



## Coastal Bend Employer Needs 2017 Survey

Released: 12/1/2017

### SUMMARY

An online survey of employers in the Coastal Bend was conducted in November. This study aims to better understand any existing gaps in the regional labor market in an effort to facilitate a strategic plan to prepare our future workforce. The survey contains 10 questions, including background information of respondents' business.

A total of 100 respondents filled out the Survey. They represented businesses of all industries within the region, except agriculture, utilities, and administrative and waste services. The largest number of respondents was from finance and insurance (12 responses), followed by construction (11 responses), accommodation and food services (10 responses), and professional and technical services (10 responses).

The majority of respondents were small business owners. Over 70 percent of those businesses operated with fewer than 50 employees, and more than one in three (38%) hired fewer than 10 employees. Slightly more than half of the respondents (56%) were from Nueces County. In addition to the 11 counties of the Coastal Bend, 12 percent of those businesses also operated outside of this region.

During the six-month period prior to the survey, nearly 70 percent of respondents had tried to fill no more than 5 positions. Five businesses had each tried to hire more than 50 additional employees. Nearly 60 percent of those companies expressed hiring difficulties. For those positions with hiring difficulties, about 30 percent of them required a high school diploma or GED. Another one in four positions (27%) required a bachelor's degree. About half of the respondents required drug testing for their job applicants.

A lack of relevant work experience was cited by most respondents (25%) as the main reason for not filling their job openings, followed by a mismatch of technical or occupational skills (19%). Other frequently cited reasons include a low number of applicants (15%) and insufficient education credentials (11%). The types of “soft skills” that businesses found missing in their jobs candidates include evidence of dependability (13%), communication skills (12%), critical and analytical thinking skills (12%), customer service (12%), enthusiasm (11%), and interpersonal skills (11%). Sixteen respondents also demanded leadership or managerial skills that were deficient among their job applicants.

According to the Survey, employers dealt with their hiring difficulties in various ways, which included having existing employees work overtime (13%), and hiring temporary workers or outsourcing (11%). While a large number of businesses had increased their recruiting efforts (12%) or targeted recruiting to fill identified gaps (11%), about the same number of them let their job openings go unfilled (12%) or hired less qualified applicants (12%). In addition, 18 of those respondents dealt with their local hiring gaps by recruiting from outside the region.

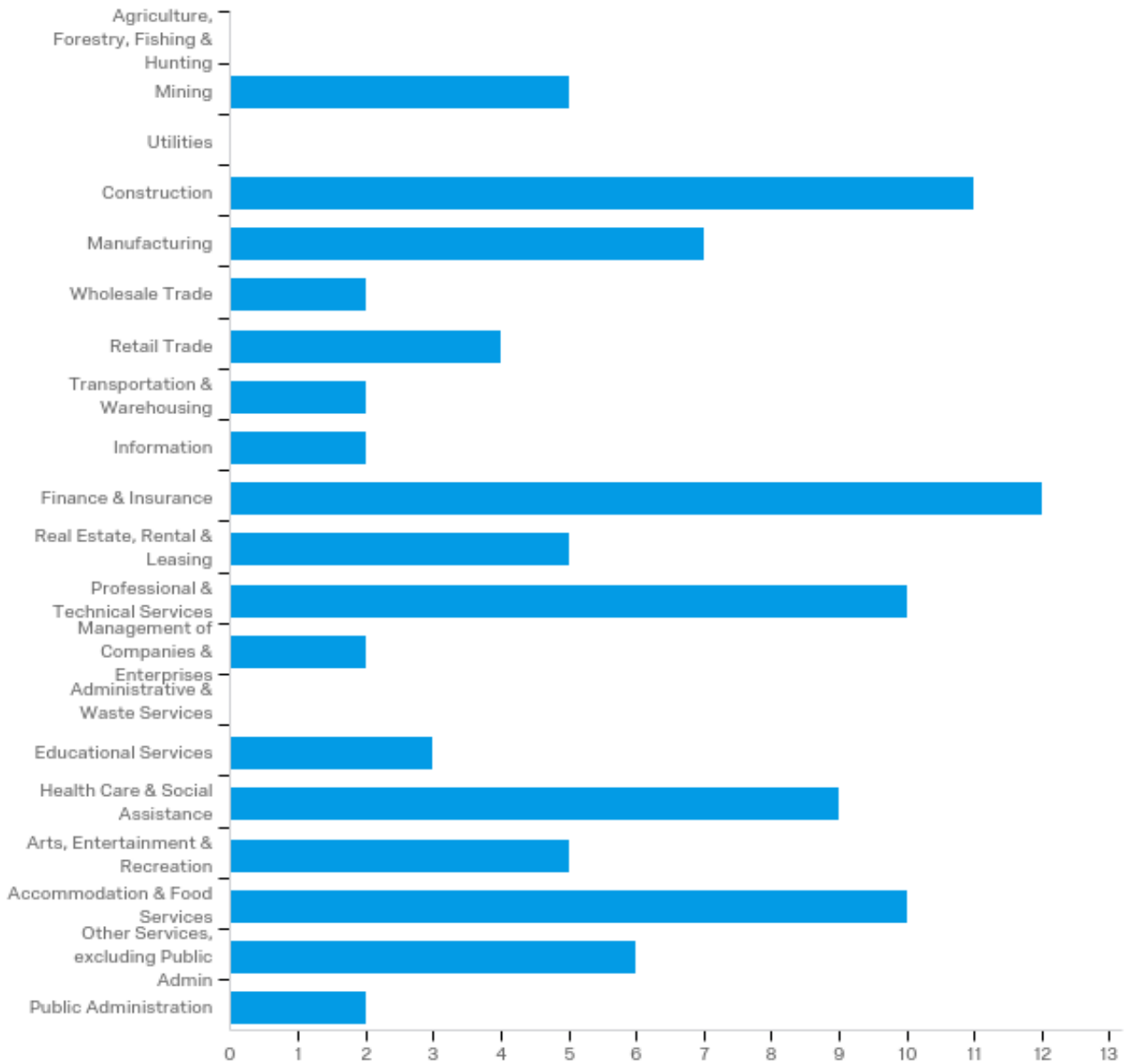
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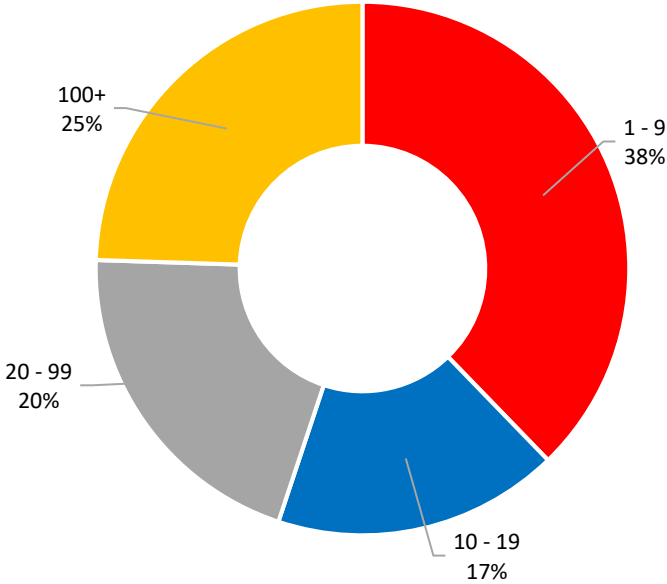
Online Survey: <https://tinyurl.com/CBEmployerNeeds>

This employer-based survey is a community project conducted jointly by the United Corpus Christi Chamber of Commerce, Citizens for Educational Excellence, Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend, and Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. We appreciate the time of our participants and our partners who helped distribute this survey. For questions, please contact Jim Lee at [jlee@tamucc.edu](mailto:jlee@tamucc.edu) or Janet Cunningham at [jcunningham@edexcellence.org](mailto:jcunningham@edexcellence.org).

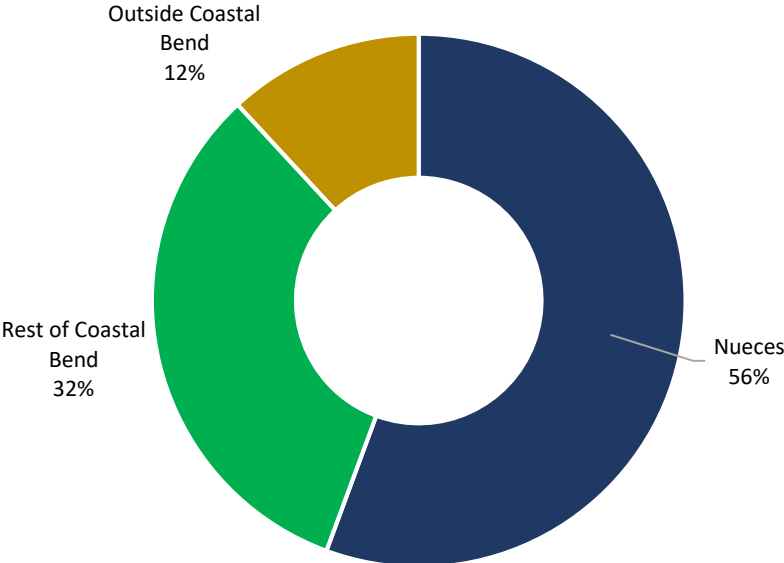
Q1 - What is the primary focus of your company?



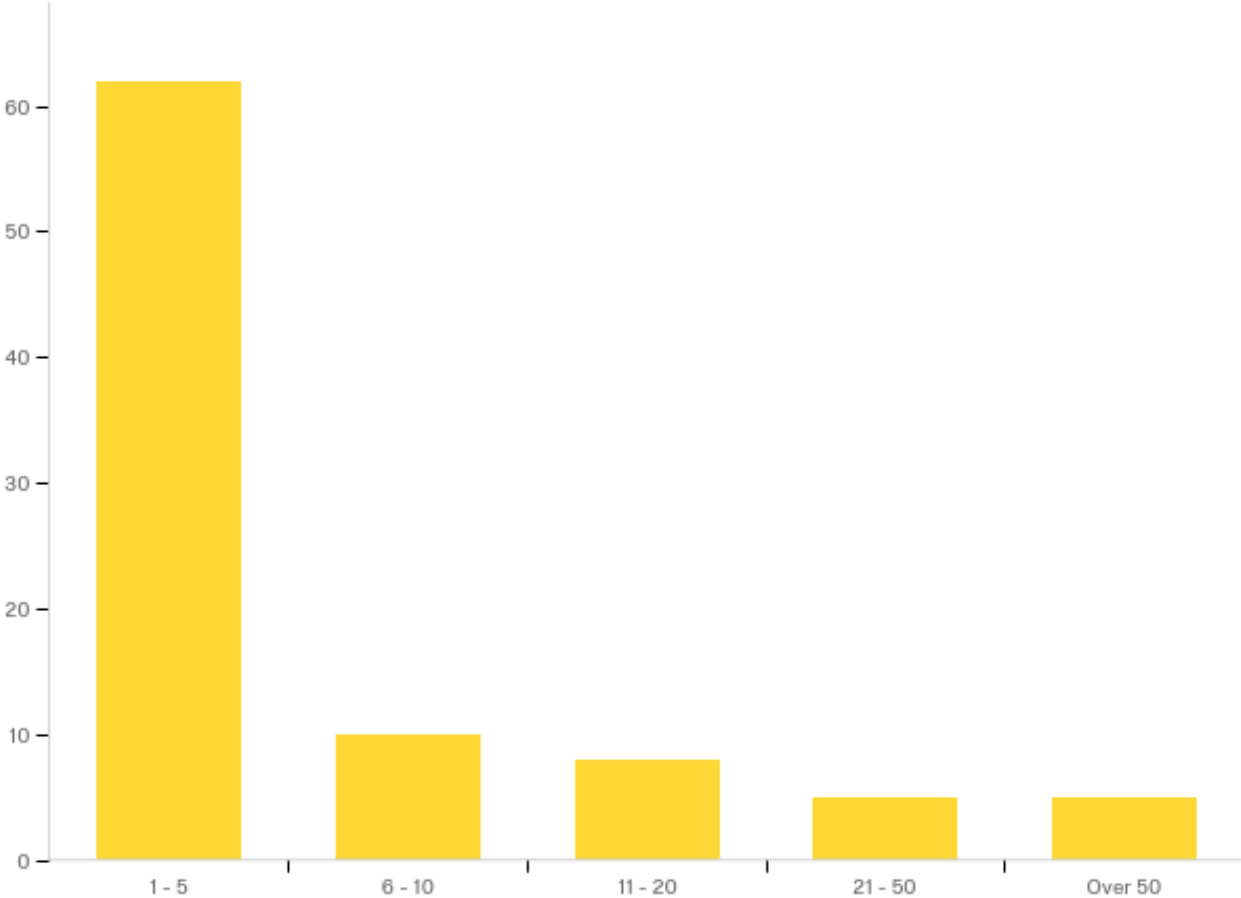
Q2 - How many employees do you employ?



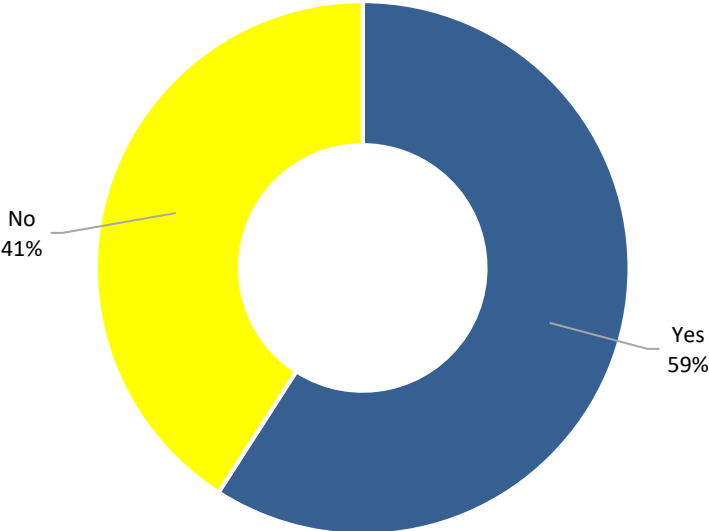
Q3 - Where are your business locations? (Mark all that apply)



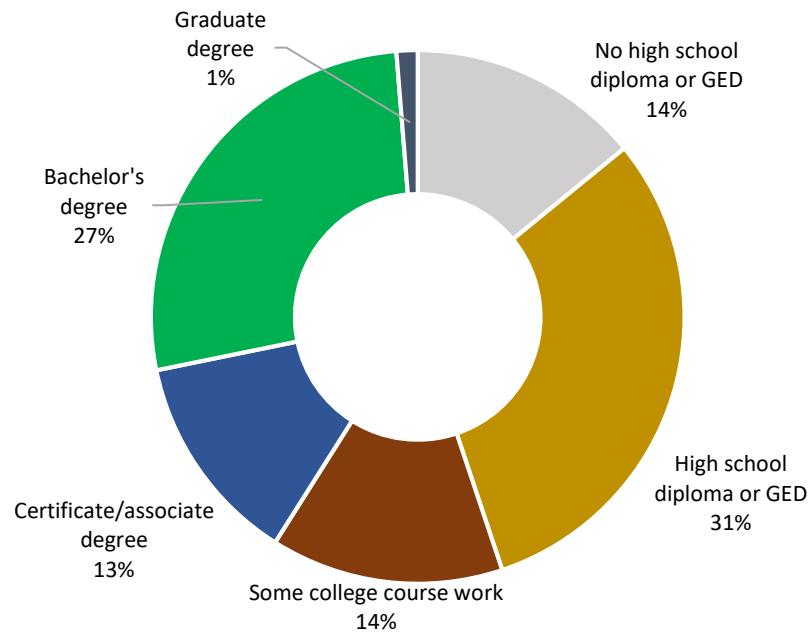
Q4 - How many positions has your company tried to fill in the last 6 months?



**Q5 - Over the last six months, has your company had any difficulty in hiring for positions?**

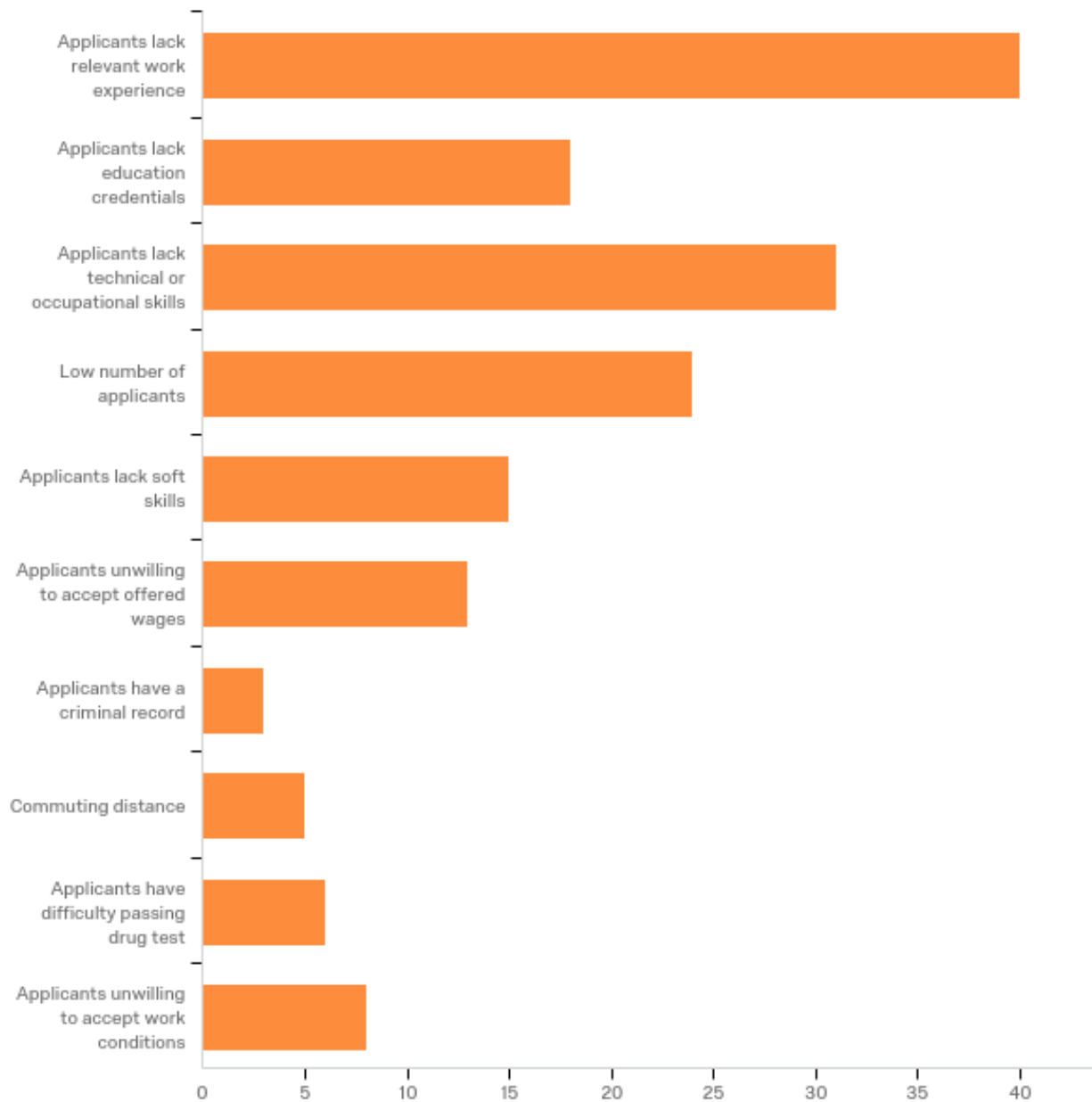


**Q6 - For the positions you have had difficulty hiring, what is the required level of education?**

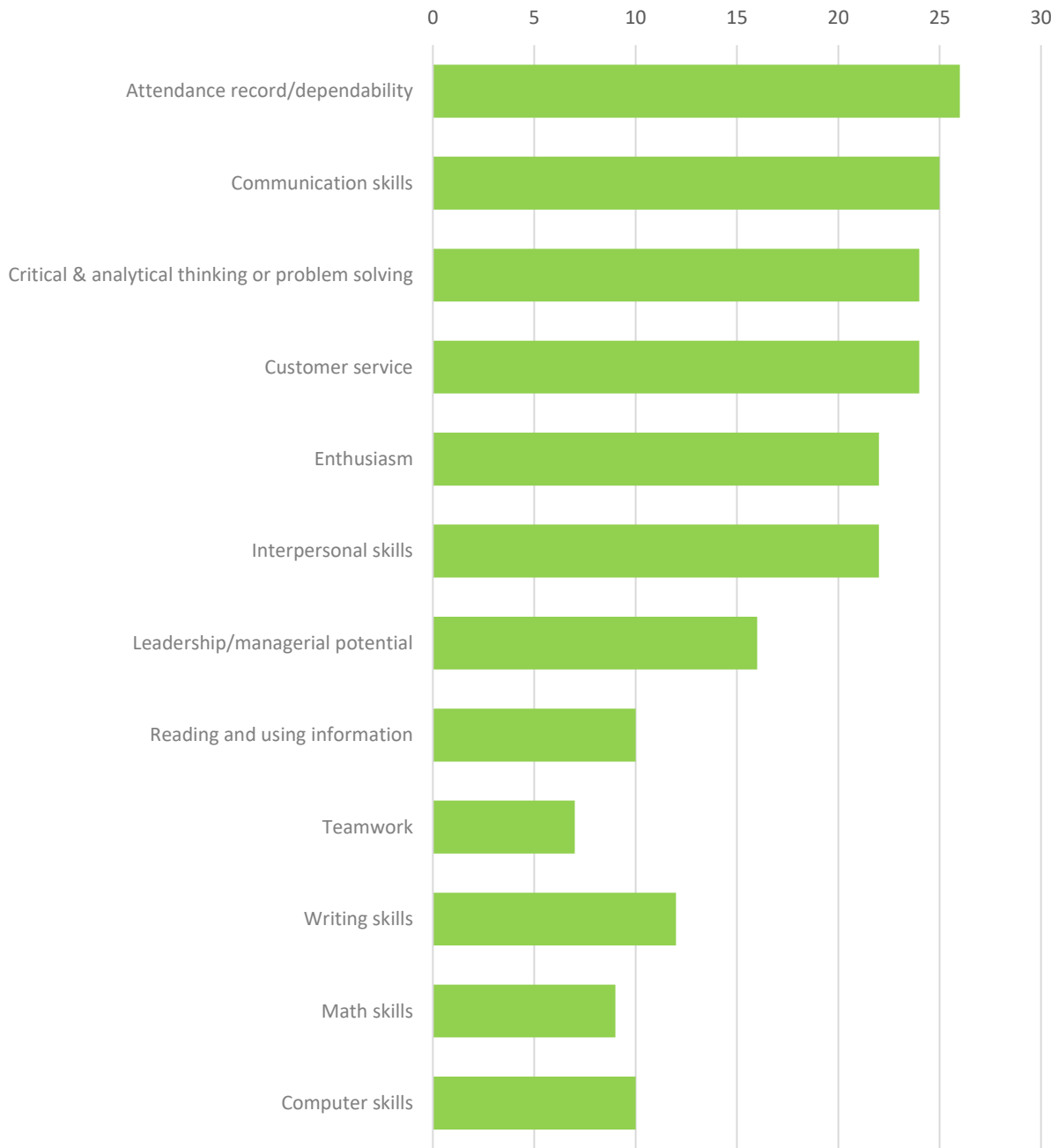




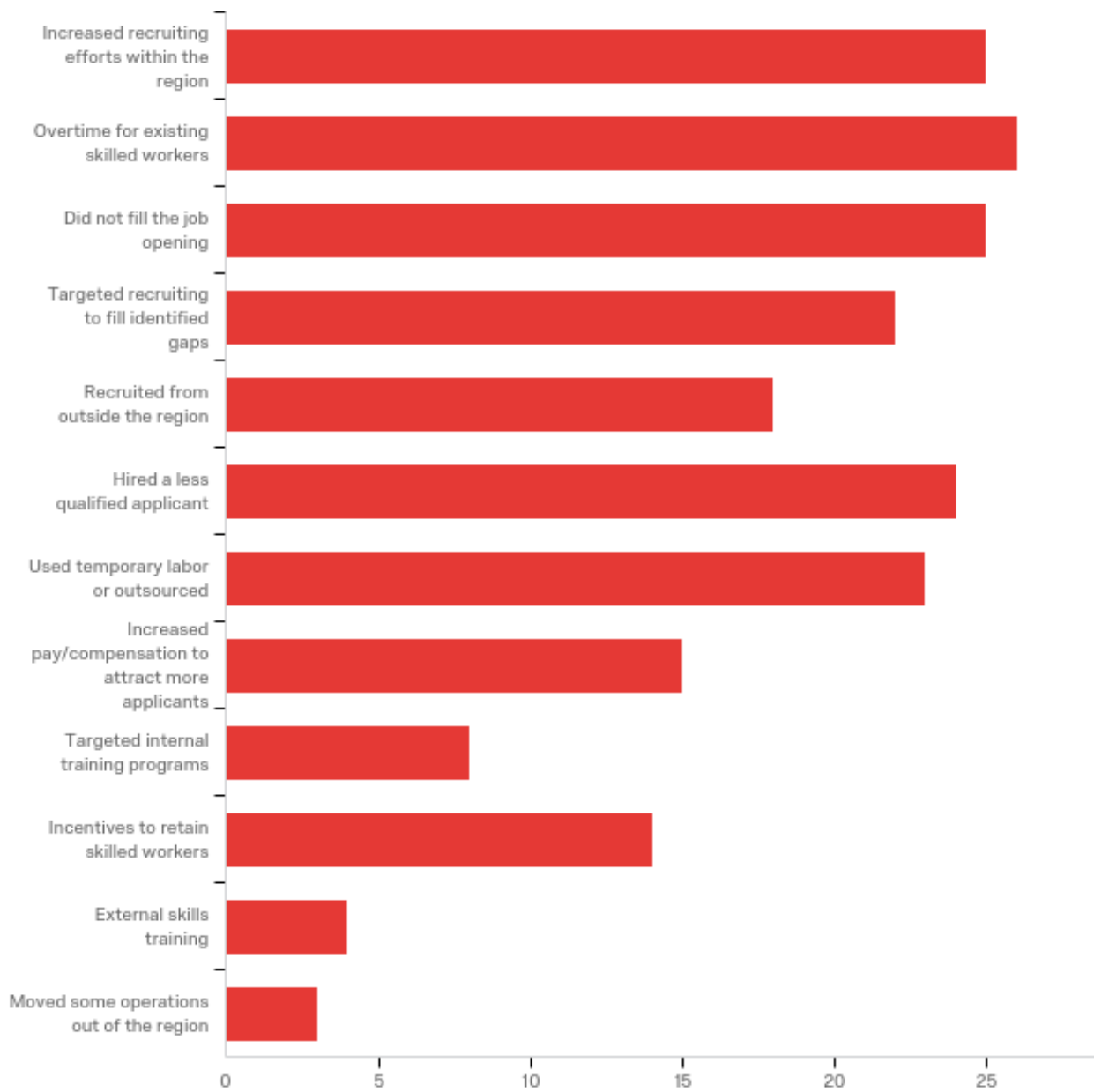
**Q7 - What do you see as the main reasons for the difficulty in finding applicants?  
(Mark all that apply)**



Q8 - Which “soft skills” were missing in your candidates? (Mark all that apply)



Q9 - How has your company responded to hiring difficulties? (Mark all that apply)



Q10 - Do you require drug testing for applicants?

