

RESEARCH

Office of Institutional Research

BRIEF

VOLUME 15 NUMBER 2

October 2005

SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS OF 2003-2004 WORKING SPC GRADUATES

As in the past years the Institutional Research Office (IR) has conducted an Employer Survey designed to measure employer satisfaction with graduates' preparation for work. In Fall 2002, SPC began offering baccalaureate degrees (Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Bachelor of Applied Science). The Baccalaureate Programs will focus on preparing students to enhance their skills, knowledge, reach higher levels of income, and increase personal/professional growth. This years' summary will include responses from 15 Bachelor employers.

This report summarizes the opinions of all employers who were identified by St. Petersburg College (SPC) working graduates. Specifically, the Employer Survey was designed:

- to attain insight into employer perceptions of SPC graduates, and
- to identify employers willingness to support various college activities or to provide opportunities for student training or placement.

Working students who graduated in the 2003-2004 reporting year, who completed the Recent Alumni Survey and identified the employers who would receive the Employer Survey form by (1) indicating that their work was related to their studies, (2) agreeing that their employer could be contacted, and (3) giving the name and address of the employer. Two hundred twenty businesses were contacted. There were 110 surveys returned for a response rate of 50.0%.

The purpose of this effort continues to be to gauge employers' perceptions regarding the educational and training preparation of their SPC graduate employee. The findings of the Employer Survey of 2003-2004 graduates are summarized below:

Employers indicated very high levels of satisfaction with SPC graduates' technical and performance skills. All 10 skills received a mean score of 6 or higher on a 7-point scale, where 7 equals excellent. The percentage of employers responding to the identified skills ranged between 74.5% and 88.1%.

- Ninety-three percent (93.6%) of the employers would hire another SPC graduate.
- The majority of SPC graduates earned \$9.00 or more per hour. This was reported by 92.7% of employers.
- Finally, employers of 2003-2004 graduates expressed an interest in participating in two of the college's activities. 48.2% (53) were interested in assisting in job placement of graduates; 45.5% (50) expressed a willingness to provide input about education/training needs for their workforce.

Employer responses to technical and performance skills of 2003-2004 SPC graduates were compared to employer's responses to the same skills of 2002-2003 SPC graduates. In the preceding year, 93 of the 183 employers who were surveyed responded for a response rate of 51.0%.

Table 1 shows each skill, the mean of the responses, and the percentage of employers responding 5, 6, or 7 on the 7-point scale. The mean score of the skills differed by no more than .1 for all skills except "Possesses necessary mathematics skills." The mean score of this skill increased by .2% from 6.0 in 2002-2003 to 6.2 in 2003-2004.

Table 1

2002-2003 Employer Responses Compared to 2003-2004 Employer Responses

Competencies and Foundation Skills	2002-2003 Graduates					2003-2004 Graduates				
	N	Mean	<u>Employer Rating</u>			N	Mean	<u>Employer Rating</u>		
			5	6	7			5	6	7
Possesses necessary reading skills	93	6.5	9.7%	20.4%	67.7%	110	6.5	10.9%	22.7%	63.6%
Uses written communication skills effectively	93	6.2	12.9%	23.7%	54.8%	109	6.3	16.5%	31.2%	49.5%
Uses oral communication skills effectively	93	6.1	17.2%	21.5%	51.6%	107	6.2	16.8%	30.8%	48.6%
Possesses effective computer skills (e.g. computing, word proc.)	87	6.3	14.0%	28.0%	47.3%	109	6.3	12.8%	30.3%	49.5%
Possesses necessary mathematics skills	90	6.0	20.4%	29.0%	39.8%	110	6.2	12.7%	33.6%	40.9%
Exhibits an appropriate level of responsibility and self-management	92	6.1	11.8%	26.9%	49.5%	109	6.1	14.7%	25.7%	49.5%
Chooses ethical courses of action	92	6.3	14.0%	23.7%	57.0%	108	6.4	10.2%	25.9%	60.2%
Participates as a team player	92	6.3	14.0%	19.4%	57.0%	109	6.4	7.3%	32.1%	56.0%
Works with individuals from diverse backgrounds	92	6.3	12.9%	25.8%	54.8%	108	6.3	5.6%	38.9%	48.1%
Acquires, interprets and uses information effectively	92	6.2	12.9%	33.3%	45.2%	93	6.2	12.9	33.3	45.2

Employers of graduates from both years expressed support for the College's educational programs. 93.6% employers of 2003-2004 graduates stated they would hire another SPC graduate as the need arises. This represents a slight decrease (2.1%) from the previous years' rating of 95.7%.

In conclusion, employers have indicated high levels of satisfaction with SPC programs and training for some time. The survey outcomes indicate that A.S. degree; B.S./B.S.N./B.A.S. and Postsecondary Vocational Certificate programs are achieving their intended objective of preparing students for work.

If you have any additional questions or comments, please contact Dr. Carol Weideman by e-mail weideman.carol@spcollege.edu or extension 5234.