



## Innovation in Industry Training, Recruitment and Employee Development Survey Results

Survey data from 26 industry respondents obtained in January of 2020.  
Results provided to NCBPA Member professionals and non-Member respondents.

**Results Release Date: February 24, 2020**

*Support provided by member company*



## Executive Summary

Thank you to the 26 industry professionals that took time from their busy schedules to respond to our survey! On behalf of our survey partner Knauf Insulation, thank you!

NCBPA is thrilled to have qualitative responses from our member and industry companies on the very important topic of opportunities for innovation in training, recruitment and employee development. We look forward to using these results to develop and deliver new and improved workforce resources that benefit all industry companies and workers!

## Background

This survey came about in late 2019 through NCBPA's ongoing discussions with member company Knauf Insulation about how our organizations can work together to improve our industry's training, recruitment and employee development practices to benefit all industry companies and professionals.

In addition, NCBPA has been ramping up industry workforce development initiatives ([see more on our website here](#)) in 2019 - 2020 in a variety of areas. Having these survey responses proves incredibly helpful to prioritizing our activities at the local and state levels, and for organizations like Knauf Insulation working at the regional and national levels.

## Knauf Insulation

NCBPA would like to thank and recognize Knauf Insulation for their support and participation in this survey and our association's workforce development activities more broadly. Knauf Insulation is one of the world's largest manufacturers of insulation products and solutions. The company maintains a strong commitment to sustainability and works in more than 40 countries with 27 manufacturing sites in 15 countries. The company has staff and customers across North Carolina and operates a wealth of training programs across the U.S.

Learn more about Knauf Insulation on their website:

- [Sustainability Programs](#)
- [Career Opportunities](#)
- [Certification Programs](#)

To speak with Knauf directly, contact Clint Shireman at [Clint.Shireman@KnaufInsulation.com](mailto:Clint.Shireman@KnaufInsulation.com).

## How the Results Will be Used

The results of this survey will help NCBPA, Knauf Insulation and others improve how we train, recruit and develop our industry's workforce. Just last week, NCBPA incorporated information from this survey in a workforce development grant application that we've been working on.

Most importantly, we're sharing the raw results with our member companies and survey respondents so that your business can benefit from this information as well! We've removed information we deemed

sensitive but comments that were both positive and negative about these topics remain – this feedback needs to be known!

## Summary Findings

At a high-level, this survey tells us that work is needed to transition industry companies from high awareness with low action to high awareness with high action that is supported by tangible resources that support training, recruitment and development. Here is a chart created by NCBPA to summarize survey findings in the eight topic areas across these three categories:

	Awareness	Resources	Execution
Training Program	High	Middle	Low
Career Pathways	High	Low	Low
Soft Skills	High	Middle	Low
Technology	Low	Low	Low
Recognition	High	Middle	Middle
Developing Leaders	High	Middle	Low
Work Life Balance	Low	Low	Low
Recruiting Students	High	Low	Low

Our analysis of the survey results identifies several key areas that NCBPA’s workforce development efforts will focus on in the coming months. Based on the survey results, these areas include:

**Employee Training Program:** The majority of respondents reported employee training programs as being important but indicated a lack of ability in acting on offering and managing them. Eleven respondents reported having training programs but few provided examples that would be considered more robust or sophisticated than routine onboarding forms and annual performance reviews. Respondents did feel that training programs were important for all of the roles listed in the question.

**Career Pathways Resources:** One major theme that NCBPA has already been working on that is present in the survey results is strong awareness and desire for resources that clearly outline career pathways for students and professionals to follow in our industry. Unfortunately, the survey results indicate that few, if any, resources are available that can be used to illustrate those pathways. In this

survey, no respondents indicated clearly available career pathways resources at their company or that they know of!

**Need for Soft Skills:** While widely known in our industry as a core skill set for obtaining an entry-level job and advancing a career, the lack of formal resources or methods that companies can use to help recruits and workers to improve their soft skills is significantly lacking. Survey respondents indicated a strong understanding for what soft skills are and how they are important, but responses varied widely and wildly in how companies and workers can work to improve them.

**Company Use of Technology:** As we expected, survey respondents affirmed a lack of innovation and clarity in how technology can be used to support improved training, recruitment and employee development. Survey respondents indicated that “slides and online videos” are frequently used for training, but that enterprise-wide systems, whether custom to the company or purchased out-of-the-box from a vendor, are few and far between. As our industry’s target workforce population continues to increase in its interactions with and reliance on technology in daily life (and increasingly work life), our industry needs to improve its usage of technology in training, recruitment and development.

**Employee Recognition:** The availability and attention to employee recognition programs scored highest of any category in the survey. “Old school methods” such as badges, certificates and recognition in company meetings were commonly referenced. Examples of more modern methods for recognition and reward were also offered in the comments. No matter the methods, having a strong employee recognition program no doubt benefits industry companies. However, we believe the survey responses indicate an overall lack of innovation in this area that could further improve how industry companies reward their workers.

**Leadership Development:** Following the overall trend on this topic, survey respondents indicated a strong awareness and understanding of the need and benefits for leadership development programs. However, few responding companies indicated that they have formal leadership development programs or at the least select formal resources for encouraging leadership development. In some cases, the “old methods” of identifying and developing leaders, such as job shadowing or only performance reviews were referenced. In a few cases, larger companies reported formal programs that offer strong support for employees with leadership potential.

**Work-Life Balance:** This category scored the lowest of any in the survey with just one of the 26 respondents indicating that they have a clear or formal way of supporting a good work-life balance for their workers. Responses indicated efforts to encourage the use of vacation and some offerings of leave for community service projects. However, the overall lack of results and only two write-in comments on this topic indicate significant weakness in this area.

**Recruiting Students:** Also following the overall trend, survey respondents indicate strong awareness for the opportunities and benefits of recruiting students as potential workers for industry firms. However, the resources available and action taken to do so were limited. A few respondents indicated formal processes and resources to recruit students, while some commented that they “wait for them to

contact us”. Newspaper ads were referenced as well, which may be beneficial in some cases, but wouldn’t be regarded as innovative.

## Thank You and Next Steps

Again, NCBPA appreciates all the individuals that took time from their busy schedules to respond to our survey. Over the next few weeks and months, NCBPA will continue to incorporate these high-level findings and detailed comments into our workforce development activities.

Be on the lookout for more information from us in the coming weeks. New information will be posted on our website here: <http://buildingnc.org/resources/careers>.

As always, our staff is happy to address your questions and comments directly!

Very best regards,



**D. Ryan Miller**

Founder & CEO

North Carolina Building Performance Association (NCBPA)

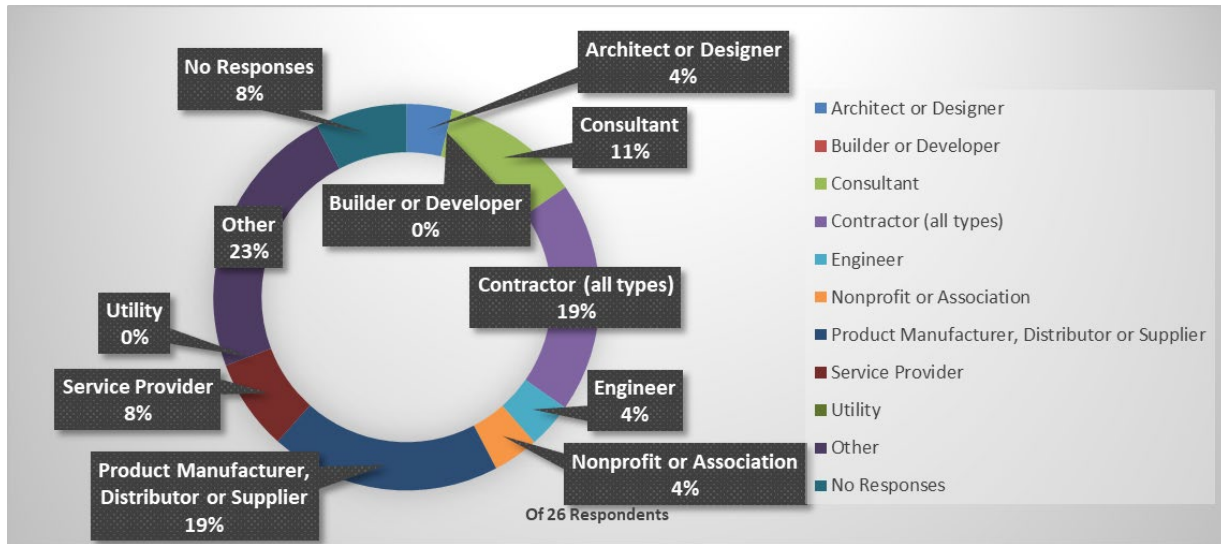
[Ryan@BuildingNC.org](mailto:Ryan@BuildingNC.org)

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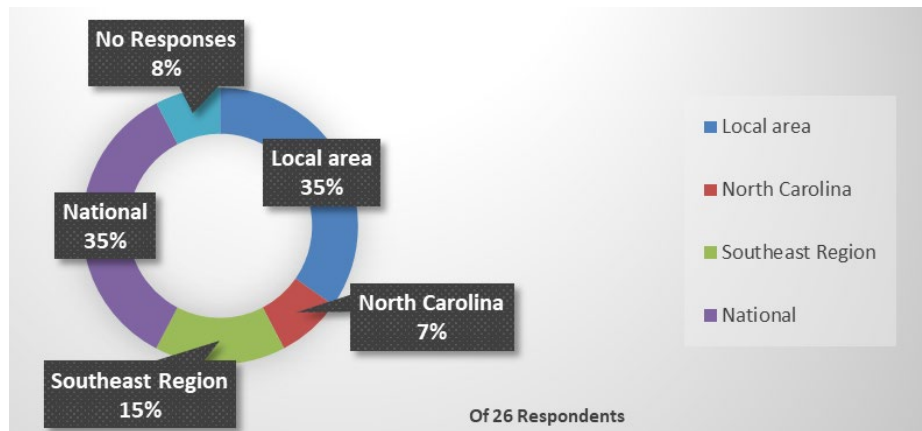
## Section 1 – Demographics

The majority of the 26 survey respondents work for contracting companies of various types with 50 or more workers and a regional or national service territory.

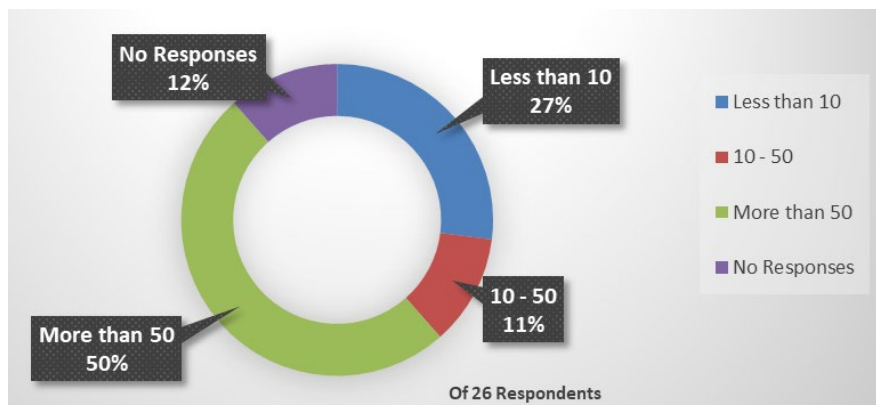
### Primary Company Type



### Service Territory



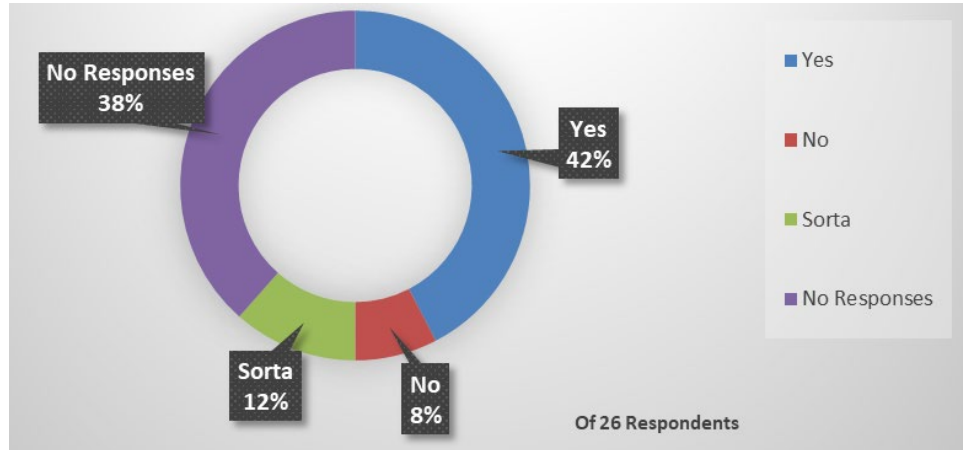
### Company Size by Number of Employees





## Section 2 – Recruitment, Training and Retention

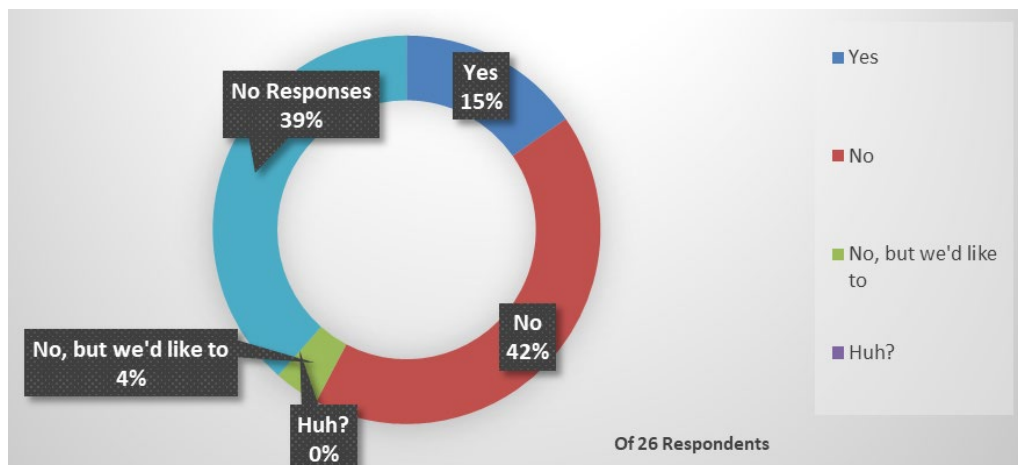
**Does your company have a formal employee training program? If so, please describe some of the more innovative or best parts.**



Comments:

- Our training program is highly automated--associates enter our HRIS and their job title triggers the deployment of training programs through our LMS. There are developmental programs there which aid in promoting associates through job tiers. We are also able to track OJT, certifications, classroom, and training events.
- Use Power Point, video and hands training to educate employees and customers.
- Training is standardized, relevant knowledge and skills is compiled in checklist format; Skill matrix is kept on record and visible to supervisors.

**Does your company use any form of augmented or virtual reality systems, interactive phone or computer apps, games or some other form of "newer" technology for worker training?**



Comments:

- We have a virtual coaching system we use, though not frequently. Our web courses are interactive and require questions to be answered throughout balances summative and formative assessment.
- Online OSHA training with "slides, videos, and testing". Face to face training is slowly being replaced with "online training", which is easier and less expensive for company, but not necessarily better.

## **What type of industry training and development do you feel is working well and/or not well? Let's hear it!**

### Comments:

- Employee Engagement Surveys do a great job of retaining employees as long as the data is taken seriously, communicated, and checked in on regularly. Leadership at all levels have to be fully committed to engagement and taking action to improve it.
- Diversity work is great for attracting the next generation of employees and keeping the ones you've got.
- Training and promotion methods that are clearly outlined are also important so people have a defined track to learn and grow.
- Combination of classroom, online, and hands on learning for the "skilled trades". I have worked in a "Union" workforce (UTILITY) that did an excellent job with employee development, educational support, etc. I was very surprised that "MY UNIVERSITY", an educational institution, did such a poor job with its own employees. The "UNIVERSITY System" offers a "tuition reimbursement (3 classes per calendar year) benefit", but it can only be used on the campuses of the "UNIVERSITY System". This is of use to "managers and administrative employees", but cannot be used at "community colleges/trade schools" where classes which would benefit employees in the "skilled trades" are generally offered.
- Residential designers and architects tend not to receive proper training on how buildings go together and how internal systems are ideally integrated. I wish they would all be forced to go out and build some of the stuff they design... it might change their attitude towards constructability and energy efficiency.
- Summer internships in the various construction trades should be a requirement in architecture programs.
- More manufacturing technical schools. There is a return to making things in the US, young people do not understand how. Computer literacy is needed so young people have understanding of earlier generation software. Schools are training students on the latest tech, many businesses are way behind. Young employees get frustrated because they have difficulty in learning older tech.
- Hands on
- Modeling software training is not being consistently applied in the industry.

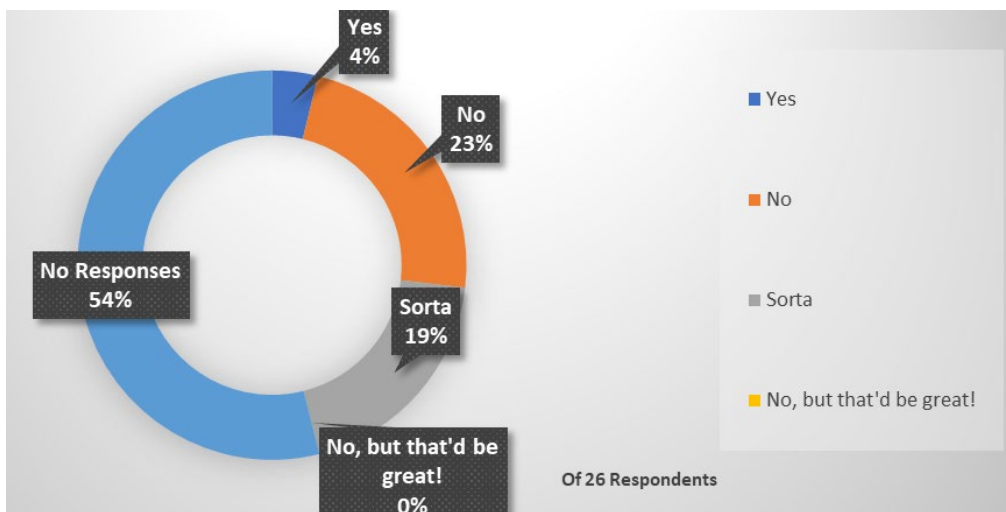


**Please describe any forms of formal leadership development programs or resources that your company has or uses.**

Comments:

- We have both internal and external methods of leadership development. We do a basic soft skills curriculum for entry level individual contributors, then we have a pre-manager program, we also utilize CCL's programs, we have executive 360s, and formalized coaching/mentoring programs.
- "Soft Skills" classes are available through HR, "supervisor training certification".
- They have all been self-developed and differ from company to company.
- On the job training
- Leadership skills class for employees identified with potential to lead or drive. To many times promotions were driven off seniority, we like long-term employees but more times than not they do not have the tools to lead.
- We make online and in person leadership, project management programs available selections for annual professional development goals.
- Performance reviews

**Does your company offer any formal resources, programs or tools to help ensure a good work-life balance? Something that encourages action and improvements, more than just tracking time? If so, please describe it!**



Comments:

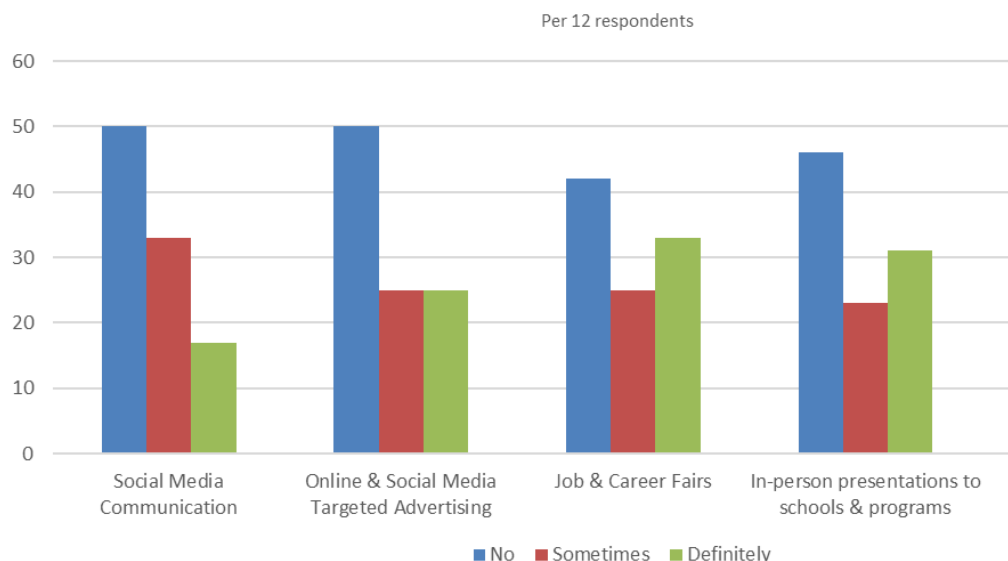
- "Community Involvement Leave" that can be used to volunteer in the community or with your children's school on "paid leave (24 hours per calendar year)".
- We try to get the life balance figured out, try to make sure everyone utilizes vacation, etc.

## What are the best ways to improve soft skills such as communicating effectively, active listening and soft selling?

Comments:

- There is a number of ways you can approach this. The most important is to address the person's beliefs about these skills. A lot of people don't think it's important and will be resistant to any training or development on the topic. Then it's a matter of exposure, practice, and reinforcement.
- With trainers that are subject matter experts, in classes where there is interaction and role playing between participants. Videos demonstrating proper and improper ways of interacting are helpful. Repeated exposure to training over time is helpful.
- Shadowing, blind copying, and not being afraid to take the time to correct someone.
- Modeling others and practice.
- Most employees we have had have picked up those skills in the field either by watching one of the principals or by being forced to interact with people on site if they are there by themselves.
- Make actual contact, either via phone or one on one meetings. Too much is lost in digital responses, requests and inquiries. The art of conversation and listening is a lost art.
- Be honest in the discussions in a timely manner in normal language not the new acronyms
- Group workshops between employees at all levels. Include self-analysis about the type of person each is with discussions about the differences in approach from each. This helps people understand others may perceive them differently, or require a different approach
- Role playing always helps make these differences clearer. Especially, if you ask, "What did the person's body language tell you?"
- We make online HR courses available online to all staff.
- There is no proven method just practicing.
- Training and practice with management following up.

## Does your company use any of the resources below for engaging and recruiting younger workers? If you do something else, please add a comment!



## Comments:

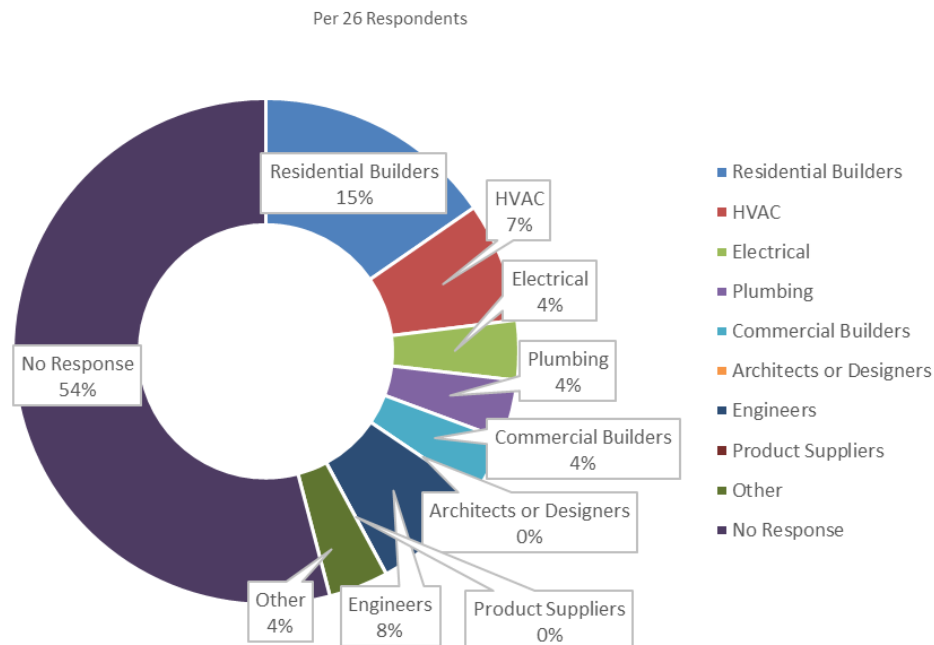
- "My University" does all of this to recruit "students" to attend the university. "Facilities Operations" does none of this to recruit "potential employees".
- They did not think these would produce candidates

## How does your company connect to high school, college or university students that are seeking jobs?

### Comments:

- We are actively engaged with local colleges and high schools through internship, apprenticeship, and co-op programs.
- The "university" as an educational institution is very well connected. "Facilities Operations" has no direct connections that I am aware of. We have employees that are graduates of the local "community college", but no recruitment, mentorship, or sponsored training for employees or students in the "skilled trades".
- Host job fairs and HR dept recruits.
- We usually talk to local community colleges and universities with environmental programs for potential new hires, and we usually get high school interns by talking to builder clients who have teenage children looking for summer work.
- Handshake and we attend job fairs. We also advertise for internships.
- Advertising in news papers
- We wait on them to contact us

## Do you feel that one of the related industries below does a really good job with employee recruitment, training and retention? If so, which one?



## Comments:

- When I was a student at the local "community college", it seemed that the "electrical contractors" and possibly "HVAC contractors" did the best job of offering "tuition support" and "apprenticeships" to students in the respective programs.
- The local home builders are very talented and are pretty good at hiring young people fresh out of school so that they can train them from the ground up. It tends to lead to more talented site superintendents and future general contractors.
- I'm not really informed enough to make comment. I do know that the contractors working in my area consistently complain about the shortage of help, especially dedicated or trained individuals.
- My experience tells me none do

**If your company could receive one resource that would really make a difference with how it recruits, trains or retains workers, what do you think that would be? (two is okay, three is okay, too!)**

## Comments:

- Money in our budget for "employee training".
- Determination from our "leadership/management" to make it a priority.
- Allow "Public Employees" to organize/unionize.
- State representatives that better understand the needs of our industry.
- Sales/Internet/Social Media Marketing
- Full time mentor or coaches. Needed for different disciplines; mfg., tech, finance, etc....learning from people that have been there brings new hires along much quicker.
- Formal industry certification tiers.
- Recruiting and retaining employees are both the same. I work in the weatherization field, which is federally funded and opportunity to advance and increase pay with years of service would be one way.

**What are some new, different or innovative ways that your company, or one that you know of, uses to recognize work achievements and encourage others?**

## Comments:

- This is a trendy topic that has led to a lot of trendy, though not effective, solutions like internal Facebooks and e-cards. Nothing replaces one-on-one recognition. What is innovative is learning what style of recognition motivates your employees (like love languages at work) and delivering on what fuels them.
- We have a "Staff Star" program, where employees can be nominated by fellow employees or management to receive a certificate/gift, recognition in employee newsletter, etc. Also have departmental awards given bi-annually (teamwork, customer service, safety).

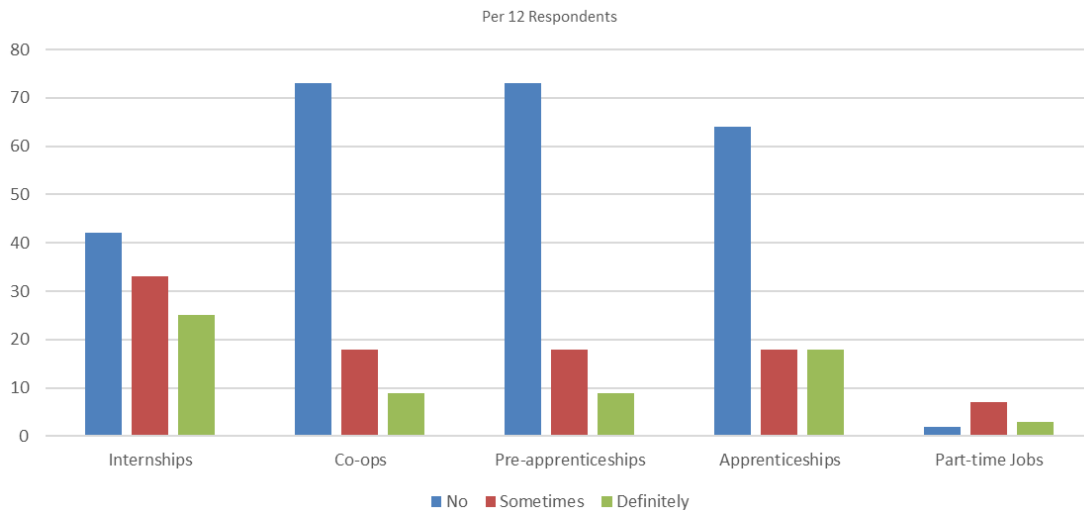
# Innovation in Training Survey Results

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- Badges, similar to the military service bars for years. Seniority in stripes based on moving through the training system, not the amount of time on the job.
- Monitor company reviews and reward the employee who influenced the customer to write a positive review
- Weekly and monthly staff and employee calls to recognize excellent work and achievements.
- We have company badges that staff earn for completing training goals as well as production milestones.
- We have what you call installer appreciation day and we give them certificates for those who are doing better than average employees

## Section 3 – Apprenticeship Programs and Career Pathways

**Does your company actively use or offer internships, co-ops, apprenticeships or part-time jobs to identify and recruit potential workers?**



Comments:

- "MY UNIVERSITY" as a university does internships and part-time jobs, but not in "Facilities Operations". "Facilities Operations" uses "temporary" positions, but is not really for "development", but rather a means to increase the workforce without hiring "full time employees" with the associated benefits. "Housekeeping" has "temporary employees" that have been working on campus for "years", they are required to periodically leave employment with the university for 30 days or so and then brought back.
- No but is a good idea.

**Does your company have a defined Career Pathways resource that clearly shows how workers at all levels can move up, over or down based on skill sets, experience, certifications, education and performance? If so, please email us a copy! We'd love to see it.**

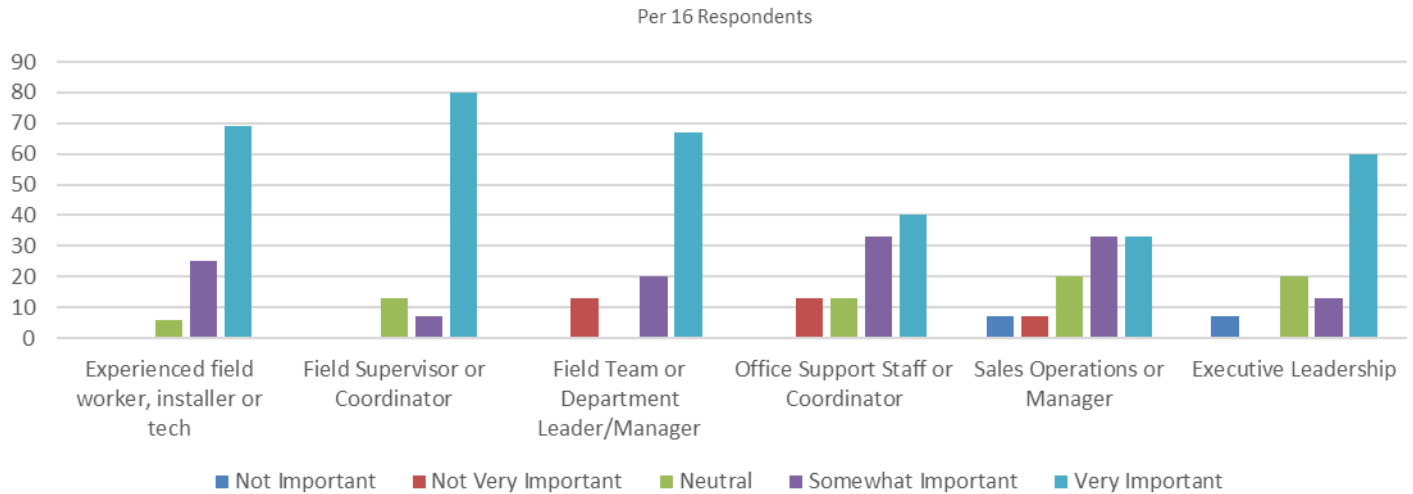
Comments:

- No clear path for advancement and no real company supported or provided training to improve skill set. Mostly you bring previous training and experience with you, and if you receive more, it is on your own time and expense.
- We had developed promotional charts for the crews to move up, but middle positions are not as temporary and need more permanence.
- Honestly there is nowhere for me to go within the company.
- They just have to be here for a certain amount of time with company and show they are a team player and have the best interest in the company.
- Started last year. Work in progress.



- Small district with 1.5 inspectors currently no need for this yet.

**Specific to the types of positions listed below, rank how important you think it is for each to have a formal development plan. If you have any examples or details that you can share about development plans at your company, please include some comments.**



### Comments:

- The larger the organization/department the more important the formal development plan. People who know where they can go and the path to get there are more like to work on improving thereby increasing job knowledge, efficiency, and productive
- All parts of the business is important
- As sole employee and owner, I do not have comments of above list.