

Experience and Skills

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

- Manufacturing, assembly, fabrication or other industrial operations;
- Back office, data processing, call centers, information technology, customer service or sales operations;
- Distribution or transportation operations; and,
- Biotechnology, pharmaceuticals or medical research operations.

Skills*	Number of Persons	Percentage
Office Operations	33,300	72%
Warehouse/Materials Handling	28,600	62%
Manufacturing/Assembly/Fabrication	26,300	57%
Medical/Health Sciences	15,200	33%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	15,200	33%
Technician/Quality Assurance	13,400	29%
Information Technology	12,900	28%
Telecommunications	12,000	26%
Electronics/Engineering	6,500	14%

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

For more information, please contact
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at 815-547-4252.

The complete study can be
found on our website:
www.growthdimensions.org

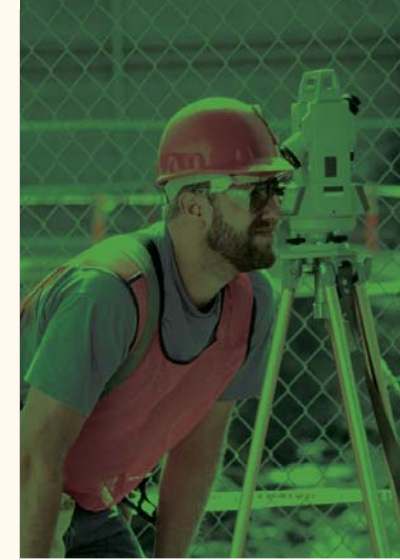


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Labor Availability Report

January 2007

Prepared by The Pathfinders



The Pathfinders, a site selection consulting group headquartered in Dallas, Texas, were retained to assess the workforce of the Belvidere-Rockford area and to quantify the extent to which *underemployment exists in the area, as well as to document the cost, skills, experience and education of that hidden workforce. This report represents the objective and professional view of The Pathfinders with regard to workforce availability, cost, skills and quality that new employers can expect in the Boone and Winnebago Counties region.

* Underemployment- the situation in which individuals are working but desire better jobs and appear to possess the skills, education and experience to qualify them for better jobs.

Workforce Availability

- The Boone/Winnebago Counties Labor Shed has a household population of 807,300 and a civilian labor force of approximately 434,800.
- In total, the Boone and Winnebago Counties area has approximately 65,500 available workers for new or existing employers, which include the underemployed, the unemployed actively seeking work and those considering re-entering the workforce.
- Over 42,000 people employed in the Boone/Winnebago County labor force commute outside the two county region to work.

Factors Affecting Job Desirability

Respondents ranked factors by order of importance. Low ranking does not mean that the underemployed workers in the Boone and Winnebago Counties area consider paid training programs to be unimportant in their evaluation of new job opportunities.

Factor	Extremely Important
Financial Stability of the Company	76%
Insurance Benefits	60%
Paid Sick Leave & Holidays	53%
Retirement Benefits	52%
Salary	50%
Opportunity for Advancement	50%
Physical Working Environment	36%
Reputation of hte Company	36%
Paid Training Programs	33%
Flexible Work Schedule	29%
Location	24%
On-Site Child Care	2%
Size of the Company	2%

Characteristics of the Unemployed

- This survey indicates that 30% of the unemployed, actively seeking work individuals are male.
- This group is two years younger on average than the underemployed, and approximately 11% have two-year degrees or higher. The largest sector of recent employment for these available workers was manufacturing.
- Their median most recent pay rate was \$11.02 per hour, and the median desired pay rate for these available workers is \$10.34 per hour.
- In terms of experience, these individuals who are actively seeking work are comparable to the underemployed in the areas of manufacturing and customer service and exceed the underemployed in telecommunications and call center experience.
- With regard to skills, this group exceeds the underemployed in the categories of manufacturing and telecommunications and approximate the underemployed in information technology.

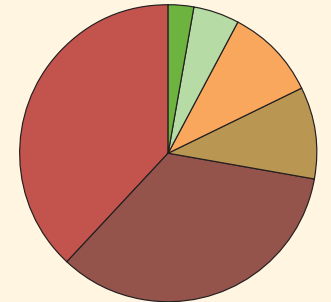
Current Employers Rating of Workforce

A common employer complaint relates to the shortage of skilled and technical workers. The availability of these workers in the Boone and Winnebago Counties region must be viewed from the perspective of comparative availability when other areas of the state and nation are considered. Skilled and technical workers are in great demand and difficult to find in the vast majority of locations.

65,500 workers are available for new or expanding business ■ **46,200 individuals are underemployed**
2,500 currently not employed would consider re-entering the workforce

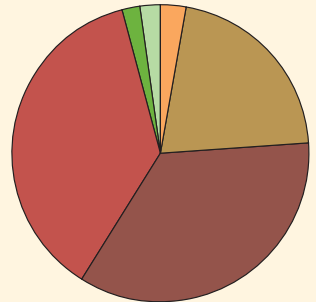
Characteristics of the Underemployed

Education Attainment of Underemployed



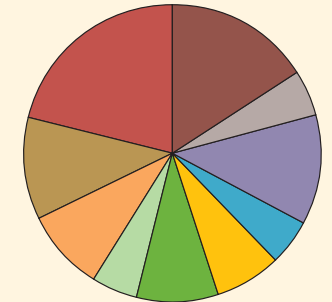
■ Less than high school 3%
 ■ Graduate degree..... 5%
 ■ Bachelor degree 10%
 ■ Associate degree 10%
 ■ Some college, but no degree 34%
 ■ High School Graduate or GED only 38%

Age of Underemployed



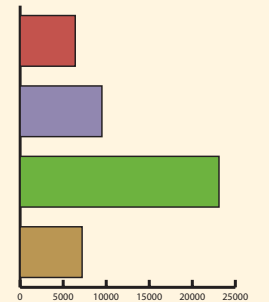
■ 20-24 years 3%
 ■ 25-34 years 21%
 ■ 35-44 years 35%
 ■ 45-54 years 37%
 ■ 55-59 years 2%
 ■ 60 years or older 2%

Current Sector of Employment



■ Manufacturing..... 16%
 ■ Financial/Insurance/Real Estate 5%
 ■ Medical 12%
 ■ Construction/Trades..... 5%
 ■ Education..... 7%
 ■ Distribution 9%
 ■ Office/Administration... 5%
 ■ Hospitality/Food Service 9%
 ■ Sales/Service..... 11%
 ■ Other 21%

Desired Wage Rates Per Hour By Range



■ \$20.00 or more 6,400
 ■ \$15.00 - \$19.99 9,500
 ■ \$10.00 - \$14.99 23,100
 ■ \$9.99 or less- 7,200..... 21%

Factor	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Availability of Skilled Workers	3%	40%	30%	27%
Availability of Unskilled Workers	21%	58%	21%	0%
Availability of Professional Workers	0%	49%	36%	15%
Availability of Technical Workers	3%	42%	42%	13%
Worker Productivity	9%	82%	9%	0%
Worker Reliability	11%	80%	6%	3%
Worker Attitudes	3%	85%	9%	3%
Reading Competency	0%	76%	21%	3%
Writing Competency	3%	72%	19%	6%
Calculations Competency	3%	70%	19%	6%
Teamwork Skills	9%	70%	21%	0%
Entry Level Skills	0%	62%	24%	14%