

New River/Mount Rogers Sector Partnership Launch

Why, and What's in it for Me?

Community Workforce Advancements

Who We Are

Community Workforce Advancements (CWA) has successfully led projects to advance sector partnerships and strategic planning in communities to the benefit of both employers and job seekers. CWA has extensive experience in local, state, regional and national work in workforce, economic, education and community development.

Today's Road Map

- Welcome and introductions
- Research feedback
- Why we are here today
- Introduction to sectors and sector partnerships, and
 - What's in it for me?
- Expectations

Why We All Are Here

The Challenge

Middle-skill jobs make up the largest portion of the labor market, yet employers can't find enough workers trained to the middle-skill level. Sector partnerships help solve this problem.

The Solution

Let's ensure that our region's businesses and industries have a talent pipeline filled with skilled workers, so that they will be competitive in both today's and tomorrow's marketplace, driving our region's economy, so that all workers can earn a sustainable, self sufficient wage.

What are sector partnerships and how they work

SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS

Sector Partnerships

Sector Partnerships – What are they?

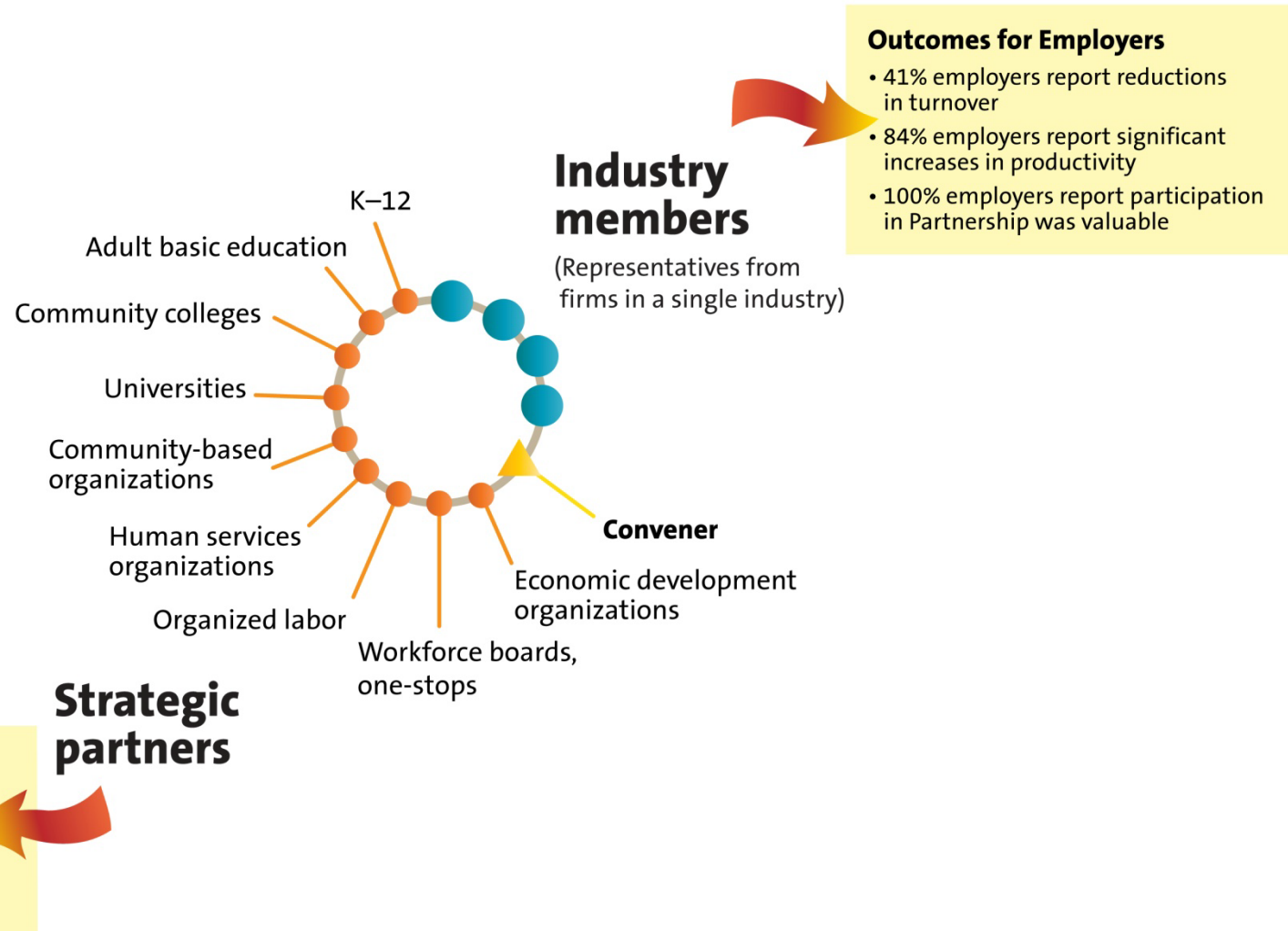
- Sector partnerships are partnerships of companies, from the same industry, with education, workforce development, economic development and community organizations that focus on key issues related to the target industry in their natural labor market region.
- They are employer-driven; they are regional; they are convened by a credible third-party; they act as a coordinating body across multiple education, workforce development, economic development and other programs; they create highly customized responses to a target industry's needs, and therefore highly accurate.

Why Do Sector Partnerships Matter?

- Meeting businesses' needs for a skilled workforce and supporting industry growth and competitiveness requires new kinds of cross-sector collaboration
- In a sector partnership, employers are not just advisors, but full partners, actively invested and engaged in implementing the solutions they have developed collaboratively
- For educators, sector partnerships provide a venue for faster understanding of changing industry needs; a vehicle to identify, build and refine curriculum, programs and credentials; the only way to truly create industry-driven career pathway systems

Sector Partnership

The partnership addresses common needs of employers and generates coordinated solutions that benefit workers.



Ideally

- **Ideally, no public partner ever “sells their wares” to companies** in a sector partnership. Instead, the convener acts as a facilitator to find out industry needs, public partners jointly listen, and jointly develop shared solutions. Sector partnerships never put the cart before the horse by assuming any “solutions.”
 - **What’s different about this?** Sector partnerships organize around industry needs, not around public programs.

What we have learned

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

What We Have Learned

- Sources of Information
 - Research existing data
 - Various websites
 - Skills Gap Analysis
 - Comprehensive Economic Development Study (CEDS)
 - Institution strategic plans
 - Electronic survey
 - 65 invitations
 - 56 responses
 - Interviews
 - Businesses, government, economic development, state leadership, and education

Region's Personality in One Word

- What we heard!
 - Empowered
 - Confident
 - Forward-looking
- How would you add to this?
 - ???

Demographics

- Population: U.S. Census Bureau estimated population of the region is 373,409, a 4.9% increase over 2000.
- Age: The median population age is 38.4 years, which includes universities. Without the universities, the median age is 43.7 years.
- Gender: The total regional population is slightly more female (50.2%).

Income and Labor Force

- Household Income: Median annual income varying by county of between \$24,059 and \$45,231.
- Labor Force Participation and Employment: 57.2% of individuals over the age of 16 participate in the civilian labor force.
 - The estimated average unemployment rate for the region is 7.8% (13,754).

Education

- Educational Attainment 25-64 Year Olds:
 - Estimated 55.1%, 102,319, of the region's working age population have some form of postsecondary educational training
 - 44,487 individuals (23.9%) have educational attainment levels of at least a bachelor's degree
 - An additional 18,439 (9.9%) have an associate's degree
 - How many are close (0-15 credits) from a degree/certification?

Sector Density

- Regional Industry and Occupation Employment:
 - Government is the leading regional employer, representing 23.3% of all jobs
 - Manufacturing is the region's largest private employer and overall second largest industry, accounting for 25,440 jobs or 18.6% of all regional jobs
 - Health Care and Social Assistance are also large employers, representing 10.6% of employment
- Other sector gains in: information technology, biomedical, business and financial services, energy, and agricultural businesses

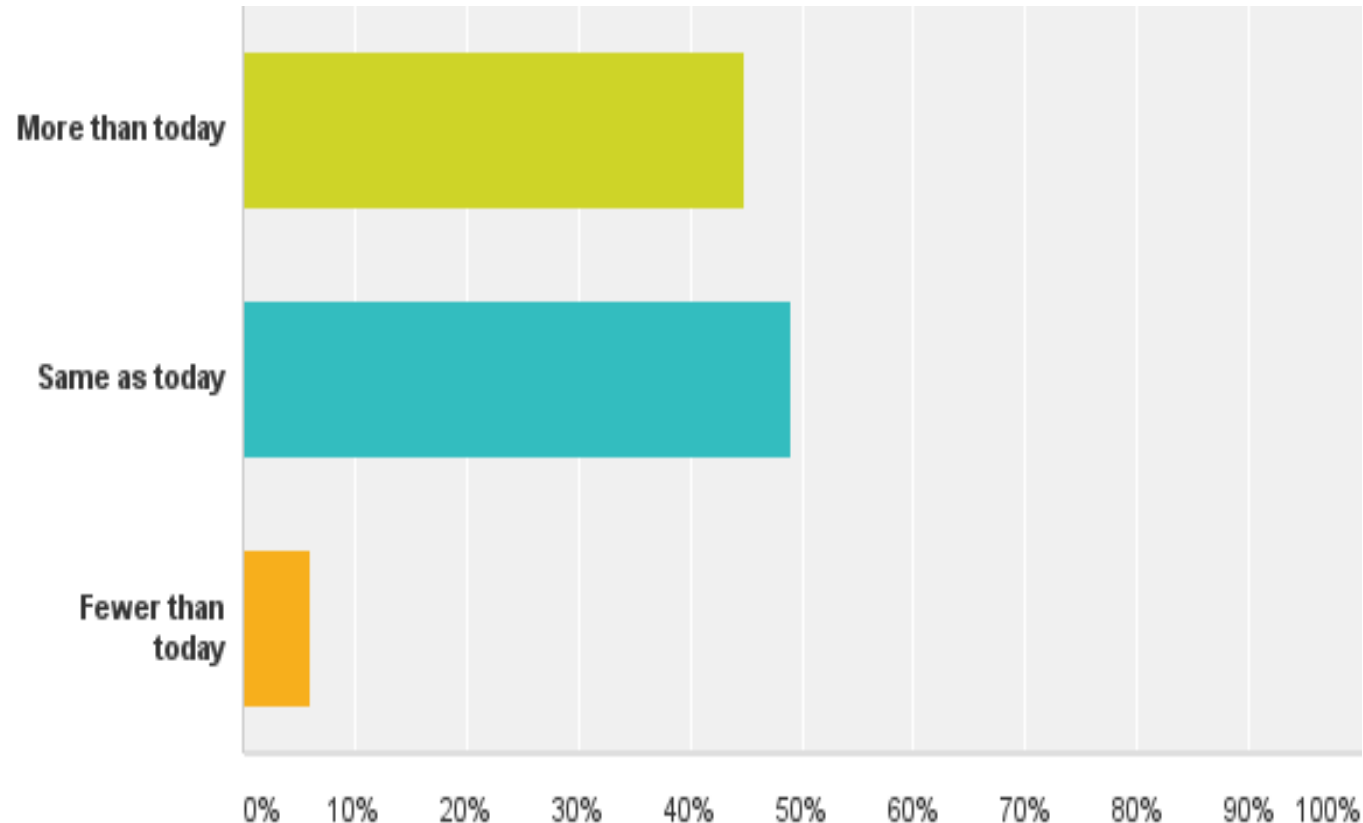
Key Thoughts

- Population gains are moderate but growing
- Thin labor pool (quantity and quality [skills gap])
- Employers see gaps in both soft and hard skills
- Educational attainment levels trailing national levels
- Wage gaps exist compared to other metro areas
- Fear of brain drain exists due to young adults seeking comparable jobs to skills
- Education assets are in place and are perceived to provide great benefit (secondary to post-secondary)

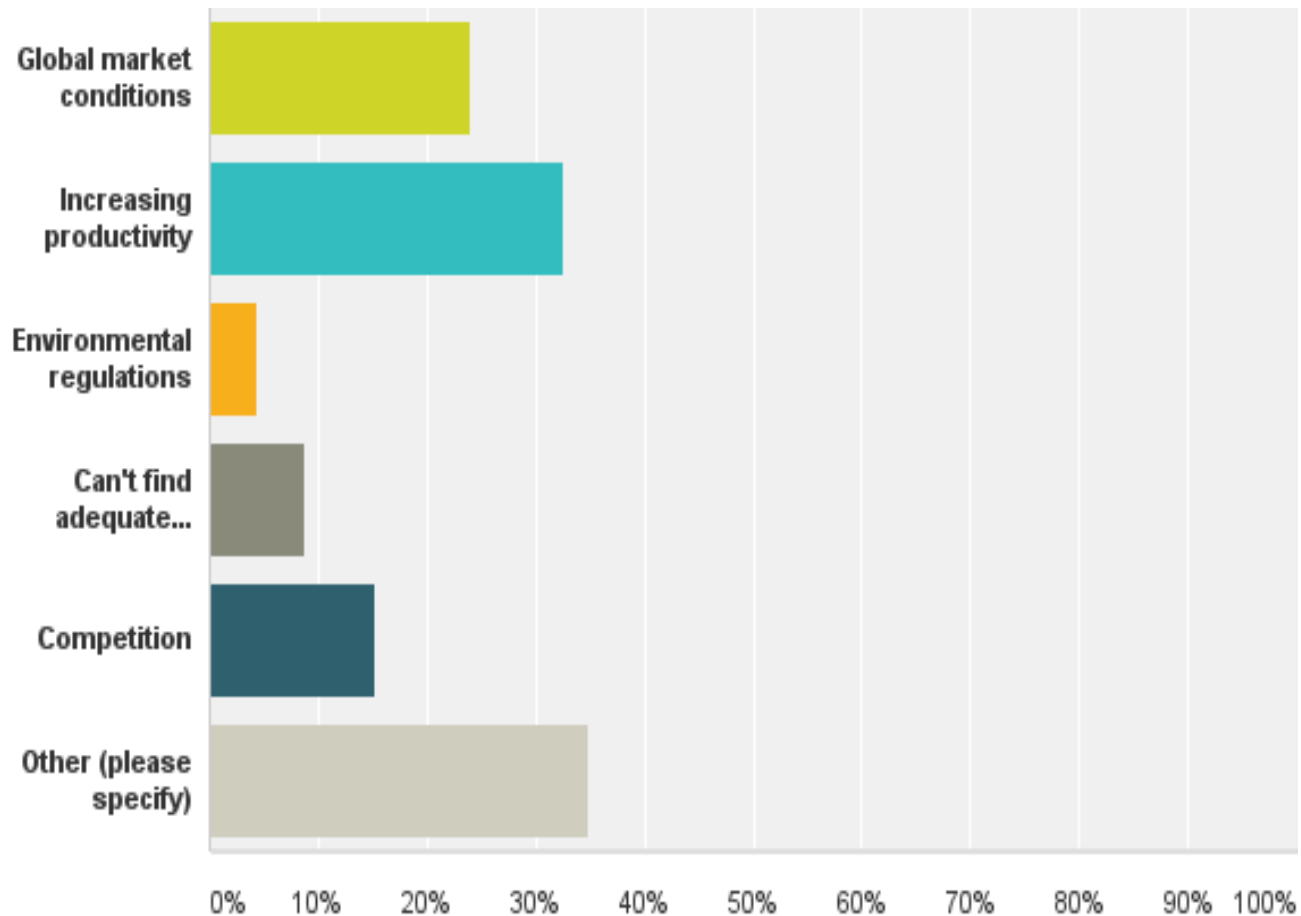
Key input from survey group

SURVEY

A year from now, which best illustrates your best expected workforce levels:



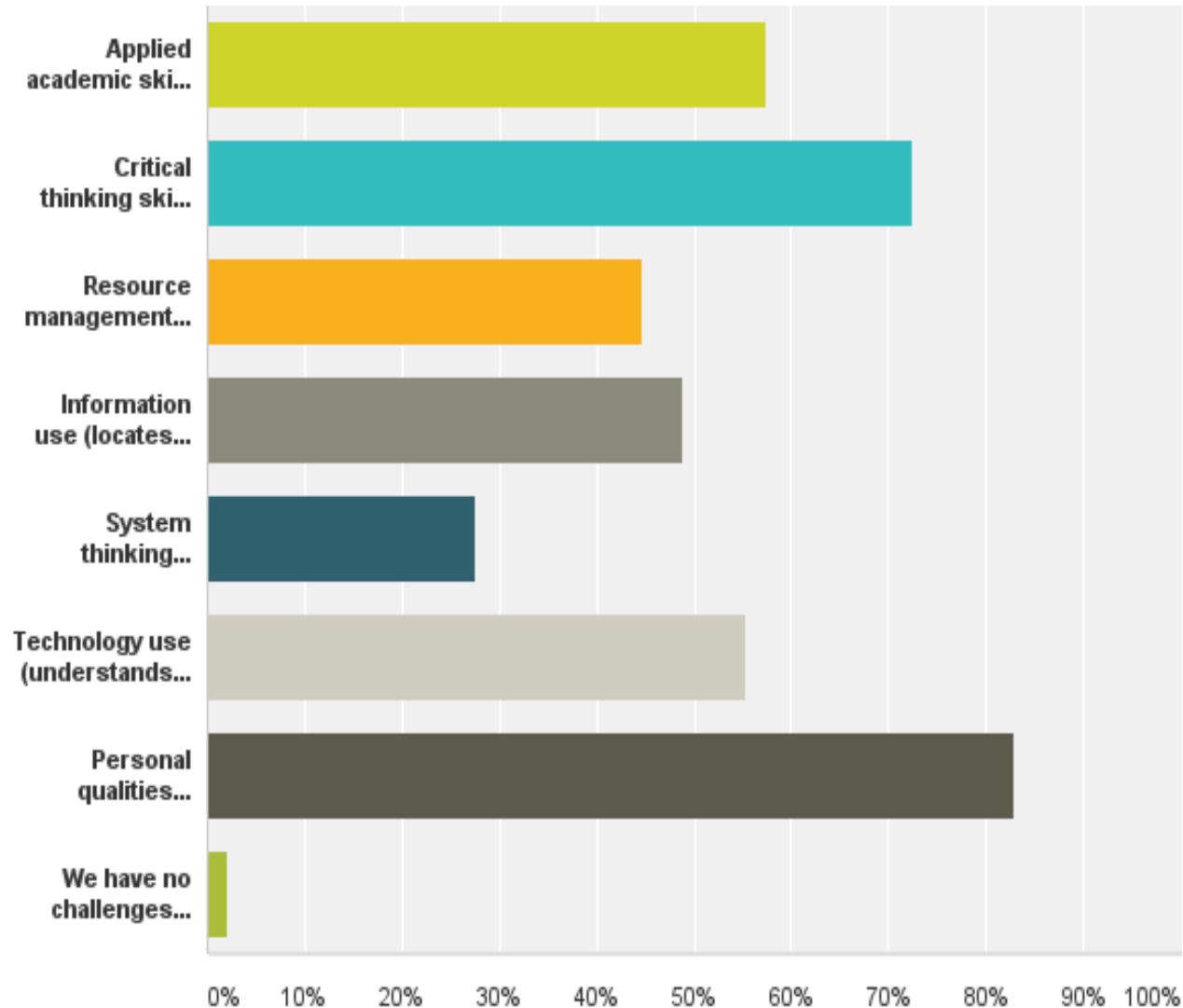
Based on your previous answer, what are the reason(s) for the difference?



Compared to other issues in your company, how hard is it to fulfill your workforce needs?

Answer Choices	Responses	
We have no challenges in filling our workforce needs	8.16%	4
Filling our workforce needs is a relatively minor challenge	26.53%	13
Filling our workforce needs is challenging but not the biggest issue	51.02%	25
Filling our workforce is our biggest challenge	14.29%	7
Total		49

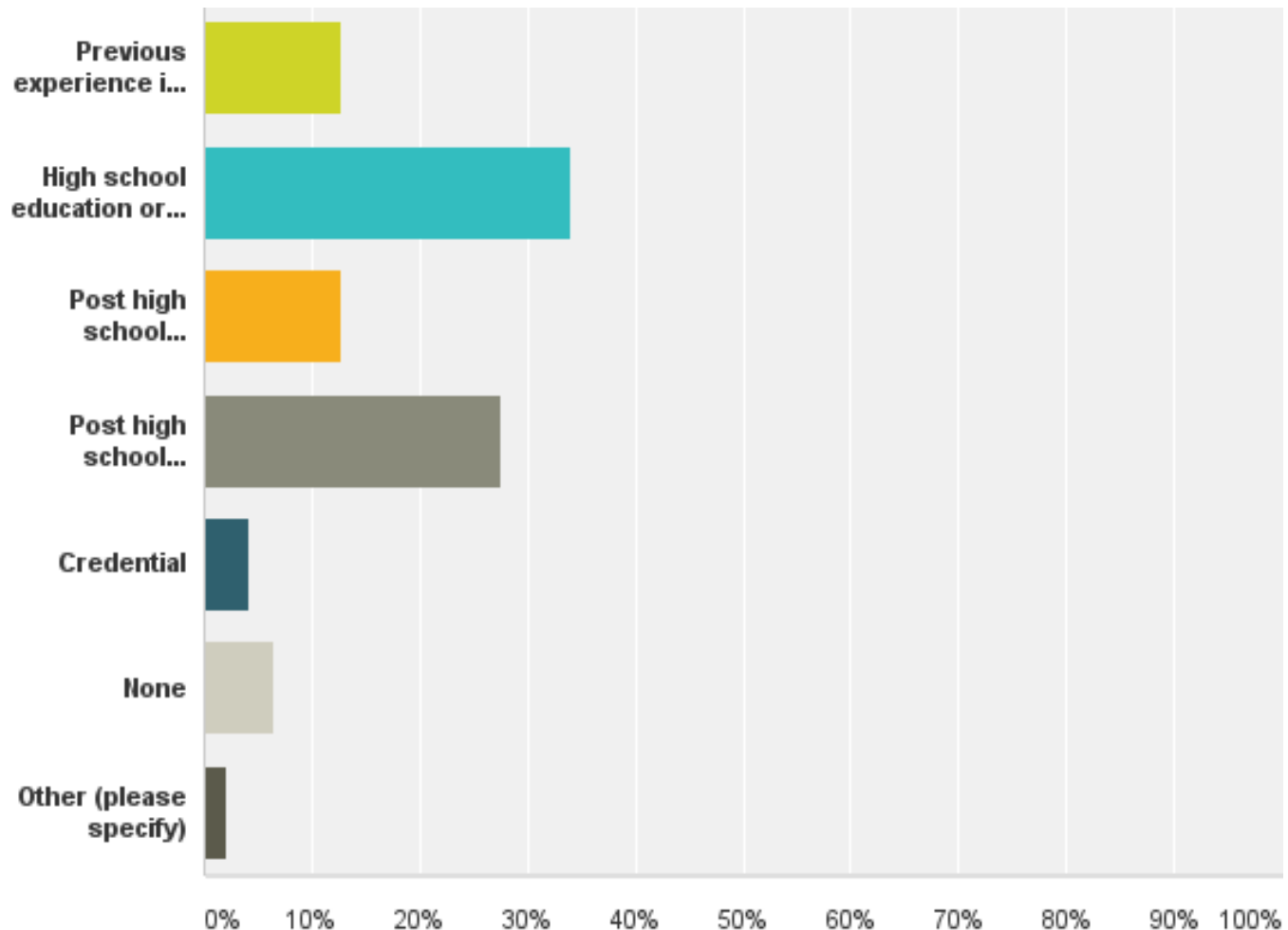
What non-technical or "soft" skills are most important to your business?



What non-technical or "soft" skills are most important to your business?

Answer Choices	Responses
Applied academic skills (reading, writing, math, scientific skills)	57.45% 27
Critical thinking skills (problem solving and making sound decisions)	72.34% 34
Resource management (manages time, money, materials and personnel)	44.68% 21
Information use (locates, organizes, uses, analyzes, listens actively, comprehends written material)	48.94% 23
System thinking (understands, uses, monitors, and improves systems)	27.66% 13
Technology use (understands and uses technology)	55.32% 26
Personal qualities (responsibility, self-discipline, flexibility, initiative)	82.98% 39
We have no challenges finding "soft" skills we need	2.13% 1
Total Respondents: 47	

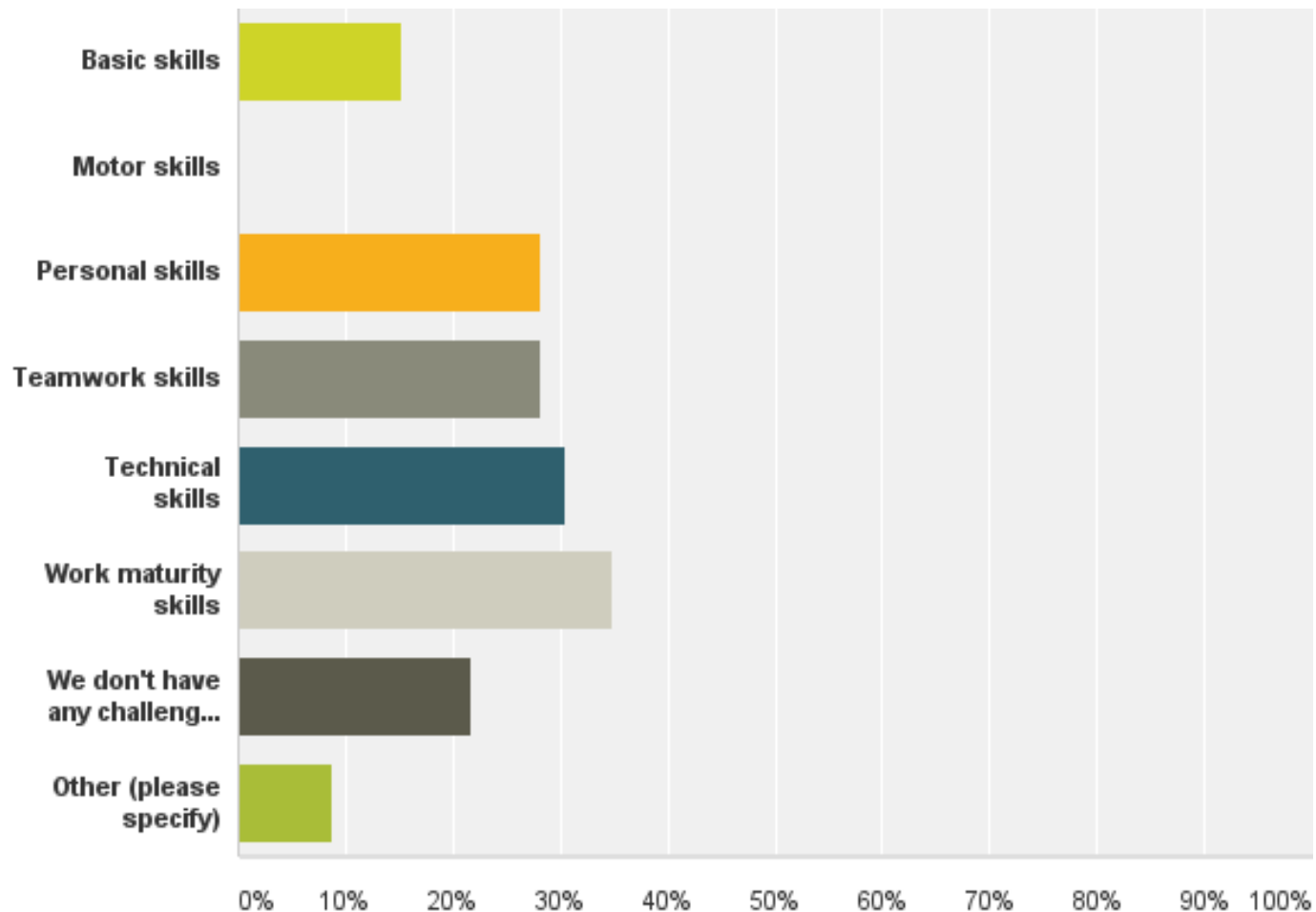
What are the educational requirements for the majority of entry level workers?



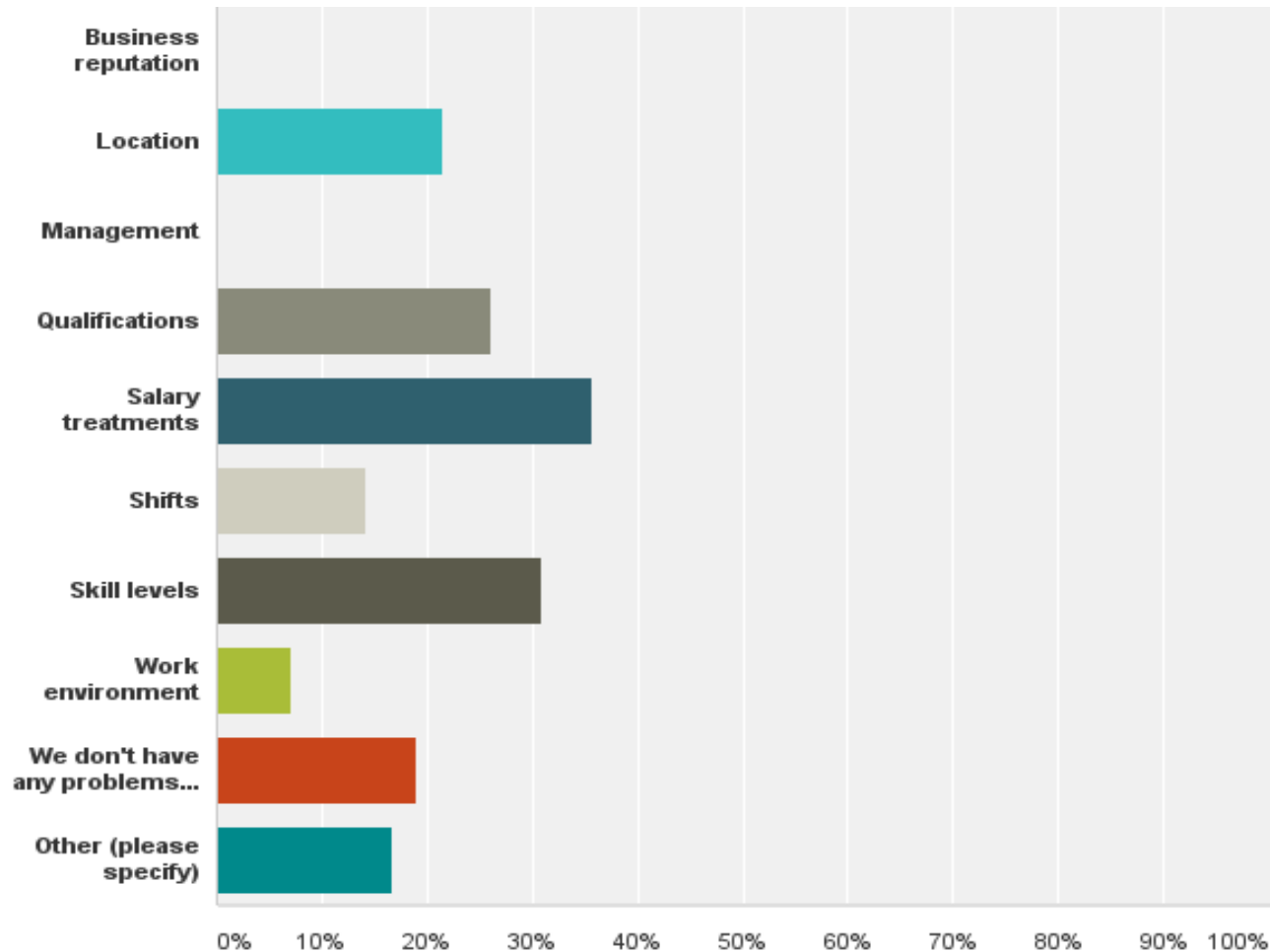
What are the educational requirements for the majority of entry level workers?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Previous experience in the field	12.77%	6
High school education or equivalent	34.04%	16
Post high school (technical schools, etc.)	12.77%	6
Post high school (college)	27.66%	13
Credential	4.26%	2
None	6.38%	3
Other (please specify)	2.13%	1
Total		47

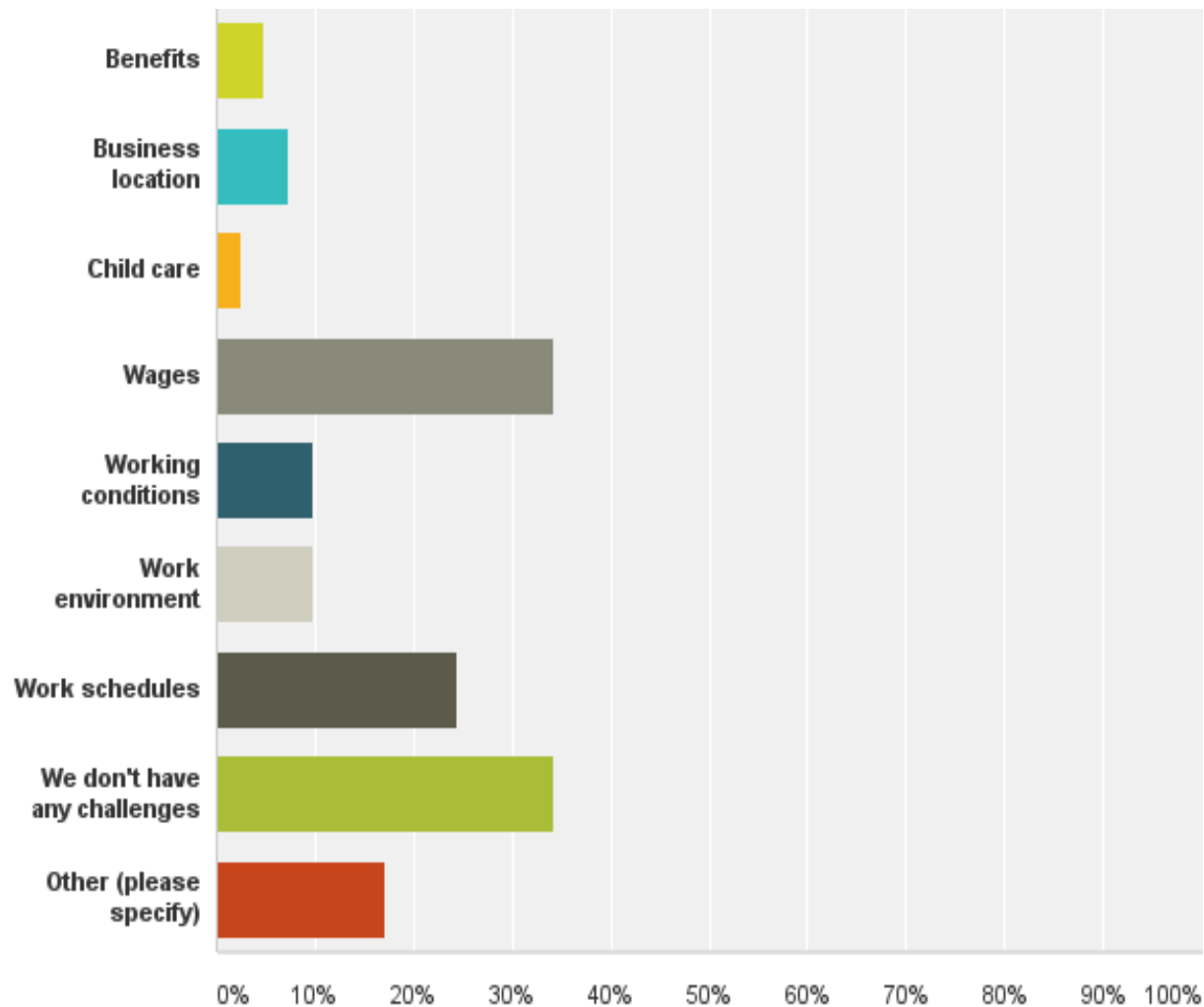
What is the most challenging skills with your current workforce?



Why do you think you are having problems recruiting employees?



Why do you think you are having challenges retaining employees?



It's your time to say what is important to go forward

PARTICIPANT INPUT

Your Input

In small groups take a few minutes to discuss the following questions:

1. Describe your ideal pathway to attain the talent you need?
2. It's 5 (five) years from now, what has changed in the region that tells you your talent needs are no longer a challenge?
3. What do you want to happen next to move a sector partnership forward?

There is a role for everyone to step in to

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

My Benefit

For Businesses – a place to solve major talent issues, a place to address other issues related to their shared competitiveness

- a single table at which to work with public entities
- an opportunity to share costs related to needed solutions

My Benefit

For Economic Developers – a place for focused work with existing key industries on talent and other questions related to competitiveness

- a meaningful venue for working with workforce development and education
- a framework for organizing the strategies needed to support critical industries
- and a tool to truly understand the strengths and opportunities of existing industry in a region that can inform retention, growth and attraction strategies

My Benefit

For Educators – a venue for faster understanding of changing industry needs

- a vehicle to identify, build and refine curriculum, programs and credentials
- the only way to truly create industry-driven career pathway systems

My Benefit

- For Workforce Developers** – a way to strategically focus time and resources toward high impact solutions for industry and workers
- a wholesale vs. a retail approach to serving employers
 - a way to create highly customized and therefore highly accurate training solutions for employers that give workers the right training at the right time for jobs that exist now

What to expect

EXPECTATIONS

Expectations

The anticipated outcome for the “Launch”

- Provide an introduction to sector strategies
- Come away with a commitment for a *call to action and formation of teams* to pursue business priorities with regional partners
- Form partnerships, beginning with manufacturing, to be followed by business led priority sectors
- Partnerships will benefit all employers in all sectors due to an expectation that this is the way we do business here

Contact Information

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