media as a job search tool
 - “Work that I find meaningful” and “ability to use my skills/experience/training/education” were key factors when looking for employment for those who were non-full-time workers, but were not in the top three factors for full-time workers
 - Non-full-time workers were likely to have quit a job within the last year because they were not given enough hours or had unpredictable work schedules; whereas full-time workers were more likely to have quit because they found a job with higher pay or were not using their skills in the workplace
 - Full-time workers were more likely to report using their skills in the workplace, and more likely to report that it is extremely or somewhat important to find a job where their skills are being used

FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT


15% 
hold more than one job

29%
have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

66% use their skills **75% + of**
the time in the workplace

95% feel it is **!!**
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

NON-FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

35% 
hold more than one job

24%
have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

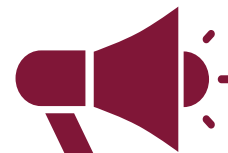
66%
would prefer
A FULL-TIME JOB

57% use their skills **75% + of**
the time in the workplace

89% feel it is **!!**
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

Top 3 JOB SEEKING METHODS

for respondents who are currently looking for work



FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

- Online job boards
- Word of mouth
- Checking a company's internet site

NON-FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

- Online job boards
- Word of mouth
- Social media

Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when looking for a job



FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

- Pay or salary
- Hours of work
- Non-salary benefits

NON-FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

- Hours of work
- Pay or salary
- Work that is meaningful*
- Ability to use skills*

*Tied for third most frequent response

Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when staying in a job



FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

- Being treated with respect and dignity
- Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors
- Regular increases in salary and/or benefits

NON-FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

- Being treated with respect and dignity*
- Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors*
- Feeling role is valued and work is recognized**
- Personal satisfaction**

*Tied for most frequent response

**Tied for second most frequent response

Top 3 REASONS INDIVIDUALS QUIT

a job within the last year



FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

- Found a different job that paid more
- Not using skills*
- Experienced harassment or bullying*

*Tied for second most frequent response

NON-FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

- Not given enough hours
- Schedule was unpredictable
- Experienced harassment or bullying

Snapshot on Unemployment

141 respondents indicated that they were unemployed. Unemployed respondents did not answer questions pertaining to employment status and type of work; however, they were asked about current obstacles to employment.

Key Findings



Unemployed respondents were asked which factors they felt were contributing to their inability to find work. They most frequently reported that available jobs did not meet their desired rate of pay, chosen field of employment, or preferred geographical area. A significant percentage of respondents also mentioned the need to improve training or education in order to secure employment. Lack of transportation and challenges around childcare/family responsibilities were also mentioned by many respondents. The highlighted responses were not original answer choices but were mentioned by respondents in the comment field.

Lack of postings at a desirable pay or salary level	47%
Lack of postings in my chosen field of employment	39%
Lack of postings in my geographical area	35%
Need to improve training/education to be eligible for available jobs	32%
Lack of transportation getting to/from work	22%
Challenges around childcare/family responsibilities	15%
Lack of work experience	11%
Lack of flexibility/accommodation for health concerns (including mental health)	10%
Age discrimination	7%
Lack of postings for my desired type of work (Full-time/Part-time/Contract/Seasonal)	5%

*Totals do not equal 100% because respondents were asked to select up to three responses

When separated by age, the top three factors were as follows. Younger workers were the only age cohort to report transportation as a key barrier to employment, and older workers were the only age cohort that did not report needing to improve training/education to be eligible for available jobs:

Top 3 BARRIERS to employment



YOUNGER WORKERS

Lack of transportation getting to/from work
Need to improve training/education to be eligible for available jobs
Lack of postings in chosen field of employment

MIDDLE-AGED WORKERS

Lack of postings at a desirable pay or salary level
Lack of postings in chosen field of employment
Need to improve training/education to be eligible for available jobs*
Lack of postings in preferred geographical area*

*Tied for third most frequent response

OLDER WORKERS

Lack of postings at a desirable pay or salary level**
Lack of postings in preferred geographical area**
Lack of postings in chosen field of employment

**Tied for most frequent response

Top 3 JOB SEEKING METHODS

for respondents who are currently looking for work

UNEMPLOYED

Online job boards
Word of mouth
Social media



23%
have been
looking for
**WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR**

Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when looking for a job

UNEMPLOYED

Pay or salary
Hours of work
Location



89% feel it is
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when staying in a job

UNEMPLOYED

Being treated with respect and dignity
Personal satisfaction
Positive relationships with coworkers
and supervisors



Top 3 REASONS INDIVIDUALS QUIT

a job within the last year

UNEMPLOYED

Experienced harassment or bullying
Health concerns (including mental health) that
required leaving a job
Schedule was unpredictable



Snapshot on Self-Employment

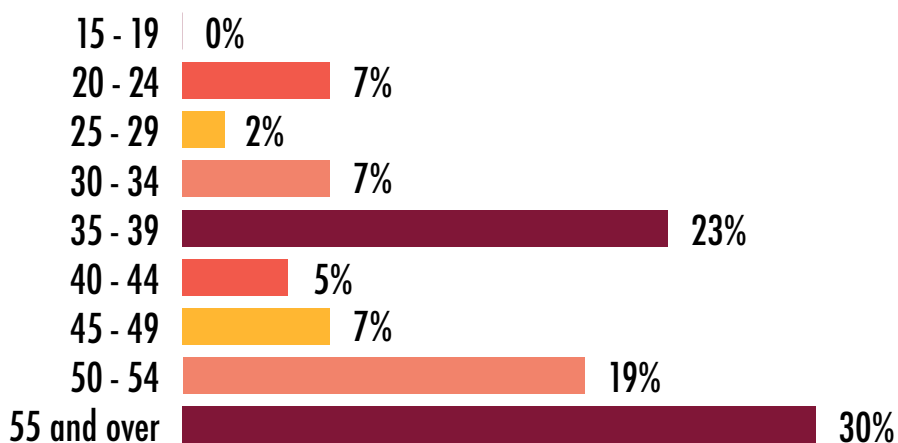
Self-employed individuals did not respond to the same questions, but were directed to an alternate survey if they attempted to complete the Employee Survey. 43 self-employed individuals responded to this survey.

Key Findings

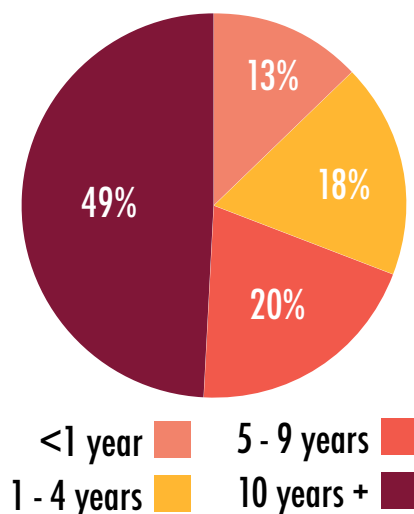


- 49% of respondents are 50 years or age or older
- 49% of respondents have been self-employed for at least 10 years
- The majority of respondents reported that they were working as an employee before becoming self-employed
- Respondents most frequently reported wanting more control over their time (i.e., hours of work, schedule of work, vacation) as the reason for self-employment
- Lack of steady income was reported as the most likely reason for which respondents might consider leaving self-employment for other opportunities

AGE



LENGTH OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT



Top 2 ACTIVITIES REPORTED in year before self-employment

Working as an employee (65%)
Enrolled in an educational program (19%)

43% are self-employed
because they could
**NOT FIND SUITABLE
PAID EMPLOYMENT**

75% **WOULD
POSSIBLY**
leave self-employment to
**ACCEPT PAID
EMPLOYMENT**

if an opportunity was at a salary
level corresponding to their skills

65% of respondents
had undertaken
TRAINING
in the last year

82% indicated training
primarily related to
**OCCUPATION
SPECIFIC SKILLS***

30% focused their
training on
**BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT &
OPERATIONS***

*Does not total 100 percent because some respondents
indicated that they required training in both areas.

Top 3 THINGS THAT COULD PREVENT respondents from remaining self-employed

Lack of steady income
Lack of non-salary benefits
Struggles around work-life balance



Top 3 REASONS FOR SELF-EMPLOYMENT by those who had previously worked as employees

Wanted more control over time
Felt they could earn more money by working
on their own
Wanted the ability to choose projects/
contracts



Top 3 BARRIERS LIMITING TRAINING for those who are self-employed

Cost
Distance to training facility*
Loss of productivity during training time*

*Tied for second most frequent response



Snapshot on Long-Term Job Seekers



This snapshot compares long-term job seekers – those who have been looking for work for more than a year – with job seekers who have spent less time looking for work. Long-term job seekers represented 25% of job-seeking respondents, while 75% of job seekers have been looking for work for less than a year.

Key Findings



- The majority of job seekers – both long-term and non-long-term – are currently employed
- Long-term job seekers were more likely than non-long-term job seekers to hold more than one job
- Long-term job seekers were less likely to use social media as a job seeking tool
- Non-long-term job seekers reported experiencing harassment or bullying, and health concerns as reasons for quitting positions within the last year; whereas long-term job seekers did not report these reasons as frequently
- Long-term job seekers were less likely to be using their skills in their current job than were non-long-term job seekers

NON-LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS


57%
ARE EMPLOYED



43%
ARE UNEMPLOYED



83%
would prefer
A FULL-TIME JOB

24% 
hold more than one job

44% use their skills **75% + of the time** in the workplace

91% *feel it is* **!!**
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS


63%
ARE EMPLOYED



37%
ARE UNEMPLOYED



86%
would prefer
A FULL-TIME JOB

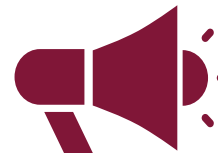
34% 
hold more than one job

33% use their skills **75% + of the time** in the workplace

90% *feel it is* **!!**
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

Top 3 JOB SEEKING METHODS

for respondents who are currently looking for work



NON-LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS

Online job boards
Word of mouth
Social media

LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS

Online job boards
Word of mouth
Checking a company's internet site

Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when looking for a job



NON-LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS

Pay or salary
Hours of work
Location

LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS

Pay or salary
Hours of work
Ability to use skills

Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when staying in a job



NON-LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS

Being treated with respect and dignity
Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors
Personal satisfaction

LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS

Being treated with respect and dignity
Personal satisfaction
Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors

Top 3 REASONS INDIVIDUALS QUIT

a job within the last year



NON-LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS

Experienced harassment or bullying
Health concerns (including mental health) that required leaving a job
Schedule was unpredictable

LONG-TERM JOB SEEKERS

Schedule was unpredictable*
Not using skills*
Not given enough hours**
No opportunities for variety at work**

*Tied for most frequent response

**Tied for second most frequent response

Snapshot on Voluntary Job Leavers



242 respondents reported quitting a job within the last year. These individuals have been classified as voluntary job leavers, and are comprised of both employed (71%) and unemployed (29%) individuals.

Key Findings



- Employed voluntary job leavers were more likely than unemployed voluntary job leavers to check a company's internet site in their search for work
- Location was more likely to be a key consideration when looking for work for unemployed voluntary job leavers than for those who are currently employed
- Health concerns were more likely to be a top reason for which unemployed voluntary job leavers quit a job within the last year; whereas, finding a higher paying position was more likely to be a top reason for which currently employed voluntary job leavers quit


EMPLOYED

71%
ARE EMPLOYED



24%
have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

84%
would prefer
A FULL-TIME JOB

26% 
hold more than one job

51% use their skills **75% + of**
the time in the workplace

93% *feel it is* **!!**
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

UNEMPLOYED

29%
ARE UNEMPLOYED

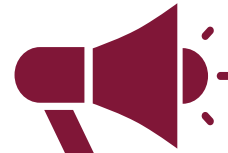


13%
have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

86% *feel it is* **!!**
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

Top 3 JOB SEEKING METHODS

for respondents who are currently looking for work



EMPLOYED

- Online job boards
- Word of mouth
- Checking a company's internet site

UNEMPLOYED

- Online job boards
- Word of mouth
- Sending resume to employers (unsolicited)

Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when looking for a job



EMPLOYED

- Pay or salary
- Hours of work
- Work that is meaningful

UNEMPLOYED

- Pay or salary
- Hours of work
- Location

Top 3 MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when staying in a job



EMPLOYED

- Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors
- Being treated with respect and dignity
- Personal satisfaction

UNEMPLOYED

- Being treated with respect and dignity
- Personal satisfaction
- Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors

Top 3 REASONS INDIVIDUALS QUIT

a job within the last year



EMPLOYED

- Experienced harassment or bullying
- Schedule was unpredictable
- Found a different job that paid more

UNEMPLOYED

- Experienced harassment or bullying
- Health concerns (including mental health) that required leaving a job
- Schedule was unpredictable

Snapshot on Skills Use in the Workplace



Employed survey respondents were asked how often their skills are a good match for their current employment. These responses were divided into low skills use (25% of the time or less); average skills use (about 50% of the time) and high skills use (at least 75% of the time). The majority of respondents (63%) were in the high skills use category:


LOW • 16%

AVERAGE • 21%

HIGH • 63%

- Key Findings*
- Of those who are employed but do not currently have full-time jobs, those in the low skills use category were the most likely to prefer full-time employment if it were available
 - Job seeking respondents in the high skills use category were the least likely to report that they have been looking for work for over a year
 - Respondents in the high skills use category were the only ones to report that “ability to use my skills/experience/training/education” was a key consideration when looking for new employment
 - Respondents in the low skills use category were the only ones to report “there were no opportunities for variety at work” as a key reason for which they had quit a job within the last year
 - Job seeking respondents in the low skills use category were the only ones to report that “ability to learn new things and feel challenged in my role” was a top factor when staying in a job

LOW


19% 
hold more than one job

85% *would prefer*
A FULL-TIME JOB

27%
have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

87% *feel it is*
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

AVERAGE

24% 
hold more than one job

72% *would prefer*
A FULL-TIME JOB

33%
have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

94% *feel it is*
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

HIGH

20% 
hold more than one job

71% *would prefer*
A FULL-TIME JOB

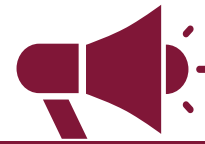
21%
have been
looking for
WORK FOR
OVER A YEAR

95% *feel it is*
**EXTREMELY IMPORTANT/
SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT**
to use their skills in the workplace

Top 3

JOB SEEKING METHODS

for respondents who are currently looking for work



LOW

Online job boards
Word of mouth*
Company's internet site*

*Tied for second most frequent response

AVERAGE

Online job boards
Word of mouth
Social media

HIGH

Online job boards
Word of mouth
Company's internet site

Top 3

MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when looking for a job



LOW

Pay or salary
Hours of work
Work that is meaningful

AVERAGE

Pay or salary
Hours of work
Non-salary benefits*
Location*

*Tied for third most frequent response

HIGH

Pay or salary
Hours of work
Ability to use skills

Top 3

MOST IMPORTANT THINGS

when staying in a job



LOW

Being treated with respect and dignity
Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors
Ability to learn new things and feeling challenged

AVERAGE

Being treated with respect and dignity
Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors
Regular increases in salary and/or benefits

HIGH

Being treated with respect and dignity
Positive relationships with coworkers and supervisors
Feeling role is valued and work is recognized

Top 3

REASONS INDIVIDUALS QUIT

a job within the last year



LOW

Experienced harassment or bullying
Not using skills
No opportunities for variety at work

AVERAGE

Schedule was unpredictable
Experienced harassment or bullying
Not using skills

HIGH

Found a different job that paid more
Schedule was unpredictable
Not given enough hours*
Experienced harassment or bullying*

*Tied for third most frequent response

Conclusion

The objective of this survey was to explore the experiences of employees and job seekers in the four county region. The questions we asked of our community members were intended to provide opportunities for discussion and research. As such, we recognize that this report is preliminary and, in many cases, raises more questions than answers. This is especially true where what employees are reporting in the workplace does not appear to be consistent with what employers and business owners have reported. Further inquiry is needed to understand the cause of these discrepancies.

EmployerOne survey results continue to show that employers are largely dissatisfied: Over the last four years, at least 2/3 have rated the availability of qualified workers as either fair or poor. Approximately half of employers struggle to fill positions each year, primarily due to lack of applicants, and employers are constantly reporting that many employees and job seekers lack the soft skills necessary for workplace success. The current report does not solve these significant challenges raised by employers, but it does shed some light on workplace concerns from a different, and much-needed, perspective.

The majority of employees and job seekers who responded to our survey wish to remain in, or obtain, work in environments where they feel respected, valued, and have positive relationships with others. They want to use their skills and abilities as much as possible in the workplace, and feel empowered to do their jobs well.

We need to focus on bridging the gap between employers who are spending long periods of time looking for new employees and job seekers who are reporting the same length of time spent looking for work. Additionally, understanding the reasons for which employees have voluntarily left their jobs may help employers with retention in the workplace.

The interplay between supply and demand in the labour market is complex and multifaceted. This Employee Survey was designed to address several issues in EmployerOne that were either concerning or perplexing. We have now collected data that has addressed some of these questions and has given us a broader understanding of workplace experiences in our region.

Endnotes

- 1 EmployerOne 2018 is cited frequently throughout this report, as references to our annual survey of employers are often used to contextualized findings in this most recent survey. Unless otherwise noted, any references to EmployerOne can be found here: www.planningboard.ca/surveyobservations
- 2 Employers reported word of mouth as the most frequently used recruitment method and online job boards as the second most frequently used method, but the top three methods used by both job seekers and employers are the same.
- 3 Eriksson, Stephan and Dan-Olof Rooth. "Do Employers use Unemployment as a Sorting Criterion When Hiring? Evidence from a Field Experiment" in *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 104, No. 3 (March 2014), pp. 1014-1039.
Rothstein, Donna S., "An Analysis of Long-Term Unemployment" in *Monthly Labor Review* (July 2016).
- 4 "Study: Harassment in Canadian workplaces, 2016" <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181217/dq181217b-eng.htm> [Retrieved December 2018]
- 5 Workplace satisfaction and factors that influence employees to stay in or leave their jobs are multi-varied and have been studied extensively. Recent research on this topic includes:
Brown, Andy et al., "Not All That it Might Seem: Why Job Satisfaction is Worth Studying Despite it Being a Poor Summary Measure of Job Quality" in *Work, Employment & Society*, Vol. 26, No. 6 (December 2012), pp. 1007-1018.
Chen, Gilad et al., "The Power of Momentum: A New Model of Dynamic Relationships between Job Satisfaction Change and Turnover Intentions" in *The Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 54, No. 1 (February 2011), pp. 159-181.
Liu, Dong et al., "When Employees are out of Step with Coworkers: How Job Satisfaction Trajectory and Dispersion Influence Individual- and Unit-Level Voluntary Turnover" in *The Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 55, No. 6 (December 2012), pp. 1360-1380.
- 6 Responses from self-employed individuals who filled out the alternate survey are not included here. Their comments are subsumed into the Snapshot on Self-Employment found later in this report (pp.24-25)
- 7 United Way of Bruce Grey: <http://unitedwayofbrucegrey.com/bruce-grey-living-wage-2017/>
United Way Perth-Huron: <http://perthhuron.unitedway.ca/srpc/living-wage-report/> [Retrieved November 2018]
- 8 Employment Ontario service providers in the four county area are as follows: VPI Working Solutions (Bruce); YMCA Employment Services (Grey); Centres for Employment and Learning of the Avon Maitland School Board (Huron); Partners in Employment (Perth); Conestoga Career Centre (Huron and Perth).
- 9 <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2018001-eng.htm> [Retrieved October 2018]
- 10 Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (Custom Table).
- 11 <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/ageism-and-age-discrimination-fact-sheet> [Retrieved October 2018]
- 12 <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/the-law-page/the-rise-of-the-older-worker-and-one-type-of-lawsuit/article16316868/> [Retrieved October 2018]
- 13 <http://www.agediscrimination.info/international-age-discrimination/canada> [retrieved October 2018]
- 14 <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/careers/leadership/article-ageism-is-becoming-a-major-issue-for-corporations/> [Retrieved October 2018]

- 15 Hendrik P. Van Dalen, Kène Henkens and Joop Schippers, "Productivity of Older Workers: Perceptions of Employers and Employees" in *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (June, 2010).
Kunze, Florian, Stephan A. Boehm and Heike Bruch. "Age Diversity, Age Discrimination Climate and Performance Consequences—A Cross Organizational Study" in *The Journal of Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 32, No. 2, (February, 2011), pp. 264-290.
Baker, Edith S. "Is there Age Discrimination in Hiring?" in *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (May, 2008).
https://www.randstad.ca/workforce360-trends/archives/how-age-and-experience-factor-into-job-hunting_1644/ [Retrieved October 2018]
- 16 <https://www.hrreporter.com/columnist/hr-policies-practices/archive/2016/08/16/when-does-age-discrimination-start/> [Retrieved October 2018]
- 17 <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/careers/leadership/article-aging-employees-may-be-a-blessing-not-a-curse/> [Retrieved October 2018]
- 18 Santora, Joseph C. and William J. Seaton, "Age Discrimination: Alive and Well in the Workplace?" in *Academy of Management Executive*, Vol. 22, 2 (May 2008), pp.103-104.
Harris, Kelly et al. "Ageism and the Older Worker: A Scoping Review" in *The Gerontologist*, Volume 58, Issue 2 (March 2018), pp. 1-14.
Hendrik P. Van Dalen et al. "Productivity of Older Workers: Perceptions of Employers and Employees" in *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (June 2010), pp. 309-30.
- 19 <https://www.bcli.org/building-an-intergenerational-workplace-and-avoiding-age-discrimination> [Retrieved October 2018]
<https://www.canadaemploymenthumanrightslaw.com/2018/06/termination-benefits-age-65-violates-charter/> [Retrieved October 2018]
<http://www.canadianlabourrelations.com/age-discrimination-in-the-workplace.html> [Retrieved October 2018]
- 20 <https://tvo.org/video/programs/the-agenda-with-steve-paikin/ageism-in-the-workplace> [Retrieved October 2018]
<https://business.financialpost.com/executive/careers/new-demographic-reality-a-challenge> [Retrieved October 2018]



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