

**Survey Results – Executive Director Validation Session
December 12, 2008**

Question #1: Please rank what you feel are the top 3 to 5 common employment challenges facing job seekers in this labour market.

Survey results:

a) Lack of/or access to appropriate employment opportunities

This issue deals with the Job Seekers ability to locate appropriate Employment Opportunities. This inability may be the result of the economic downturn limiting Employment Opportunities, the lack job search skills or lack of current labour market information. “Appropriate” usually means Employment Opportunities that provide a living wage and a chance for professional and personal growth linked to position.

b) Lack of appropriate skill sets

If Job Seekers are able to locate appropriate Employment Opportunities, they (the Job Seekers) may lack some or all of the skills required to effectively compete for the Employment Opportunity. In this category lack of experience or lack of Canadian experience should be considered.

c) Education level

If the Job Seekers have some or all of the necessary skills to complete the skill set required for the Employment Opportunity, their education level or credentials may not be acceptable for the Employment Opportunity and may not be at a level that would allow for completion of training for the necessary skills to complete the skill set as required.

d) Transportation

If the Job Seekers are able to locate an appropriate Employment Opportunity and have the required skill set or has the ability to acquire the skills needed and has attained the appropriate education level to suit the Employment Opportunity or can undertake the training necessary to meet the requirements of the Employment Opportunity, the Job Seekers may not be able to physically get to the worksite due the lack of transportation.

A Vision in Action: Capturing Employment Agency Input Survey
Nov/December, 2008

Executive Director Observations

Do you agree with these results? Please explain.

- Consensus – Yes
- Lack of skills around job seeking in current market
- Coming out of heavy industry unaware of transferable skills
- Unfamiliar with technology
- Skilled trades
- Transportation

What is missing? Please explain.

- People taking survival jobs – eliminate opportunities to build skills – eligibility criteria
- Trapped – lack of income to go to school
- Racism
- Disabilities – accommodation – Human Rights legislature will make it more difficult to get job
- Culture in Niagara that does not work well with change
- Cooperate – Working together has to improve
- Crisis Counselling – supporting through chaos

Question #2: Please rank what you feel are the top 3 to 5 recruitment challenges being identified by the employers you work with.

Survey results:

a) Acceptable employment opportunities

Employers inability to provide "acceptable" employment opportunities to Job Seekers. "Acceptable" usually means a living wage and an opportunity to for professional and personal growth during employment

b) Identifying potential employees

Finding and matching the Job Seekers with the appropriate skill sets to the available employment opportunity. This includes verifying and accepting credentials, education levels and work experience from other countries as suitable for the Canadian workplace.

c) Education

The education levels of Job Seekers do not match the requirements of the employment opportunities.

d) Job search skills

Job Seekers are lacking in Job search skills, for example resume writing, interview skills, having some knowledge of company that has the Employment Opportunity, and the ability to discuss their skills as transferable skills as they relate to the Employment Opportunity.

e) Workforce issues and problems

Not enough applicants for Employment Opportunities, reliability of new hires is an issue, work ethics, training costs, language barrier for newcomers as new hires and newcomers adapting to the Canadian workplace culture.

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Executive Director Observations:

Do you agree with these results? Please explain.

- A, b, & c are very closely related
- There are good jobs if skill levels are there but low wages are attached to low skill sets
- Education – do not match requirements – creates the foundation for employment opportunities – reduces costs for training
- Acceptable employment opportunities – as employment fluctuations take place/ people need to readjust into new world of employment including business supplying individuals living in this region
- Identifying potential employers
- Utilizing and developing job developers

What is missing? Please explain.

- Employers need:
 - A strategy for monitoring services and knowledge workers especially with downturn in economy
 - A strategy for knowledge transfer – loss of productivity
- Dependent on supply and demand
- To offer pathways to employees – need motivation to take jobs
- Support government to attend new businesses
- Link between job market and what is needed
- Job strategy needs to be created to facilitate the link between the two

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Question #3: What approach or methods do you find the most effective in assisting job seekers to secure employment?

**() = number of responses in this category*

Survey results:

- a) Establish relationship / work one-on-one with client (8)
- b) Prepare an individual job search plan / educate on job search tools (5)
- c) Connect job seeker to other agencies / resources (5)
- d) Assistance with: Resume / Cover Letter / Interview Skills / Job Search Skills (4)
- e) Connect job seeker to employer / employer research (4)
- f) Utilize wage subsidy initiatives (3)
- g) Identify job seeker skills (3)
- h) Address / identify barriers to employment (2)
- i) Other (2)
 - 1) Take a very realistic approach; do your research
 - 2) Ongoing communications at several community levels

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Executive Director Observations:

Do you agree with these results? Please explain.

- All items are important – rank changes according to individual needs
- H should become B
- Agree with ranking but vary greatly with client

What is missing? Please explain.

- What's out there – labour market information – options available in the market
- Job maintenance
- Job coaching
- Career management
- A way to respond to the “immediacy” of the situation – getting the “buy in” to the “processes” for helping we have in place
- Explaining labour market opportunities
- Strengthen employer relationships
- Understanding capacity of individual to expand their employment opportunities

Question #4: What resources do job seekers use most often to transition effectively to employment?

**() = number of responses in this category*

Survey results:

- a) Job Counseling / Employment Support Services (11)
- b) Technology Aids / Internet Job Search (6)
- c) Training & Skills Development / Training Programs (5)
- d) Job Finding Clubs (3)
- e) Job Bank (3)
- f) Social Services Support (2)
- g) Other (4)
 - 1) 'Not all job seekers have had equal access to employment supports under our current system.....target driven environment'
 - 2) 'Most effective clients are those who never give up (diligence) and are willing to travel'
 - 3) 'Niagara Employment News is a great resource that many people seem to be unaware of. Newspapers still can be good resources'
 - 4) 'Networking with people they know'

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Executive Director Observations

Do you agree with these results? Please explain.

- For those who do access – accurate description
- Agree with results
- Effective counseling uses all the resources listed as well as counseling that assists emotional resources – psychologically, emotionally – provides hope

What is missing? Please explain.

- Identifying those who are not accessing traditional resources
- Consistency around identifying employment services
- Lack of commitment from employers in terms of criteria for postings – more realistic – recognize the value of skills
- Old school job boards
- How do we access job seekers that are not accessing employment services
- Access to financial support – not meeting criteria
- Taking survival jobs
- Direct and available mental health services
- Crisis counseling
- Second Career – does not meet the needs of many people (one agency stated 80% of their clients are not eligible)
- Newcomers pushed into survival jobs on Continuing Ed programs that do not match clients skill sets

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Discussion Results – What’s working? What needs to change?

What is working?

- Improvement in receptiveness in EO – meaningful discussions
- Happy with communication, cooperation with service providers
- Realizing that things have to come together – project is great timing
- Have made opportunity to connect – ED’s to meet on regular basis
- See job seeker as customer rather than just a job seeker – increased respect
- Thinking of how we are doing things – more desperation – “How can I make it better for the client?”
- Deliberately thinking about making it work
- Through communication – internet is a time saver
- SCS – recognition for longer term strategy for training – good with moving forward-beginning stages
- Knowing what is happening @ Directors level of Ministries
- Niagara has responded well to working together, increased partnership – this has allowed Niagara to become the “talk of the town” and allows more forward thinking

What needs to Change?

- Increased communication at ED level in Niagara
- No wrong door
- Ministry of Corrections – current process not working effectively for people with a record in their late teens/early twenties who are now in their forties and looking for employment. Employers are discriminating.
- Literacy – a common assessment tool to understand the capacity of clients
- Branding of Employment Ontario – should be the main focus with the agency as the secondary focus. Allows people to quickly identify the EO offices i.e.
EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO ~ Agency Name