

In-Demand Skilled Trades

IN PEEL AND HALTON REGIONS

**What the Data Shows and
What Employers Say**



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In-Demand Skilled Trades In Peel and Halton Regions What the Data Shows and What Employers Say

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is in response to a Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development requirement that all local employment planning councils and workforce development boards consult with their local employers regarding in-demand skilled trades and their views on the apprenticeship system.

The findings of this report are based on data analysis, employer interviews, key informant interviews and an employer survey.

In principle, employers like the apprenticeship philosophy, which emphasizes training while working, supplemented by classroom instruction. However, employers raise a number of concerns, notably with respect to looming retirements of experienced skilled tradespersons, the decreasing interest on the part of youth to enter a trade, the challenges of navigating the “red tape” of the apprenticeship process, the financial burden to employers of training new workers, the financial challenges borne by apprentices, and a number of other observations and suggestions.

More than half of employers feel that technological change is increasing the skill requirements for skilled trades occupations, with the advent of more sophisticated machines and tools, the need for a range of digital skills, and in some cases with completely new technology emerging (for example, electric cars replacing gasoline-powered cars).

Despite the fact that there are 144 skilled trades in Ontario, the following five trades account for three-quarters of the registered journeypersons in Peel and Halton: Electrician (Construction and Maintenance); Automotive Service Technician; Hairstylist; Truck and Coach Technician; and Plumber.

Skilled trades categories where employers find difficulty hiring or where the data suggests the potential for a future shortage include:

- **Auto Body and Collision Damage Repairer**
- **Cook**
- **General Machinist**
- **Hairstylist**
- **Industrial Electrician**
- **Industrial Mechanic Millwright**
- **Truck and Coach Technician**
- **Truck-Trailer Service Technician**

41% of employers find it very difficult to hire a journeyperson, while only 18% say it is very difficult to hire an apprentice. A considerable proportion of employers feel that the mismatch between the supply and demand of workers will get worse in the next two to three years. On the other hand, two-thirds of employers report that only a few or no apprentices drop out of their training programs.



Introduction

The Government of Ontario has made a clear commitment to attract more people to the skilled trades and to encourage more employers to hire apprentices.

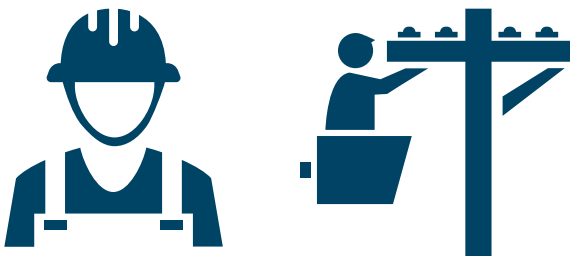
As part of this goal, in the late spring of 2019, the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development directed all Local Employment Planning Councils and Workforce Planning Boards to undertake an In-Demand Skilled Trades Project to provide local insights on labour market conditions for skilled trades and to obtain employer perspectives on the operations of the apprenticeship system.

To carry out this project, the Peel Halton Local Employment Planning Council (PHLEPC) undertook a literature review, analyzed local labour market data, interviewed employers and key informants, administered an employer survey and convened an advisory group, all for the purpose of gathering as much evidence as possible on which to base its findings. This report provides a summary of what we learned and includes data analysis, an overview of responses to the specific questions for which the Ministry sought answers, as well as additional insights we gained from our investigation.

Through the latter half of 2019, PHLEPC undertook 37 employer interviews, 18 interviews with key informants, and held an advisory group meeting with 14 participants representing employers, employers' organizations, educators, employment service providers and local economic development offices. The employer survey attracted 228 employers who hire skilled tradespersons. In short, the project reflects almost 300 engagements with employers and other stakeholders.

The result of this work has been communicated to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. This report is intended to provide our local community with the benefits of this research, so that all stakeholders can better understand and engage with the apprenticeship system and the skilled trades labour market.

This report provides a summary of what we learned and includes data analysis, an overview of responses to the specific questions for which the Ministry sought answers, as well as additional insights we gained from our investigation.





Insights from the data analysis¹

Context. Currently, there are 144 skilled trades in Ontario (12 trades were de-prescribed or removed from the list on July 1, 2019).

There are 23 compulsory trades, meaning that a person cannot work in such a trade without being a journeyman and without being registered with the Ontario College of Trades.² No certificate is required to work in a voluntary trade, but employers may prefer someone who can demonstrate skills proficiency obtained by way of an apprenticeship.

An **apprentice** An apprentice is someone who enters into a Registered Training Agreement with the Ministry and who then registers with the Ontario College of Trades. Most apprentices spend 80-90% of their time learning their skill in the workplace and around 10-20% of their time learning in a classroom. Depending on the program, an apprenticeship program can last one to five years.

A **Certificate of Apprenticeship** is issued when the apprenticeship training is completed. There are 75 trades that also require passing an exam, which results in a **Certificate of Qualification**. Some trades have a **Red Seal** exam, which provides certification for every province in Canada.

An **occupation** is defined by the National Occupational Classification and does not distinguish between whether a job is a skilled trade or not.

Limitations of the data. Data analysis of skilled trades occupations is made more challenging because of how the data is reported. The Ontario College of Trades and the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development collects registration data for journeymen and apprentices by skilled trades program, while labour market data such as is collected through the Census by Statistics Canada is categorized by occupation. One can match skilled trades programs to occupations, however, there is not always a perfect match. For example, registrants in the Hairstylist skilled trades program are found in the occupation of Hairstylists and Barbers, yet barbers are not a skilled trade. As well, while all apprentices are registered, only journeymen in compulsory trades are required to be registered and so occupations representing voluntary trades will number far more employed residents than there are registrations in the corresponding skilled trade program.



¹ There is a fuller data report for each of Peel and Halton Regions available on the PHLEPC website.

² During the period of this project, the Government of Ontario was in the process of winding down the Ontario College of Trades and a number of its functions were being transferred to the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. However, certain processes, such as the registration of apprentices and journeymen, were still described on government websites in terms of the Ontario College of Trades. One can expect these references will be amended in the near future.



Indeed, for certain occupations, skilled trades workers can make up a very small percentage of all persons employed in that occupation, because that broad occupation may represent a wide range of sub-occupations,³ and because the skilled trade may be a voluntary trade, so that it is not necessary to obtain a certificate to work in that occupation.

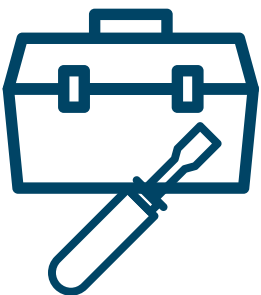
Numbers for apprentices, journeypersons, occupations.

This section illustrates the size of the skilled trades labour market in Peel and Halton. The top five skilled trades by registered journeypersons are the same in both Peel and Halton Regions (Table 1). It is also noteworthy that these five trades alone account for over three-quarters of all registered journeypersons locally, in Peel for 79% and in Halton for 77%.

Table 1: Top Five Trades by Registered Journeypersons, Peel and Halton, October 2019⁴

Skills	Peel	Halton
Electrician — Construction and Maintenance	3984	1704
Automotive Service Technician	3660	1373
Hairstylist	2723	1070
Truck and Coach Technician	2477	780
Plumber	1143	470

Bolded entries are compulsory trades.



³ A good example is the occupation of Transport Truck Driver, which includes anyone who drives a heavy truck, such as a tractor-trailer truck, a dump truck, a moving van, and so on. There exists an apprentice program for a Tractor-Trailer Commercial Driver. Tractor-trailer trucks make up just one portion of the Transport Truck Driver occupation, and there are very few registered journeypersons for this trade.

⁴ This data was made available through the helpful assistance of Ontario College of Trades staff.

There is only a slight difference when one lists the top five trades by apprentices (Table 2). It is also the case that registered apprentices are less concentrated in fewer trades, as these top five programs account for only slightly over half of all local apprenticeships (for Peel, 56%, and for Halton 55%).

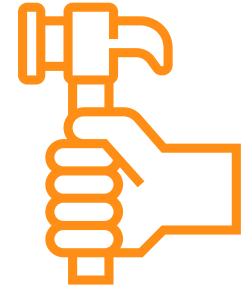


Table 2: Top Five Trades by Registered Apprentices, Peel and Halton, October 2019

	Peel	Halton	
Electrician - Constr. & Maint.	902	443	Electrician — Constr. & Maint.
Automotive Service Technician	773	276	Automotive Service Technician
Plumber	418	143	Plumber
Truck and Coach Technician	399	109	Refrigeration and AC Mechanic
General Carpenter	298	109	Hairstylist

Bolded entries are compulsory trades.

Taking the top six compulsory trades in Peel and Halton, the new registration numbers have been increasing steadily (Table 3). Indeed, for the last three years, new registrations for all apprenticeship programs in Peel and Halton have increased between 7% and 13% each year.

Table 3: Apprentice registrations, top six new registrations for Peel and Halton combined, 2013-2014 to 2018-2019

Skills	Year ▶	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19
Electrician		353	339	426	490	511	614
Automotive Service Technician		294	276	449	465	538	506
Hairstylist		13	145	205	237	281	286
Refrigeration & AC Mechanic		122	161	186	197	19	297
Truck and Coach Technician		173	62	202	186	235	283
Plumber		63	46	96	109	121	124

Bolded entries are compulsory trades.



... in the case of voluntary trades, there can be far more individuals working in that occupation as skilled tradespersons than would be registered with the Ontario College of Trades.

Occupations. When it comes to providing data relating to the actual occupations, the presentation can become more complicated. For one, as noted earlier, some broad occupations include more sub-occupations than what is represented by a single skilled trades program. In addition, in the case of voluntary trades, there can be far more individuals working in that occupation as skilled tradespersons than would be registered with the Ontario College of Trades.

There is a further challenge because the occupation data does not quite reflect the actual jobs in a given locality. Instead, most labour market data is expressed in terms of the jobs that residents are employed in. However, the number of employed residents in an area does not mean they all work in that area. Some commute to other locations for work, just as residents from outside commute to the local area for work. Some data is available which counts the actual jobs present in an area, but here a different challenge arises. Jobs can only be counted for a local area if they have a fixed location for work. A number of skilled trades occupations move from job site to job site, such as when a carpenter goes to different construction sites or when a plumber attends to different locations to fix a leak.

To see how these issues play out, Table 4 presents the number of registered apprentices and journeypersons by occupation in Peel and Halton in October 2019, as well as the number of employed residents in that same occupation. However, the employed resident occupation data is from the 2016 Census. To see how these figures compare, we express the comparison in terms of a percentage of registered tradespersons to employed residents. Given the time lag, we would expect the ratio to be greater than 100%, as there should be more workers in these occupations after three years, given the growth in employment generally.

On the other hand, where an occupation involves a voluntary trade, we would expect the ratio to be less than 100%, because fewer journeypersons may go to the trouble and expense of being registered.

In order to capture these differences, Table 4 presents three types of examples:⁵ (i) compulsory trades; (ii) voluntary trades which have a higher number of registrations; and (iii) voluntary trades with a small number of registrations.

Essentially, among compulsory trades, the figures for registered tradespersons and employed residents are roughly in the same range. Among voluntary trades with higher registration numbers, the registered tradespersons are roughly 10%-20% of employed residents in that occupation. But among voluntary trades with low registration numbers, the proportion of registered tradespersons to the entire occupation can be very low, often under 2%.

⁵ There are more examples in the data appendix to this report.

Table 4: Comparison of registered tradespersons (2019) and employed residents (2016) figures, select trades, Peel and Halton Regions combined

Occupation	Registered tradespersons	Employed residents	Registered trades as % of employed residents
COMPULSORY TRADES			
6341 Hairstylists and barbers	4,066	4,315	94%
7241 Electricians (except industrial & power system)	7,129	3,950	181%
7251 Plumbers	2,174	1,840	118%
7321 Automotive service technicians and others	10,224	8,155	125%
VOLUNTARY TRADES WITH HIGHER REGISTRATION NUMBERS			
7271 Carpenters	463	4,355	11%
7311 Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	547	2,980	18%
VOLUNTARY TRADES WITH LOWER REGISTRATION NUMBERS			
6322 Cooks	128	6,765	1.9%
7237 Welders and related machine operators	54	3,280	1.6%

Bolded entries are compulsory trades.

The number preceding each occupation refers to the National Occupational Classification code (NOC)

Some preliminary observations regarding these comparisons:

- 1) It may be, among those voluntary trades with higher registration numbers, that some employers do place a higher value on a Certificate of Apprenticeship or a Certificate of Qualification, either in terms of who they hire or what wage they offer, which then provides a reason for more workers to acquire a certificate and to become registered;
- 2) In the case of those voluntary trades with lower registration numbers, it would require deeper research to understand if journeypersons are simply not registering or if completion of an apprenticeship does not typically result in better employment or wage outcomes for these occupations.



Evidence from the data for shortages or impending shortages among specific skilled trades categories.

There are several ways in which one can analyze the data to produce some insights regarding where one might expect to see some skills shortages in the near future. Firstly, based on the registration numbers for journeypersons and apprentices in compulsory trades, one can produce a figure of how many journeypersons there are for each apprentice. A high number of journeypersons would suggest that not enough apprentices are filling the training pipeline, and this could be a sign that there could be a looming shortage in the future. Table 5 lists those skilled trades in Peel and Halton where such higher ratios exist.

Table 5: Skilled Trades with High Ratios of Journeypersons to One Apprentice, Peel and Halton, October 2019

PEEL		HALTON	
Skilled Trade	Ratio	Skilled Trade	Ratio
Hairstylist	10.0	Hairstylist	9.8
Truck and Coach Technician	6.2	Truck and Coach Technician	9.6
Auto Body/Collision Damage Repairer	6.1	Truck-Trailer Service Technician	7.8

A second method for identifying skilled trades at risk of shortages is to look at the median age of registered journeypersons. A median age of 50 years old means that half of the registered journeypersons in that trade are 50 years of age or older. Table 6 lists those skilled trades with a larger number of registered journeypersons which have a median age of 50 years old or older.

Table 6: Skilled Trades where Median Age of Registered Journeypersons is 50 Years Old or More, Peel and Halton, October 2019 PEEL HALTON

PEEL		HALTON	
Skilled Trade	Median Age	Skilled Trade	Median Age
Auto Body/Collision Damage Repairer	54	Truck and Coach Technician	55
Truck and Coach Technician	53		
Refrigeration & AC Systems Mechanic	51		
Truck-Trailer Service Technician	51		
Steamfitter	51		
Electrician — Constr & Maintenance	50		
Automotive Service Technician	50		

Bolded entries are compulsory trades.

Finally, one can also examine the data for specific occupations, comparing the proportion of workers aged 55 years and older (likely to retire soon), the proportion of workers aged 15-34 years of age (what does the supply pipeline look like), and how these proportions have changed between 2006 and 2016 (two Census periods), in comparison to averages for all occupations. Table 7 lists those occupations which appear most at risk of a future shortage based on these calculations.

Table 7: Skilled trades occupations most at risk of potential supply shortage, based on age profile analysis, Peel and Halton, 2016 PEEL HALTON

PEEL	HALTON
Machinists and machining and tooling inspectors	Machinists and machining and tooling inspectors
Tool and die makers	Tool and die makers
Welders and related machine operators	Transport truck drivers
Construction millwrights and industrial mechanics	

Bolded entries are compulsory trades.

Other insights from the data. There are several other features of the skilled trades which emerge from an analysis of the relevant data for Peel and Halton:

- Based on the registration data, it is evident that skilled trades in the Construction, Industrial and Motive sectors are almost exclusively comprised of males, almost always 96% or 97%, both among journeypersons and apprentices; only among the Service sector trades are there a number of skilled trades where there are more females present, certainly among Childhood Development Practitioners and also among Hairstylists;
- Especially among the Construction trades, a large proportion of skilled tradespersons (often 50% or more) are working at no fixed workplace, that is, they constantly change where they carry out their function (for example, moving from one construction site to another);
- Certain skilled trades occupations have higher proportions of self-employed workers, notably: painters & decorators (except interior decorators); carpenters; hairstylists and barbers;
- Certain skilled trades occupations have higher proportions of workers who work mainly part-time weeks, notably: cooks; bakers; early childhood educators and assistants; elementary and secondary school teacher assistants.





The labour force data is largely based on where employed residents live. The commuting data reveals different commuting patterns for different occupations.

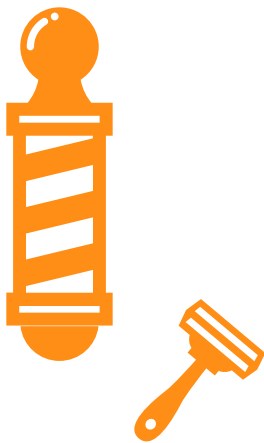
Some highlights:

FOR PEEL:

- Destinations for Peel residents employed in skilled trades: For most industrial trades, many Peel residents travel to York or Halton Regions (Machinists, Tool & Die Makers, and Industrial Electricians); more than half of Electricians travel out of Peel for work, and a large portion of Carpenters also leave Peel each day, with a higher proportion travelling to York than is typical of all Peel commuters;
- Commuters travelling to skilled trades jobs in Peel: Over 80% of Hairstylists & Barbers working in Peel Region live in Peel Region, whereas among many of the industrial trades, only around half of Peel jobs are filled by Peel residents, with the exception of Machinist jobs, where 69% commute from Peel;

FOR HALTON:

- Destinations for Halton residents employed in skilled trades: Many more Hairstylists & Barbers travel to Halton for their work (76%), and a larger proportion of Machinists, Welders and Auto Service Technicians also commute within Halton for their work (55-57%). On the other hand, smaller proportions of Electricians, Industrial Electricians and Millwrights travel to Halton. Among the industrial trades, especially Welders, Industrial Electricians and Millwrights, a larger proportion commute to Hamilton, compared to the average figures for Halton commuters;
- Commuters travelling to skilled trades jobs in Halton: Slightly higher proportions of Industrial Electricians and Millwrights commute from Hamilton, whereas considerably higher proportions of Machinists and Welders travel from Peel, and for all four of these occupations, a slightly higher proportion commute from Niagara; Carpenter jobs in Halton have a higher proportion of commuters from Toronto.





The most important issues expected to impact the skilled trades over the next five years

The biggest issue that employers feel is impacting and will continue to impact the skilled trades over the next few years is a demographic one, where older workers are retiring and there are fewer younger workers entering the skilled trades. Even though quite a few employers acknowledge that the number of youth entering the skilled trades has increased somewhat in the last few years, it will take some years before they acquire the experience to make up for the loss of the skilled workers being lost through retirement. There is a gap of experienced workers, namely those between 35 and 55 years old, due to the shortfall in enrolments in the skilled trades over the last couple of decades.

This point comes out clearly in the survey.⁶ Employers were asked which issues were the most important in terms on their impact (they could select as many as they wished from a list). Of six issues proposed, two were selected by roughly three-quarters of all employers: 76% cited the decreasing number of young people choosing skilled trades and 72% said baby boomers retiring and leaving a gap in the skilled trades labour market. None of the other issues received more than 40%.

The following quotes from employer interviews express this demographic imbalance in more detail:

“Our largest problem is that our personnel are 50 years old or more and many of them are retiring. We do not have anybody to fill the gap for 10 years. Only starting 5 years ago, there was a push to start covering this gap.”

“All the trades are dealing with a demographic crunch. The recession of the early 1990s saw fewer people enter the trades and the training capacity was reduced. One never gets to make up for that shortfall of people entering the trades. It accounts for why it is harder to find experienced journeypersons now. As well, the recession of 2008, with the losses in people’s pensions, caused a good portion of older people to work a bit longer. That group is now finally retiring and so we are feeling the retirement pinch that much more.”

Some employers add further comments regarding the younger generation. The first relates to youth not getting appropriate exposure to the trades in high school (or earlier) while at the same time they get considerable encouragement to pursue a college or university education. The second is that employers feel that youth do not exhibit the same work ethic or dedication to the job, while expressing high expectations regarding their wages and their career advancement.

“Our largest problem is that our personnel are 50 years old or more and many of them are retiring. We do not have anybody to fill the gap for 10 years. Only starting 5 years ago, there was a push to start covering this gap.”

⁶ For more information regarding how the survey was carried out and a profile of the employers who completed the survey, please see the appendix at the end of this report.



The following employer quote places some of these issues in a broader context:

“Overall, the big challenge in the skilled trades space is the lower number of people who wish to work in this field. Partly this is a result of the academic mindset of parents who believe that success for their children is dependant on a college or university degree, and it is also a function of newcomers to Canada being completely unaware of the skilled trades as an option. We need to do a better job of marketing the skilled trades to youth, to parents and to newcomers.”

The impact of technological change on skilled trades occupations

Technological change is clearly having an impact. By far, most employers see it as a positive thing, however, it does have implications in terms of how business is done, what skills are needed of employees and the implications that constant change has on the continuous need to upgrade, in terms of training as well as equipment.



In the survey, employers were asked how technological change is impacting the skilled trade occupation in your organization. The results were as follows:

Table 8: Percent of employers agreeing with the following statements on the impact of technological change

Technological change is re-shaping the skill requirements of the job	57%
Technological change is having no impact	26%
Technological change is advancing at a rapid pace and training programs are not keeping up	19%
Technological change is reducing the demand for jobs in this occupation	6%

The concern on the part of workers that technology and automation might replace jobs is not an outcome which many employers believe will happen, as only 6% of employers think that technological change will reduce the demand for jobs. Perhaps the better way of putting it is that jobs that can be automated will be lost, but that increased productivity will generate more jobs which will require higher skills.

Thus, as one employer in the logistics sector expresses it:

“It is positive because the major challenge in logistics is the shortage of labour so it can compensate for this shortage. But also, automation can handle a higher volume which can also create a larger labour force because of growth opportunities.”

A manufacturer makes a similar observation:

“The amount of skills needed for entry level positions is increasing. It is not just about pushing a button because the job now requires making adjustments, doing math and understanding the mechanics of the machinery. Workers need to understand how the machine works even at the basic operator level. We need to ensure workers get the necessary training to operate as well as maintain these new machines.”

Another view, this one regarding horticultural technicians:

“On the one hand, highly automated and computerized systems do involve a replacement of labour – for example, monitors that measure moisture and the need for irrigation. But, it also means that people working in this field need to have digital skills, plus the skills to operate and trouble-shoot the equipment.”

Other comments made during the interviews provide a more detailed understanding of how this change is being felt:

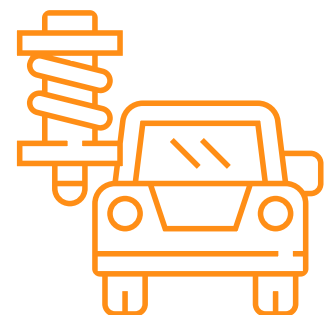
From an employer in the logistics sector:

“Technology is shifting the industry. For example, there are more hi-tech equipment and methods to diagnose. This change is requiring higher technological ability on the part of technicians. Technology also is allowing the employers to monitor shipping activities in real time and, if there is an accident, they can respond faster. Technology also allows for billing and payment to be made through automated systems. All this means is that more skills are required even for entry-level jobs in the industry.”

The issue is very apparent in the automotive repair sector:

“Technology is making a significant impact on the industry because of electrical vehicles and computerized systems, adding complexity to the job. Consistent and complex training is important to keep up with technological changes. This require more resources.” Another employer adds: “The biggest issue will be the transition to more and more electric and hybrid vehicles. We do not have a cadre of experienced trainers in this sector as everything is new, and so the training will not be based on extensive experience.”

A number of employers noted that there is a cost associated with such constant technological change, not only the cost of needing to upgrade equipment and systems, but also the cost of training and re-training, as well as the disruptive environment where one is operating with several technologies at once, the interface between those technologies and the different knowledge embedded with different generations of workers.





Which journeyman skilled trades occupations are most difficult for employers to fill and why

There are two answers to this question: on the one hand, there are specific trades where there are acute shortages of journeymen yet, on the other hand, after canvassing many employers, one finds that the issue appears to be as much a systemic one as it is related to a specific trade. That is, most employers, regardless of what skilled trade they hire for, will indicate that they have difficulty recruiting for a journeyman position because it involves hiring someone who has experience, and anyone who has experience is already working. If a journeyman is in the labour market and not working, quite a few employers will say that that person likely lacks skills, experience or the proper attitude. In short, there is simply a lack of available, qualified journeymen.

Many employers concede that they often have to poach workers from other firms and small businesses are more likely to complain that they lose workers to larger firms which often can offer slightly better wages.

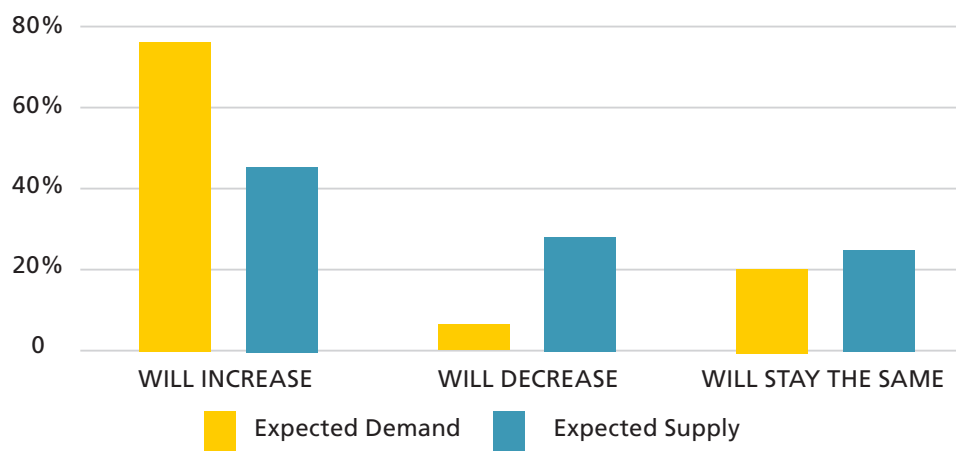
In the survey, almost three-quarters of employers (72%) say it is either very difficult or difficult to hire a journeyman. The degree of difficulty increases the smaller the firm. Thus, 67% of firms with over 100 employees say it is very difficult or difficult, while 80% of firms with 5-19 employees have that view. By sector, firms in the Motive field are more likely to say it is very difficult (68%, compared to an average of 41% for all firms).

The skilled trades most often cited by employers for which they have difficulty hiring are: Industrial Mechanic Millwright; General Machinist; Industrial Electrician; Plumber; Automotive Service Technician; and Cook.

Looking toward the future, we asked employers whether they felt that demand for the skilled trade occupation that they were most concerned with would increase or decrease in the next two to three years. 74% said it would increase, while 6% said it would decrease and 20% said demand would stay the same. When asked about the future supply for the same occupation, 45% said they felt supply would increase, while 29% thought it would decrease and 26% felt it would stay the same. Thus, the immediate expectation of employers is that the demand and supply balance of these skilled trades occupations will get worse in the immediate future. The following chart illustrates the point.

Many employers concede that they often have to poach workers from other firms and small businesses are more likely to complain that they lose workers to larger firms which often can offer slightly better wages.

Chart 1: Expectations of employers regarding the supply of and demand for skilled trade workers in Peel and Halton over the next 2-3 years



Which apprentice skilled trades occupations are most difficult for employers to fill and why

Employers do not have as much difficulty hiring apprentices as they do when hiring journeypersons (Table 9). Whereas three-quarters (72%) of employers say it is either very difficult or difficult to hire a journeyperson, slightly less than half (47%) say the same about hiring apprentices. There are also variations by categories of employers: smaller firms have more difficulty hiring apprentices (around 54%-55% for firms with 5-19 and 20-99 employees), while only a third (33%) of large firms (100+ employees) have the same difficulty. Firms in the Construction sector are considerably less likely to express the same difficulty (29%), while firms in the three other sectors have a range of between 51% and 56% expressing this difficulty.

Table 9: Degree of difficulty in hiring a journeyperson and an apprentice

	Very difficult	Difficult	Somewhat difficult	Not difficult	Very difficult or difficult
JOURNEYPERSON	41%	32%	22%	6%	72%
APPRENTICE	18%	28%	38%	16%	47%

First and second column numbers do not add up to last column numbers because of rounding of the initial figures.

First and second column numbers do not add up to last column numbers because of rounding of the initial figures.

In other parts of the report, employers do express complaints regarding the challenges of training and of finding employees who commit to their work and their craft in the way that meets employers' expectations. In a way, one could say that

employers are challenged in simply finding journeyperson candidates (a matter of numbers, that is, a quantitative issue), while the issue with respect to apprentices is finding candidates who are interested in the work and dedicated to the process of learning and applying the trade (more of a qualitative issue).

In terms of apprenticeships generally, 56% of survey respondents indicated that they had sponsored or are currently sponsoring apprentices. This was more likely among firms in the Motive sector (80% affirmative) and Construction sector (72%) and slightly less likely among firms in the Service sector (52%) or the Industrial sector (49%).

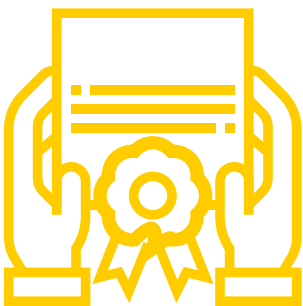
Over the course of the last six years, the following six trades represent both the highest as well as regularly consistent number of apprentice registrations in both Peel and Halton Regions: Electrician - Construction and Maintenance; Automotive Service Technician; Hairstylist; Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Systems Mechanic; Truck and Coach Technician; and Plumber.

Recruitment methods for hard-to-fill skilled trades positions

Employers were asked what methods they used to recruit candidates for hard-to-fill skilled trades positions. This question solicited an open-ended response, and so the answers below represent the actual responses which employers provided (they were able to provide more than one answer). The table lists the top ten responses, including the number of employers who mentioned this option.

Table 10: Top ten methods employer survey respondents cited for recruiting tradespersons

RECRUITMENT METHOD	NUMBER OF MENTIONS
On-line job boards in general	21
Advertisements, job ads (newspaper, radio)	14
Employment agencies	14
Indeed	14
Job fair/career fair	11
Word-of-mouth	11
Colleges (Sheridan, Humber, Conestoga and Fanshawe each received two mentions)	10
Internal recruitment	10
Recruitment services	9
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)	8





The issue of apprentices dropping out of their apprenticeship

Most employers report that few apprentices drop out of their apprenticeship. According to the survey, the following represented the incidence of dropping out:

Table 11: Incidence of apprentices dropping out, according to employer survey

Majority drop out	Less than half drop out	Very small number drop-out	No apprentices drop out
9%	23%	50%	18%

Two-thirds of employers (68%) said that either a very small number or none drop out. Among firms with 100 or more employees, 87% said that either a very small number or none drop out.

In the survey, employers were offered possible reasons for why an apprentice might drop out. No one reason attracted a majority of support, rather the reasons varied, as follows:

- 1) There are ample job opportunities without needing to complete a certificate;
- 2) Personal reasons or difficulties cause an apprentice leave (more often in Construction trades);
- 3) The length and complexity of the program is a disincentive (more often in Industrial trades);
- 4) There is not much difference in wage whether one completes or not (more often cited in Service trades).

When asked to provide additional comments, a noteworthy reason mentioned by employers was that the apprentice simply found that the trade was not something they either wanted to do and that they were not suitable for the trade. The fit was not there and it was something they realized as they experienced the day-to-day work.

In order to improve the completion rate, employers suggested that:

- 1) Government should provide more financial incentives to off-set costs to employers and to make it more attractive to apprentices;
- 2) In particular, government needed to improve access to financial support while the apprentice was undertaking the classroom training portion of the apprenticeship;
- 3) The apprenticeship process had to be made easier to navigate (with a few employers saying that it should be made shorter);
- 4) As far as the issue of fit with the specific trade, employers felt that more needed to be done so that students could be introduced to the hands-on experience of the work while they were still in high school.



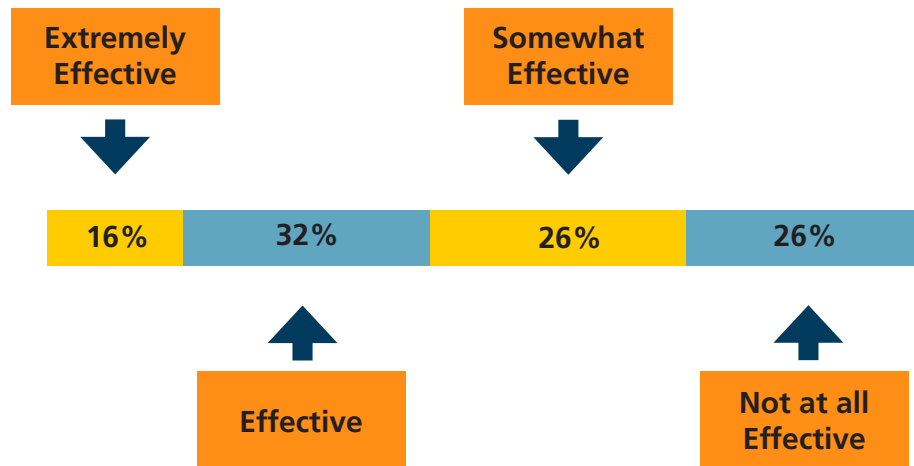
Rating how well apprenticeship has served the skill requirements of employers

In the survey, employers were asked the following question:
“How well has the apprenticeship program served your organization’s skills requirements?”

The distribution of responses was as follows:

- 16% of employers said the apprenticeship program was extremely effective
- 32% said it was effective
- 26% said it was somewhat effective
- 26% said it was not effective at all

Diagram 1: How well has apprenticeship served employers’ skill requirements



The average score would fall between effective and somewhat effective, a bit closer to the somewhat effective side of the assessment spectrum. This is a lukewarm evaluation of the apprenticeship system. Employers hiring tradespersons in the Construction sector are the most positive about the apprenticeship system, with one-third (32%) saying it is extremely effective and another third (32%) saying it is effective. Employers in the Motive sector come next, with their score tending toward the “Effective” assessment. The scores then drop off, with Service sector employers tending more toward the lower assessment (29% said it was somewhat effective and a further 29% said it was not effective at all). Employers in the Industrial sector ranked it lowest, with 27% saying it was somewhat effective and a third (33%) saying it was not effective at all.

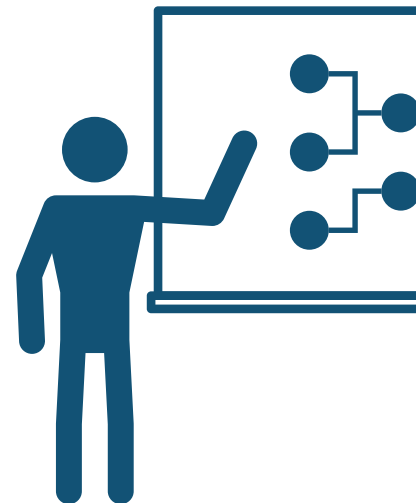


It should be emphasized, however, that employers like the apprenticeship model in principle, where on-the-job training is combined with classroom training. Employers understand that it represents an investment in ensuring a continuous supply of skilled workers. Their lukewarm rating of the system has more to do with issues such as finding a sufficient number of capable workers, the financial burden of training and various process challenges they encounter in trying to make an apprenticeship successful.

Barriers to apprenticeship faced by employers

The big barriers which employers face are:

- 1) **Shortage of journeypersons:** On the supply side, it is usually very hard to find experienced, competent journeypersons; these are all already working somewhere;
- 2) **Difficulty finding and developing capable apprentices:** While it is easier to find apprentices, they are still learning, some of them will find the trade is not for them, so will not have the right attitude or work ethic; one has to spend time finding the right apprentice as well as make adjustments to the values and work expectations of this younger generation;
- 3) **Financial burden of training:** There is a financial cost to training; one pays an apprentice but they are not yet fully-contributing to the work; there is the supervisor's time who is taken away from work; and sometimes apprentices make mistakes or break equipment; this cost is especially burdensome for smaller employers;
- 4) **Complexity and lack of responsiveness of the system:** There are many procedural challenges with the apprenticeships system: (i) oftentimes, it is difficult to get an answer from the Ministry; it is not always clear whom to call or else it takes some time before a call is returned; (ii) sometimes the paperwork can be a burden;
- 5) **Difficulties created by the classroom training:** The classroom training portion poses several problems: (i) sometimes there are not enough seats for the classroom training; this causes a delay in the completion of the apprenticeship and the apprentice stays stuck at a certain level and cannot proceed to the next level; (ii) The timing of when the classroom training is offered is sometimes not convenient to the employer, as it might arise during the busy cycle for the company, which can result in lost sales and complaints from customers; (iii) the content of the classroom training is sometimes out-of-date, including training apprentices on out-dated equipment; it means that employers have to deliver additional training;
- 6) **Continuing complaints about the journeyperson-apprentice ratio:** While a number of employers applauded the adjustment of the journeyperson-to-apprentice ratio to 1:1, a number felt it did not go far enough. These employers felt that one journeyperson is capable of training and supervising more than one apprentice at a time. The ratio restricts the number of apprentices who can be hired, especially for smaller firms.



What employers said could make the apprenticeship system better meet their needs

Employers had many suggestions regarding how the apprenticeship system could be made better.

Better promotion of trades among youth. Their biggest concern was the continuing supply of skilled trades workers and many felt that much more should be done introducing youth at an early age to the trades. This included even starting at Grade 7 or 8, having more tech classes and more experiential learning opportunities for youth, so they know what the trades entail.

Do a better job of selling skilled trades as an attractive career option. Many also felt that the trades had a stigma and felt efforts should be made to make trades more attractive, as well as providing youth with more information about the good wages associated with the trades and the career opportunities that were open to tradespersons, such as being supervisors, managers and project leaders. A number of employers felt that trades should be given equal billing as an educational choice as enrolling in college or university.

Include parents and guidance counsellors as targets of skilled trades promotion. It was also felt that such an advocacy campaign also needed to be directed toward parents as well as guidance counsellors, both of whom were felt to be unaware of or holding negative views of the trades as a career.

Platform for matching employers and apprentices. To help connect with potential apprentices, employers suggested that there should be a central database or clearinghouse for matching employers and apprentices.

More classroom seats. A number of employers felt it was important to make available more seats for the classroom training portion. They felt it was unfair to both employers and apprentices when an apprentice could not enrol in classroom training when they were available and felt that this was something which could be anticipated, given that the Ministry knew how many apprentices there were in a given region.

Bring back one-on-one connection between Ministry and apprentice. Employers made reference to the fact that in the past there was a one-to-one relationship between an apprenticeship officer and the apprentice and their employer. This allowed for extra support for the apprentice because there was a person they could contact when there were questions or issues. Employers felt this would reduce the drop-out rate among apprentices.

Increase ratio further. While employers were pleased that the journey-person-apprentice ratio had been changed, several felt it had not gone far enough, believing that a journey-person could train and supervise more than one apprentice at a time.

Financial incentives for employers. Many employers cited the financial cost to their firm of having to train someone and a number expressed the view that they wished there were financial assistance, in the way of grants or tax breaks, to alleviate the cost to employers.

Financial support for apprentices. In addition, employers felt that the financial circumstance of apprentices needed to be improved. A number mentioned that they felt their wage should be increased, that something needed to be done to ensure they had financial support when they attended classroom training (some employers actually pay the apprentices during this period, others do not), and that apprentices who need to purchase tools should get some form of assistance, even if it meant a loan program that offered reasonable rates.

Promote emigration of skilled tradespersons. Several employers felt that immigration policy should be changed to make it easier to recruit skilled tradespersons from overseas, in order to meet the skilled trades shortages.

Attract more women into the trades. Employers and key informants are well aware that in many trades, the potential pool of candidates is already reduced by half because women are not entering these trades. While there are and have been efforts to attract women in the past, a number felt that more should be done to overcome stereotypes and barriers which inhibit women from joining these occupations.

Consult more with employers. Employers wished that the government consult with them more, about what trades are in demand, about ensuring that the training curriculum stayed up-to-date, and about the timing of classroom training (to ensure it did not coincide with busy business periods).

Include soft skills training. Some employers felt the training curriculum needed to include more emphasis on soft skills, as these are becoming more and more important in the workplace, especially for customer-facing roles.

More accountability from the apprenticeship system. Some employers also wished to see greater accountability on the part of the system, some form of scorecard or other mechanism, to track how the apprenticeship system is being responsive to the needs of the labour market.



Concern regarding stackable skills. Some employers had heard discussions about changing the nature of specific trades, by making training shorter or more flexible, providing for credentialing of skills which could be stackable, that is, there would be different levels of certification for a given trade. Those employers who brought up this topic were concerned about such an approach, believing that a tradesperson had breadth and depth of knowledge of their profession. They also worried that such changes to what constitutes a tradesperson would limit mobility across the country and, in particular, would affect access to a Red Seal designation. There was a smaller group of employers who supported the idea of stackable skills. Comments about this topic were limited to employers in the Construction and Industrial trades sectors.

Other issues emerging from the consultations

In the course of the research and consultations with employers, other issues emerged which provided further insight regarding how employers used or viewed the apprenticeship system.

Reliance on certified workers among voluntary trades. Employers who employed workers in voluntary trades were asked what percentage of these workers were in possession of a Certificate of Apprenticeship or a Certificate of Qualification. Table 12 shows the distribution of responses across the various sectors.

Table 12: Percentage of workers in voluntary trades occupations who have a CA or CQ

	0%-24%	25-49%	50-74%	75-100%
Construction	4	1	1	3
Industrial	19	4	6	13
Motive	0	0	1	3
Service	14	0	1	2

In the case of Industrial and Construction sector employers, it appears that the responses cluster at the two ends of the spectrum: either there is a small percentage of workers with certification or else a large percentage with certification. The conclusion one could draw for these sectors is that some employers appear to seek out workers with certification or have their workers acquire certification, even though it is a voluntary trade. For other employers in that sector, it appears to make less difference.

In the case of employers in the Motive sector, while the sample size is very small, most of the employers expect certification (this may also be a consequence of the fact that almost half of the trades in the Motive sector are compulsory, whereas slightly less than a third of the Construction sector trades are compulsory).



In the Service sector, far more of the employers have a smaller percentage of their workers who have certificate.

Verification of skills in the absence of a voluntary skilled trades certificate.

Given that an individual could be employed in a voluntary skilled trade without having gone through the apprenticeship process, employers were asked how they ensured that the individual had the skills necessary to do the job. Table 13 presents the responses to the question:

For workers employed by your organization in this occupation who are not in possession of a CA or CQ in this skilled trades occupation, how do you ensure that these individuals have the necessary vocational skills to perform the job?

Employers were provided with a series of possible answers and were allowed to select as many as applied to them.

Table 13: Methods to assess vocational skills in absence of apprenticeship certification

Method	Percent
Trains them and learn on-the-job	74%
A minimum amount of previous work experience in the same occupation	52%
A college diploma or certificate in the field (which is not an apprentice certificate)	22%
Other industry or training certificate (not an apprenticeship) in the field	20%
Pass skills test to ensure that they can carry out the job	19%
Completed at least one year of an apprenticeship program	4%
Completed at least two years of an apprenticeship program	2%

By far the most common approach is for employers to train the workers themselves, with three-quarters (74%) selecting this method. Half of the employers also sought a minimum level of work experience in the same occupation. After these two approaches, the remaining options received a limited amount of support. Other certification, either by way of a college diploma or other industry or training certificate was cited by around one-fifth (20%-22%) of employers, whereas very few felt that partial completion of an apprenticeship was sufficient evidence of having acquired the appropriate skills.

Knowledge about whether a trade is compulsory or voluntary. In the survey, employers were asked to identify a specific trade for which there then followed a series of questions. As a result, it was possible to test their knowledge about whether the trade for which they hired was compulsory or voluntary. Table 14 shows the percentage of accurate and inaccurate results, based on whether the trade was compulsory or voluntary.

Table 14: Knowledge of whether a trade is compulsory or voluntary

EMPLOYERS HIRING COMPULSORY TRADES		EMPLOYERS HIRING VOLUNTARY TRADES	
Correctly identified that it was a compulsory trade	77%	Correctly identified that it was a voluntary trade	58%
Incorrectly identified that it was a voluntary trade	23%	Incorrectly identified that it was a compulsory trade	42%

Slightly more than three-quarters of employers (77%) who hire workers in a compulsory trade knew that the trade was compulsory. This was a higher percentage with an accurate response than that for employers who hire workers in a voluntary trade, where only 58% knew that the trade was voluntary. However, it does pose a greater problem if even a quarter of employers hiring workers in a compulsory trade do not know that these workers are not allowed to work unless they are certified and have registered with the Ontario College of Trades.

Relevance of certification to occupations which are not skilled trades occupations. In carrying out the data research, it became apparent that there were certain occupations which, although not technically skilled trades, often had higher proportions of workers who were in possession of a Certificate of Apprenticeship or a Certificate of Qualification. As a consequence, employers were asked in the survey what importance they placed on a job candidate having certification when hiring for these occupations. Table 15 presents the results, both the percentage distribution of responses for those employers which provided a ranking, as well as a composite score, which is based on the following formula:



- “3” for “It makes a great deal of difference”
- “2” for “It makes some difference”
- “1” for “It makes a little difference”
- “0” for “It has no impact at all”



Table 15: Rating the relevance of certification when hiring for select occupations

OCCUPATION	PERCENTAGE OF DISTRIBUTION RESPONSES				COMPOSITE SCORE
	It makes a great deal of difference	It makes some difference	It makes a little of difference	It makes no impact at all	
Gas fitter	67%	12%	9%	12%	2.33
Construction manager	59%	18%	14%	8%	2.29
Contractor and supervisor, other construction trades and servicers	50%	33%	13%	5%	2.28
Contractor and supervisor, carpentry trade	51%	30%	9%	11%	2.21
Home building and renovation manager	50%	25%	14%	11%	2.14
Facility operation and maintenance manager	45%	27%	19%	9%	2.08
Public works maintenance equipment operator	34%	43%	13%	11%	2.00
Janitors, caretakers and building superintendent	15%	21%	39%	25%	1.26

The survey responses indicate that employers make subtle judgments about the qualifications they prefer for these various occupations. In the case of gas fitters and construction managers, a large percentage indicate that a skilled trades certificate makes a lot of difference in their hiring decision. For another set of occupations (namely contractors and supervisors, other construction trades and servicers; home building and renovation managers; facility operation and maintenance managers; and public works maintenance equipment operators), a larger percentage of employers feel that a skilled trades certificate makes either a great deal of difference or some difference. And, finally, for janitors, caretakers and building superintendents, the expectations are lower, and for most a certificate makes a little difference.





Comments about specific skilled trades programs. Employers provided useful insights regarding certain specific skilled trades categories.

The IT trades: There are a number of trades associated with the Information Technology sector, as follows:

- IT Contact Centre Technical Support Agent (Trade Code 634A)
- IT Hardware Technician (634B)
- IT Network Technician (634C)
- IT Contact Centre Sales Agent (634D)
- IT Contact Centre Customer Service Agent (634E)

These trades do not appear to be at all known by key informants heavily engaged in the IT sector. The IT sector is a constantly-evolving industry and the training which is available appears to be either reliant on vendor training certificates (for example, Microsoft or Cisco) or developed by industry associations (for example, A+ and CompTIA certificates offered by the Computing Technology Industry Association). These programs tend to be short-term and are regularly being updated, to match rapid changes in hardware and software. Whereas 202 apprentices in Peel and Halton registered in the IT Customer Service Agent program in 2013-14, that figure dropped to 20 in 2014-15, and the zero for every year subsequently. In 2019, all these programs had no more than a handful of apprentices in Peel and Halton, except for the IT Network Technician program, which had 29 apprentices in Peel and 17 apprentices in Halton. There does not appear to be much evidence that these trades have much profile across the IT sector.



The child education/development trades: There are two programs, in particular, that attracted comment:

- Child Development Practitioner (620C)
- Educational Assistant (620E)

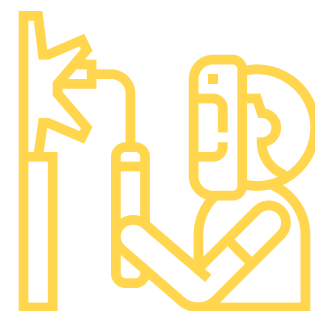
The Child Development Practitioner program qualifies an individual to work as an Early Childhood Education Assistant. It is equivalent to a similar college-based diploma, and the advantage of this program is that it allows a person to earn their certificate while working and getting paid. In the parallel college program, practicum experience ends up usually being not remunerated. In order to qualify to become an Early Childhood Educator, a graduate of the Child Development Practitioner program would still need to complete 12 more college credits. The value of the Child Development Practitioner program is that it provides a certificate for an ECE Assistant and a stepping-stone toward an ECE designation, all while an individual is working.

The Educational Assistant program is designed to support an individual to become an Educational Assistant in primary or secondary school, however, it does not appear to be either used by or even known by school boards, who more likely hire individuals for the Educational Assistant position from relevant college and university programs.

Welders and metal fabricators: There are four apprentice programs which cover these functions:

- Precision metal fabricators (200G)
- Metal fabricator (fitter) (437A)
- Welder (456A)
- Pressure systems welder (456P)

Manufacturing employers often mentioned these two functions together, welding and metal fabricating and fitting. As an important occupation in the manufacturing sector, one finds a limited number of registered apprentices and journeypersons in these programs, in total less than 100, whereas these occupations employ several thousands of workers locally. On the other hand, there exists alternative processes for training and certification in these occupations, notably through the Canadian Welding Bureau. It raises the question whether an alternative certification process is a more attractive option for employers and workers.



Tractor-trailer commercial driver (638A): Transport truck drivers include a number of sub-occupations which involve driving heavy trucks (for example, moving vans and dump trucks) and it includes drivers of tractor-trailer commercial trucks. In Peel and Halton, in 2016, there were approximately 25,000 residents employed as transport truck drivers. In comparison, in 2019, there were 29 registered apprentices and 22 registered journeypersons in the tractor-trailer commercial driver program. The discrepancy is so stark that it brings into question the relevance of a trade for this occupation. Yet among employers and other stakeholders there is a strong sentiment to raise the skill qualifications of truck drivers, with many advocating in support of an apprenticeship program in this field. It may be that some intermediate position could be found, not unlike the circumstance of welders, whereby an industry certification process could be advanced which may be better suited to qualify truck drivers through a process less formal than an apprenticeship approach.

Retail meat cutter (245R): Currently, there are no retail meat cutters registered as apprentices or journeypersons in either Peel or Halton regions. The problem is, according to an industry key informant, is that meat preparation involves three separate and distinct functions, and only one of those functions is covered by an apprenticeship program. These functions are as follows: industrial butcher (preparing slabs of meat from carcasses); retail meat cutter (preparing slices of meat for retail sale); and sausage maker. The argument is that all these functions are a skilled trade, and the single skilled trades designation does not provide an access to the broader range of possibilities within the industry. Consequently, this designation is hardly pursued, which accounts for the low registration numbers. Currently, there does not exist some other form of certification or training, and so this sector is experiencing considerable staff shortages and skills shortages, resulting in negative impacts on productivity as well as concerns for worker safety.



Conclusion

This study was the result of a direction from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development to all local employment planning councils (LEPCs) and workforce planning boards (WPBs) that they canvass employers regarding the local skilled trades labour market and their views on the apprenticeship process. The purpose of this assignment was to collect information, which has been done through a variety of means and which has been transmitted to the Ministry. This document is intended to inform our wider community about what we heard.

Employers are clearly finding it difficult to hire experienced journeypersons and they are greatly worried that the current skills shortage in the trades will only get worse in the next few years.

Overall, employers like the concept of apprenticeship training, the combination of learning on the job supplemented by classroom instruction. However, they feel the apprenticeship process needs to be made less complex and easier to navigate, both for employers and for apprentices. Employers also feel they need more financial assistance for undertaking training, because of its actual cost to the employer and the risk of an apprentice either not working out or not staying after becoming a journeyperson.

Employers also felt that much more needed to be done to promote the trades, not only to attract youth but also to convince their parents and high school guidance counsellors that skilled trades are a rewarding and enriching career option.

There was a clear consistency in the messages that came from employers and already the Ministry has announced initiatives to promote skilled trades more with youth. Hopefully, this report can provide an up-to-date picture to our various stakeholders concerned with the local labour market, so that they can better understand and move forward with actions that can support local employers find the skilled trades workers that they so clearly need.



APPENDIX A:

Background Regarding the Employer Survey

This appendix describes the survey, how it was administered and profiles the employers who responded to the survey.

Methodology

Our goal in designing the survey was to ensure that an employer was providing answers with respect to a specific skilled trade which was most important to their business. Our intention was to be able to compare employers' responses on the basis of the skilled trade they chose, so as to identify differences in responses by occupation or by skilled trade sector.

The survey was therefore structured so that employers first were asked to select a trade category (the four categories being Construction, Industrial, Motive Power and Services). Depending on their answer, the respondent was then directed to choose from a list of skilled trades occupations for that sector and then further choose a skilled trades training program. For example, if an employer chose the Motive Power trades sector, the choices for occupation would include Motor Vehicle Body Repairer, Automotive Service Technician and other occupations. If they selected Motor Vehicle Body Repairer, they then had a choice of a number of programs, such as Auto Body and Collision Damage Repairer, Automotive Glass Technician, or they could select all programs that fell under that occupation.

Once they selected an occupation or a specific program, each employer was asked the same set of questions, relating to such issue as recruitment of journeypersons and apprentices, impact of technology, future expectations regarding the supply of and demand for workers in this field, and so on. Once these questions were completed, respondents were provided with the option of selecting a second occupation or program and answering these same questions in relation to that second choice. Approximately 20% of respondents choose a second occupation.

After the questions related to a specific trade, the survey concluded with a series of questions not specific to a particular trade, including identifying their recruitment methods or inviting employers to suggest how they would improve the apprenticeship process.

Most of the survey questions were drawn from the specific list of questions which the Ministry provided when directing the local employment planning councils and workforce development boards to undertake this assignment.

The survey was administered through the Survey Monkey platform and it was distributed through various channels, such as e-blasts with the help of community partners, as well as through social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. In total, 327 employers visited the survey site, almost half of what would be the usual number of visits based on previous surveys. No doubt, many employers declined to begin the survey because they did not hire skilled trades workers. Indeed, the first question of the survey posed exactly this question, and almost one-third of the site visitors answered that they did not hire skilled trades workers, at which point they were thanked for their interest and excluded from the rest of the survey. Of the 228 employers who continued the survey, 118 answered every question, with a variable number of respondents across the survey.

It is important to note that the survey is not a scientifically random survey because it was distributed through community partners and to employers connected to the Peel Halton Local Employment Planning Council. It represents the views of employers who hire skilled tradespersons and who had an interest in contributing their views regarding issues affecting skilled trades in Ontario.



Profile of survey respondents

Table A1 profiles the survey responses by industry. The table presents the actual number of survey responses by industry and the percentage share of the total survey population by industry to compare to the actual percentage distribution by industry of all establishments with employees in Peel and Halton Regions.

Table A1: Distribution of survey respondents by industry

Industry	Survey Number	Survey Percent	Actual Percent Peel-Halton
Accommodation and Food Services	6	4%	5.1%
Administrative & Support, Waste Management	0	0%	4.1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1	1%	0.3%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	2	1%	0.9%
Construction	20	13%	8.4%
Educational Services	6	4%	1.1%
Finance and Insurance	1	1%	3.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	9	6%	7.9%
Information and Cultural Industries	0	0%	1.2%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0%	0.6%
Manufacturing	70	45%	5.0%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0%	0.0%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	9	6%	7.1%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	1	1%	15.7%
Public Administration	1	1%	0.1%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	0	0%	3.5%
Retail Trade	5	3%	9.2%
Transportation and Warehousing	24	15%	20.2%
Utilities	0	0%	0.1%
Wholesale Trade	0	0%	6.4%
Total	155	100%	100%

Actual Distribution of Employers from Canadian Business Counts, Statistics Canada, June 2019.

Other Services includes such establishments as automotive repair and dry-cleaning services. Professional, Scientific & Technical Services includes legal, accounting and computer systems design services



The distribution of survey respondents has only a limited match to the distribution of employers across Peel and Halton. The most likely explanation for why the survey respondents are skewed toward a limited set of industries is because those are the industries which employ skilled tradespersons. Employers who do not employ skilled tradespersons were either not inclined to start the survey or were screened out of the survey by the first question which asked whether or not they employed skilled tradespersons. Thus, a very high proportion of survey respondents were from the Manufacturing industry (45%), far higher than the 5% that manufacturers represent of all establishments with employees in Peel and Halton Regions. Other prominent sectors represented in the survey were Construction and Transportation & Warehousing.

Table A2 identifies survey respondents by the number of employees in their establishment. In Peel and Halton, 65% of establishments with employees have 1-4 employees. Of the survey respondents, 10% had 1-4 employees. On the other hand, while establishments with 100 employees represent 2% of all employers in Peel and Halton, they made up 35% of all survey respondents, and the 63 firms with 100 employees who answered the survey represented 3.6% of all such firms in Peel and Halton. In short, larger establishments were far more represented in the survey than their share of all establishments in Peel and Halton.

Table A2: Distribution of survey respondents by number of employees

	1-4	5-19	20-99	100+	Total
Number of employers	51,820	18,442	7,419	1,763	79,444
Percentage of total employers	65%	23%	9%	2%	100%
Survey responses	18	45	52	63	178
Percentage of survey responses	10%	25%	29%	35%	100%
Survey responses as a percentage of the total number of employers	0.0%	0.2%	0.7%	3.6%	0.2%

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