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**WORKFORCE INNOVATION IN REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (WIRED)
CALIFORNIA INNOVATION CORRIDOR (CIC)**

Workforce Needs Assessment Analysis: Project 3.1

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Date: August 28, 2008
Location: Los Angeles County
Number of Companies Surveyed: 30

WIRED 3.1 Project Overview (Project Goal): Conduct a labor needs assessment of 200 entities, to include 100 key space and information technology companies and government employers, 50 space entrepreneurial and small business companies, and 50 manufacturing companies. Workforce composition, current and future skill needs, and education and training gaps will be identified and included in the assessments.

Introduction:

The purpose of the survey was to gather information about the skills required for critical positions and to identify future workforce gaps in order to develop a strategy to address future California Innovation Corridor employer needs. To collect the data, a survey instrument was created where employers were asked to rate both the competency and importance of workforce skills. As a participant of the WIRED 3.1 project, the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) and the Los Angeles City Workforce Investment Board (WIB) collected data from 30 City of Los Angeles employers.

To complete this project, a survey instrument was created for the 3.1 project by utilizing an LMID survey development process. Company, occupation, and staffing pattern data were analyzed to help each county identify potential target companies. The survey instrument was utilized by the LAEDC and LA City WIB during May 2008 through July 2008 to gather information on the 30 targeted companies. In addition to this survey, other relevant information was collected and utilized in this report. This summary provides an analysis of the survey and includes data from the 30 targeted key companies in the fields of hi-technology, aerospace, environmental, bio-tech, manufacturing, and transportation which represent the innovation and economic diversity of the City of Los Angeles.

Although this sample size may not be large enough to be considered relevant statistically, the survey accurately reflects the diversity within the high-tech communities within the City of Los Angeles and gives voice to common themes and workforce concerns.

Target Companies:

The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation and City of Los Angeles Workforce Investment Board conducted surveys of 30 Los Angeles City employers in the 325, 332, 334, 336, 483, 488, 515, 517, 541 and 561 NAICS codes.

Los Angeles County is the largest manufacturing center in the country based on the number employed within the region. In addition, Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is the largest "origin and destination" airport in the world and the fifth largest in terms of total passenger volume. LA County is also home to the nation's largest port complex. The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach are responsible for 45% of all consumer products shipped into the U.S.



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In addition, there are a number of transportation-based companies located in the region which support these industries. While these large economic generators are located in the County, there are a number of transportation-based companies and many of the support companies that are located within the City of Los Angeles.

The region surveyed also includes biotech/pharmaceutical, manufacturing, engineering, environmental design, and high precision machining. The typical growing clusters in Los Angeles County (e.g. Entertainment and Hospitality, Retail, Aerospace, and Health Care) were excluded as target industries because of their lack of connection to technical innovation.

The following tables show the self-identified profile of the businesses surveyed.

Targeted Company NAICS Designations

NAICS	Description	FTE
325	Chemical Manufacturing	(1) 5 – 10
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	(1) 0 – 4
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	(1) 100 – 249
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	(1) 5 – 10; (1) 20 – 49
483	Water Transportation	(1) 11 – 19
488	Support Activities for Transportation	(2) 0 – 4; (1) 5 – 10; (1) 20 – 49; (2) 100 - 249
515	Broadcasting (except Internet)	(1) 100 – 249
517	Telecommunications	(1) 1,000+
541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	(1) 0 – 4; (4) 5 – 10; (4) 11 – 19; (1) 20 – 49; (2) 50 – 99; (1) 100 – 249; (1) 250 – 499; (1) 1,000+
561	Administrative and Support Services	(1) 100 – 249

Summary of Surveyed Respondents

Type	Service	Manufacturing	Transportation	R & D	Telecom	Other			
Count	2	5	7	12	1	3			
FTE									
FTE	0-4	5-9	11-19	20-49	50-99	100-249	250-499	500-999	1000+
Count	4	7	5	3	2	6	1		2
Respondent Position									
Respondent Position	HR Director	Supervisor/Mngr.	President/CEO	Other	Not Stated				
Count	8	3	7	12	0				
Background									
Background	A: Supervise	B: Periodically Observe	C: Discuss with Supervisors	D: Other	Not Stated				
Count	12	3	11	4	0				

Type of Companies: Of the 30 companies surveyed, 40% indicated R & D as their primary classification, 23% transportation, 17% manufacturing, 7% service, 10% other, and 3%

telecommunication. Although many of the responding companies could be characterized within several classifications, the individuals responding to the survey did not select multiple classifications, which may reflect their single focus on the critical occupations described in the survey.

Number of Employees: Although the average number of employees of those companies surveyed was 190, it is more accurate to view them in categories: small (under 20) is 53%; small to mid (20 - 99) is 17%; mid to large (100 – 499) 23% and large (+1000) is 7%. Overall, 70% of the responding companies have less than 100 employees. This percentage is reflective of the business base of Los Angeles County, as a whole, which is predominantly made of small and medium-sized businesses.

Feedback was obtained directly from upper management that either directly supervises employee performance or regularly discusses performance with the direct supervisor, as in the case of human resources (HR).

Core Critical Occupations:

NAIC	325	332	334	336	483	488	515	517	541	561		%
Critical Occupation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total	%
Engineer	1		1						6		8	18%
Scientist									5	2	7	16%
CNC		1		2							3	7%
Technician								1	2		3	7%
Machinist		1		1							2	4%
Assembly/Line			1			1					2	4%
Demolition/Construc									2		2	4%
Project mngt			1						1		2	4%
Sales			1				1				2	4%
Operations						2					2	4%
Electrician						1					1	2%
Geologist									1		1	2%
Architectural Design									1		1	2%
Ground handlers						1					1	2%
Maintenance						1					1	2%
Molders			1								1	2%
Production solderer			1								1	2%
Product Devlpmt.									1		1	2%
Legal									1		1	2%
Analyst									1		1	2%
Drivers						1					1	2%
Admin Support									1		1	2%
Total	1	2	6	3	0	7	1	1	22	2	45	100%

Type of Employees: The chart above captures all of the various responses in terms of specific positions required for core critical occupations. On the lower scale of the chart, the small sample size of the survey limits the relevancy of the percentage weighting for each position, especially for those with only one response. However, when grouped together, the largest concentration of critical occupations are Technical (36%), such as engineering, programmers, technicians and machinists; and Scientific (19%) which spanned several occupational disciplines including environmental, aerospace, biotech and architecture. Production/manufacturing skills represent 12%.

Major Skills Gaps:



Quantitative Results Summary:

Survey Question #2	Ranking of Employees Skills	Total	Average	Gap Score	Skills Gap Priority Rank
2	Rating of Problem Solving Skills	94	3.1	0.35	4
Importance	Importance of Problem Solving Skills	104.5	3.5		
3	Rating of Workplace Skills	87.5	2.9	0.64	1
Importance	Importance of Workplace Skills	103.0	3.6		
Technical Skills	Technical Skills	541.5	3.1		
4	Rating of Occupational Technical Skills	87.0	3.0	0.40	3
5	Importance of Occupational Technical Skills	102.0	3.4		
6	Rating of Additional Technical Skills	94.0	3.1	0.13	6
7	Importance of Additional Technical Skills	98.0	3.3		
8	Rating of Computer Skills	71.5	2.6	0.53	2
9	Importance of Computer Skills	89.0	3.2		
11	Rating of Social Skills	88.5	2.95	0.22	5
Importance	Importance of Social Skills	95.0	3.17		
14	Rating of Education Sufficiency (Average)	87.3		2.9	Education Gap Priority Rank
14	Satisfaction with Entry Level	85.0	2.8	2.8	1
14	Satisfaction with Technical	90.0	2.9	3.0	3
14	Satisfaction with Professional	87.0	3.0	2.9	2

Most Important Skills:

In addition to identifying and ranking the Skill Gap, the chart above denotes how companies rated various Employee Skills in terms of importance. The following is the list of important skills, from greatest to least:

- 1) Workplace Skills 3.6
- 2) Problem Solving Skills 3.5
- 3) Occupational Technical Skills 3.4
- 4) Additional Technical Skills 3.3
- 5) Computer Skills 3.2
- 6) Social Skills 3.17

Workplace Skills, defined on the survey as judgment, decision making, management of resources and time, are ranked as most important, even above technical and computer skills. In the qualitative section of the survey, companies expanded upon these definitions to include a full range of abilities including communication, teamwork, work ethic, reliability, which would all be necessary components for good judgment and management.

All six of the skill areas are important, evidenced by a rating of 3+ and there are not wide margins between the categories.

Largest Skill Gaps:

The Skill Gap is derived from comparing the relative importance of the specific skill to the rating of the current performance of that skill. The larger the gap, the greater the dissatisfaction with the level of performance, vis a vis its impact on the critical core occupation. The Skill Gaps are ranked in terms of priority, 1 being the greatest opportunity or challenge. As with Skill Importance, Workplace Skills have the greatest skill gap and remain the greatest priority.

Education Sufficiency:

Employers are least satisfied with the quality of education of Entry Level employees, followed by Professional. Of the three categories, they are most satisfied with the educational sufficiency of Technical Employees, but the margins of difference are miniscule.

Qualitative Results Summary:

		People Skills	No	Other	Communi-cation	Account-ability	Punctuality	Problem Solving/Commo n Sense	Work Ethic
12	Other Social Skills	3	17	4	3	3	2	2	2
		Problem Solver	Attn. To Detail	Multi-tasking	Good communication	Reliable	R & D, Science Background	Teamwork	Ability to Learn
13b	Describe best employee	4	6	2	7	5	4	4	1
		Technical	Professional	Both	Neither	N/A			
15	Critical Shortage	7	9	1	10	3			
		Regulatory Affairs, legal, insurance	Information Tech.	Project Mgt.	Scheduling, Cost Analysis	Reliability	Work Ethic	Good Business Practices	No/N/A
16	Identify Future Skills	5	1	1	1	2	2	2	18
		Math & Science	Interpersonal skills, common sense	Communication	Writing	Welding, metals, molding	Machining	CNC Programming	Legal
17	Identify Desired Training	3	5	4	4	2	4	1	1
19	Other Comments	4							

Critical Skills Shortage (Technical or Professional):

Of the 17 companies that reported a critical skills shortage, 53% identified a shortage in the area of Professional Skills; 41% in Technical Skills, and 6% in both. Six out of the 30 respondents stated that they did not perceive a shortage of professional or technical skills. **Note:** This survey question does not provide any detail regarding the definition of the terms professional and technical. This is one of the areas where the low number of responses does not represent a sufficiently large statistical pool from which to draw a strong conclusion.

Best Employees:

The top category of attributes characterizing the “best employees” includes excellent communication skills, attention to detail and reliability. Attention to detail was mentioned within the context of laboratory and research work environments. The next set of attributes includes problem-solving, teamwork and a science background.

Identification of New Skills:

Of the 30 surveyed companies, 16 either did not answer Question #16 which addressed this issue, or answered it negatively that there were no new skills that they could identify that would be required by future workers in their industry. This is interesting, considering that one of the main purposes of this survey is to help identify skills needed to equip the workforce of the future. From this, it can be concluded that the skills that are identified for current employees will be the same ones needed for future employees.

Of the 14 companies that provided a specific response, there were 13 different specific answers covering a broad spectrum ranging from technical, basic skills, soft skills and personal attributes such as integrity that employers are looking for in future employees. To demonstrate the range and diversity of these answers, they have been included in this summary:

New Skills Required by Future Workers:

	Responses	Skill Set
1	2	Artistry and Imagination
2	2	Insurance
3	2	Legal Process
4	2	Project Mgt.
5	2	Reliability/Follow-through
6	2	Social/Human Skills
7	1	Basic Programming
8	1	Green Environmental Practices
9	1	Info Tech
10	1	Moral ethics/Integrity
11	1	Regulations
12	1	RFID Technology
13	1	Writing and Communication

Education/Training Issues:

Engineering and Technical Training:

Referring back to data presented earlier in this summary, 55% of the companies interviewed have engineering-related, scientific or technical core critical occupations. There is a wide variety of choices for obtaining advanced degrees in engineering as well as technical certification, both within the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County.

One of the key issues for success is ensuring that the educational providers stay in tune with the changing needs of the area innovators so that programs do not become outdated or irrelevant. This can be secured through continuous dialogue between companies and those educational institutions that develop the technology-related curricula.

Basic Training:

Nearly all of the companies surveyed identified the need for strengthening basic skills training in the areas of Communication (written and verbal), Math, and Science.

Although most professionals believe in the value of mastering basic skills, there is evidence of a growing generational disconnect among members of the younger generation of people entering the workforce as far as the perceived relevance of these skills. One of the challenges our educators face, in addition to ensuring the quality and accessibility of basic skills education, is conveying the relevance of these subjects as they relate to lifestyle and material success.

Soft Skills Training:

Based on the results of this survey, “soft skills” fall into two categories: practical skills, such as problem solving, communication and teamwork, which can be taught, and items which are more closely related to personal attributes, qualities and abilities, such; as creativity, integrity, reliability and accountability. Across all business disciplines, the need for these characteristics remains of primary importance to the core critical occupation. Even with the most rigorous technical training, can a person build a plane without them? Can our educational institutions teach these?

The first group of practical soft skills can be taught and are, in fact, increasingly incorporated into modern course work which requires students to complete projects together, encouraging teamwork and communication.

The second group of soft skills that revolve around character issues are more complex, with more complex origins and influences beyond the academic environment. These successful behaviors and character attributes are modeled in the family, churches, community organizations, schools, and within the corporate workplace. They are integrally woven throughout the fabric of these social structures. To have a positive impact on the development of desirable character traits will require an unprecedented, concerted effort and multifaceted approach.

Hands-on Experience:

In a fast-paced, competitive job environment, especially within aerospace and high-tech companies, it is assumed that educated applicants possess the skills required to be successful within a relatively short time after being hired. However, many employers are reporting that prospective employees lack the overall job knowledge and the practical foundation required for them to effectively learn on-the-job, despite possessing a college degree or technical certification. In general, companies requiring a high degree of functionality from key employees do not have the in-house programs in place to sufficiently train new employees in order to maximize successful workplace skills and overall knowledge.

Compounding this challenge, on-the-job (OJT) training programs through the LA County WIB have experienced a sharp decline in federal funding. Because of a lack of funding, many companies no longer consider OJT as a viable strategy for employee development and attraction. Fortunately, California companies have an excellent resource available to help them upgrade the skills of existing employees through the use of the state-funded Employer Training Panel (ETP) program. ETP allows companies to work with a hired consultant or educational institution to create a tailored curriculum for their training needs, while the state pays for a portion of the training.

How skills will evolve:

The results of this survey represent a fresh perspective to enhance the cooperative dialogue already underway between our business community, educational stakeholders and supportive agencies/resources such as ETP. The impact that this survey will have on how skills will evolve will be the direct result of how it is used to encourage the synergy between members of these three groups.

How to Create a Culture of Continuous Employee Education:

Traditionally, companies use the employee benefit of tuition reimbursement to encourage employee education and help attract and retain self-motivated employees. In contrast with very general tuition reimbursement programs, companies could retool these programs to address specific needs. If they do not already do so, employers could offer credits on annual performance reviews for successfully completing selected courses which are directly relevant to advancement within the organization.

Regional Investment Strategy:

Looking ahead, one possible outcome of the WIRED 3.1 Survey for the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles region, and for the Innovation Corridor, in general, would be to extend the reach of ETP through cross-promotion to expand awareness and outreach of programs and funding opportunities.

Survey results could be used to help create curricula that would meet the needs of innovative companies within industry clusters and geographic regions which could be replicated and extended throughout the Innovation Corridor.

Another solution is for companies to work with local educational stakeholders to expand practical internships, which would allow prospective employees to gain real-world experience and provide employers a tool to train prospective employees for workplace success. Internship programs, however, require an investment of time and resources as well as a top-down commitment to long-term workforce development.



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Summary:

Innovative, high-tech companies are a natural subset within our business community to take a leadership role in shaping a successful workforce for the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles region, as well as statewide. Many of the larger technology leaders have multi-city locations within the Innovation Corridor and could perhaps be brought together to develop programs that would have a great impact on California.

Due to the highly competitive nature of high-tech markets, which is increasingly global, there is a real sense of urgency for these companies to develop solutions. It is likely that without corrective action, the skill gaps identified will become more pronounced. Educational solutions take time, even with a concerted, well-coordinated effort. If solutions are not developed, the demands of the international market place may make outsourcing positions to overseas labor markets more attractive than long-term local and regional programs.

All of our stakeholders, whether they are educational, government agencies, trade organizations, or community groups have much to gain and lose. We need to extend the definition of the "Innovation Corridor" to apply to innovation in workforce development and Los Angeles is an excellent region from which to start.

All surveys conducted by:
The Los Angeles City Workforce Investment Board and
the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation



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Table 1: Quantitative Survey Results Summary, Page 9

Part IV Details	Total	# Responses	Average
Critical Occupations and their Basic Skills			
1. What are some of the core critical occupations that drive your company or make your company able to perform?			
1.a. For each occupation, what are the most critical skills of these occupations?			
How important is it that employees meet your expectations in those skills when hired?	105	29	3.6
2. How do you rate their problem solving skills performance/competency?	94	30	3.1
Please rate the importance of problem-solving skills for future entry-level employees?	104.5	30	3.5
3. How would you rate typical new-hire performance/competency in workplace skills such as; judgment and decision making, management of resources and time management?	87.5	30	2.9
How important will these skills be for future employees?	103	29	3.6
Technical Skills			
4. In your company, how well does the new employee typically meet performance/competency expectations set for entry-level workers in terms of technical knowledge related to the job s/he will perform?	87	29	3.0
5. Please rate the future importance of occupational knowledge for employees	102	30	3.4
6. In the area of technical skills, how important will it be for entry-level employees to be adept in the use/operation of equipment, tools, materials, software, information systems, or more than one specific technology when hired?	94	30	3.1
7. What is the importance of these skills and/or abilities for future entry level employees?	98	30	3.3
8. In terms of specific computer skills such as using spreadsheets, databases, word processing, graphics, Internet or giving presentations, etc., how well does the new hire meet entry-level performance expectations?	71.5	27	2.6
9. How would you rate the importance of information technology use and management for future entry-level employees?	89	28	3.2
10. Do you look for any other skills that are among your entry-level expectations for present and future employees which I have not mentioned? Please discuss them.		17	Yes
Social Skills			
11. In the area of social skills, how well does the employee meet entry level performance expectations for team-work, coordination, instructing, relationship-building, cross-cultural understanding, negotiation, persuasion, etc.?	88.5	30	2.95
What level of future importance will social skills have for your entry level employees?	95	30	3.17
12. Are there any social skills not mentioned which you include in entry level expectations, now, or will in the future? Please discuss.			
13. In demonstrating good work ethics (initiative, dependability, reliability), how well does the employee meet entry-level expectations?	91.8	30	3.06
13.b In terms of technical abilities and organizational fit, please identify the characteristics, which best describe your most effective, reliable technical employees for each critical occupation:			
Overall Perception of today's workforce			
14. In general, how satisfied are you with the education of today's worker?			
Entry level:	85	30	2.8
Technical	90	30	3.0
Professional	87	30	2.9

Table 2: Qualitative Survey Results Summary

Consolidated Answers to open-ended questions:

13b. In terms of technical abilities and organizational fit, please identify the characteristics, which best describe your most effective, reliable technical employees for each critical occupation:

- Passion for knowledge, attention to detail
- Initiative, ethical, problem-solver, good communication skills, team-player, negotiator, reliable, food analytical skills
- Precision is key in the success of working in a laboratory setting where clinical trials research is conducted. Attention to detail ability to document/record work and findings
- Confidence in solving problems cost effectively. This is true for both operations and support staff
- Research & Development, technical competencies in biology and chemist, teamwork
- Easily adaptable to proprietary systems, good w/information-tech. Train specific job knowledge, so good employees are mostly professional, not necessarily technical
- Communication, soft-skills and ability to work with others
- Multi-taskers. Broad range of skills
- Professional competence and activity; Excellence in ability to contribute to administrative and academic activities such as research, education, and teaching, at JWCI and in public service and fundraising
- Perceptive, clean, articulate self-motivated
- Application of education. Dealing w/construction, design, so there's environmental liabilities
- Conscientiousness, problem solving, communication
- Independent-minded, knowledgeable, ability to manage task completion
- On-time, able to read and stick to schedules and maps, both electronic and paper, able to communicate professionally in front of client
- Ability to learn
- Attention to detail, good language skills, desire to meet deadlines and bring work to conclusion
- Fluent in English, Driver's License
- Highly motivated, detail-oriented, can successfully meet frequent deadlines; analytical and results-oriented

15. Is there a critical skills shortage, if so, is it more at the Professional Level or Technical Level?

- Professional. More difficult to find engineers with the right background who are eligible for high level clearances
- Professional
- Technician
- Technician & Professional
- Professional. Drivers need to be trained on how to communicate with others, behave properly in the workplace as well as on the road, these two skills don't seem to be inherent in today's employees despite years of experience in the position.

16. Are there any new skills sets that may be required of future workers in this industry?

- Artistry and imagination
- Project management
- Basic human skill set, gaining trust by keeping promises, good follow through, reliable
- Courses in social soft-skills, good business practices and moral ethics, integrity
- RFID technology, and oddly - regulatory affairs working skills - FDA is expecting that all technical persons have a good knowledge - something new which used to be more isolated to QA and RA types
- Information Technology
- Broader background. Insurance, legal
- More green knowledge. Environmental trend knowledge. Insurance, litigation
- Writing and communication
- Basic programming (Filemaker Pro)
- Understanding of personalized medicine
- Web Advertising Knowledge

17. Are there any classes or training programs you would like to see covered during high school years or offered by the local community college that would better prepare potential employees for employment by your company?

- Professionalism, collaboration, team & task management
- More math, science and engineering offerings
- Project management
- Perhaps more opportunities for students as interns during summer. They might benefit greatly in deciding on their career as well as becoming a responsible/reliable employees.
- Machine shop, CNC Programming
- Start earlier than High School level. Social and communication skills. Moral Ethics, integrity accountability and reliability training
- Every student should have a better grounding in basic anatomy. We deal with Biomaterials and tissues, and it would help communicate what we do better. Added benefit: a deeper understanding of family and personal medical issues
- Common sense type of training; desire to work (weak work ethic); interpersonal skills; writing and discussion skills - especially writing; valuable 'life skills' (e.g., balance a checkbook, learn how to cook, fix a flat tire on a car).
- Social skills, professional, social skills. What is appropriate and not.
- Machine shop
- Machining, engineering, manufacturing process (blue print reading/drawing, math skills)
- Trade skills - auto, welding
- Public speaking and communication
- Mostly in B.A. is where importance lies. Writing has improved.
- More critical writing programs. New grads have poor writing skills.
- More focus on skilled trades such as plumbers and electricians
- If there is a class on how to prepare a worker to conduct themselves when in a work setting, sex harassment for truck drivers. A course that they can take seriously, that would prevent some problems in the future.
- Teaching team approach to solve problems
- More legal secretary and bookkeeper training
- Focus in expanding Biology and Chemistry Science Programs to include: Immunohistochemistry and Molecular Diagnostics
- Most of our entry hires for sales are coming straight out of undergraduate communications, advertising or marketing programs and are getting academic exposure for the industry.

18. What types of companies are involved in your supply chain?

- Building materials, interior design products
- Aerospace and defense contractors
- Brazing, painting, grinding, finish coat, x-ray, inspection, anodizing, plating, heat treatment
- University and Research Institutions
- Material production, component production, completed PV module production
- Aerospace
- Pharmaceuticals and research institutions
- Cobalt-60 irradiators, specialized insulated packing, chemical companies, tissue banks Surgeons(e.g. practices), machine shops
- Chemical companies; companies that supply technical equipment for bio medical and chemical research
- Aerospace/Airlines, distribution centers, transportation, entertainment, colleges, government, residential resort communities
- Office supply, lab supply
- Petroleum companies
- Petroleum providers, electronics and avionics, concessions
- Construction, office supplies
- Trucker, Airliner and Custom Brokers, Software, Govt.
- We deliver and pickup from all kinds of companies around the nation, anything that does not require cold storage.
- Insurance and risk management
- Trucking & Airline companies
- Interface with customs, brokers and truckers
- Supply vendors (office supplies)
- Clinical Lab Equipment and Reagent Manufacturers
- Cable Programmers primarily, Other Media news, On-line, Print media

19. Are there any further comments you would like to make?

- We are a young company with limited human resources (all of our G&A and manufacturing functions are outsourced), and we heavily rely on outside professionals (who are leaders in their own specific technical fields). We work from geographically separated locations on a daily basis relying on internet communications, telephone, etc.
- Some of our hands-on technical work is carried out in a Chicago suburb. Although I attempted to focus on our LA office experience - some of the Illinois situation has likely entered into my responses. Similar, though.
- LAEDC does good things. Thanks

Sample Survey (Page 1)

WIRED 3.1 Interview Format for Employer Questionnaire

Introduction

Part One: Demographics

Name of Employer _____

Industry (NAICS): _____

Type of Business: Service _____ Manufacturing _____ Government _____ Other _____

Size of Business:

0 -4 Full-time employees or full-time equivalents (FTE) ___ 5 - 9 FTE ___ 10 - 19 FTE ___ 20 - 49 FTE ___ 50 - 99 FTE ___ 100 – 249 FTE ___ 250 – 499 FTE ___ 1000+FTE ___

Interviewee's Title/Position

Pres./CEO/Dir. ___ HR Dir. ___ Supv./Mgr. ___ Other _____

Primary Site of Business _____

Part Two: Background Description

Please indicate which one of the following descriptions best defines your role relating to employees at your company?

___ A. I directly supervise or am able to closely observe the job performance and/or work results of employees.

___ B. I periodically (at least once a month) observe the job performance or see the work results of employees.

___ C. In my position I discuss with direct supervisors, managers and/or management personnel, the job performances of employees as part of my role with the company.

___ D. OR complete the following statement. "My opinions and perceptions of the current workforce are based on

Do you have any questions or concerns before we continue?
(Note comments or observations as needed)

Part Three: Directions for Interview Questions

The purpose of this interview is to gather information about the skills required for positions at your firm and any gaps between your expectations and what is available in the current workforce.

While you are recalling recent new hires in your business, please give an evaluation of how well they meet your *performance expectations*.

Specific skills are grouped in three broad areas:

- Basic Skills, i.e., math, language, writing, reading
- Technical Skills i.e., skills specific to the occupation
- Social Skills, i.e., communication, coordination, team building
- Workplace Skills, i.e., reliability, dependability, etc.

Sample Survey (page 2)

First, I will name specific skills and ask that you discuss the skills of the new hire in terms of *performance/competency expectations*:

- 4 = **Exceeding** your entry-level expectations (E)
- 3= **Meeting** your entry-level expectations (M)
- 2 = **Nearly Meeting** your entry-level expectations (NM)
- 1 = **Does Not Meet** your entry-level expectations (DNM)
- 0 = **Does not apply (NA)**

Secondly, I will ask you to rate how **important** each attribute is for employees you will hire in the future. Please rate each attribute using one of the following, which best applies.

- A. 4 = **Very Important** in future entry level employees (VI)
- B. 3 = **Important** (I)
- C. 2 = **Somewhat Important** (SI)
- D. 1 = **Not Important** (NI)

You are encouraged to briefly elaborate on your response with any specific examples related to a particular occupation.

Part Four: Interview Questions

Critical Occupations and their Basic Skills

1. What are some of the core critical occupations that drive your company or make your company able to perform?

- 1.a. For each occupation, what are the most critical skills of these occupations?

For each critical occupation, please answer the following:

How *important* is it that employees meet your expectations in those skills when hired?

Rating_____

2. How do you rate their problem solving skills *performance/competency*?

Rating_____

Please rate the *importance* of problem-solving skills for future entry-level employees?

Rating_____

3. How would you rate typical new-hire *performance/competency* in workplace skills such as; judgment and decision making, management of resources and time management?

Rating_____

How *important* will these skills be for future employees?

Rating_____

Sample Survey (page 3)

Technical Skills

4. In your company, how well does the new employee typically meet *performance/competency* expectations set for entry-level workers in terms of technical knowledge related to the job s/he will perform?

Rating _____

5. Please rate the future *importance* of occupational knowledge for employees

Rating _____

6. In the area of technical skills, how *important* will it be for entry-level employees to be adept in the use/operation of equipment, tools, materials, software, information systems, or more than one specific technologies when hired?

Rating _____

7. What is the *importance* of these skills and/or abilities for future entry level employees?

Rating _____

8. In terms of specific computer skills such as using spreadsheets, databases, word processing, graphics, Internet or giving presentations, etc., how well does the new hire meet entry-level *performance* expectations?

Rating _____

9. How would you rate the *importance* of information technology use and management for future entry-level employees?

Rating _____

10. Do you look for any other skills that are among your entry-level expectations for present and future employees which I have not mentioned? Please discuss them.

Social Skills

11. In the area of social skills, how well does the employee meet entry level *performance* expectations for team-work, coordination, instructing, relationship-building, cross-cultural understanding, negotiation, persuasion, etc.?

Rating _____

What level of future *importance* will social skills have for your entry level employees?

Rating _____

12. Are there any social skills not mentioned which you include in entry level expectations, now, or will in the future? Please discuss.

13. In demonstrating good work ethics (initiative, dependability, reliability), how well does the employee meet entry-level expectations?

Rating _____

Sample Survey (page 4)

13.b In terms of technical abilities and organizational fit, please identify the characteristics, which best describe your most effective, reliable technical employees for each critical occupation:

Overall Perception of today's workforce

14. In general, how satisfied are you with the education of today's worker?

Entry level:

4 = Very satisfied ___ 3 = Satisfied ___ 2 = Unsatisfied ___ 1 = Very Unsatisfied ___

Technical:

4 = Very satisfied ___ 3 = Satisfied ___ 2 = Unsatisfied ___ 1 = Very Unsatisfied ___

Professional

4 = Very satisfied ___ 3 = Satisfied ___ 2 = Unsatisfied ___ 1 = Very Unsatisfied ___

We appreciate the time you have taken to share your perceptions. We value your feedback. There are a few final questions that I would like to ask regarding the labor pool from which you have to choose future employees.

15. Is there a critical skills shortage, if so, is it more at the:

1. Technician level
2. Professional Level

16. Are there any new skills sets that may be required of future workers in this industry?

17. Are there any classes or training programs you would like to see covered during high school years or offered by the local community college that would better prepare potential employees for employment by your company?

18. What types of companies are involved in your supply chain?

19. Are there any further comments you would like to make?

Sample Survey (page 5)

Date _____
Location of Interview _____
Person conducting Interview _____
Duration of Interview _____

Recording Interview Responses

Part One: Demographics

Check response given or record information given under "other".

Part Two: Background description

Check response given or record information given "Complete this statement..."

Part Three: Directions for interview

Please note any need for clarification or concerns expressed.

Part Four: Interview Questions

Suggested abbreviations for ratings:

4 = Ex = Exceeds expectations	4= VI=Very Important
3 = M = Meets expectations	3 = I = Important
2 = NM = Nearly meets expectations	2 = SI = Somewhat Important
1 = DNM = Does not meet expectations	1 = NI = Not Important
0 = NA = Does not apply	

Please transcribe your notes of lengthy responses, with appropriate Interview question numbers.



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Funding provided by Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration: WIRED Initiative