



**Westchester County Association
Hospitality Resource Group
Workforce Development Initiative
2018 Employer Focus Group and Survey Report**



Westchester County Association/Hospitality Resource Group Workforce Development Initiative 2018 Employer Focus Group Executive Summary

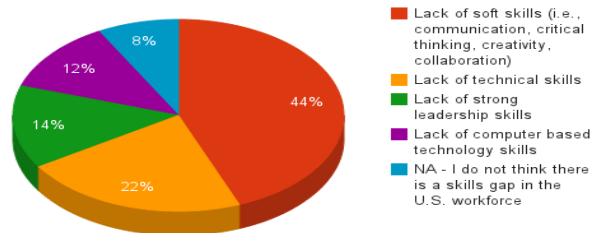
- In our ongoing effort to promote workforce development as an economic growth strategy, the Westchester County Association partnered with Hospitality Resource Group's Strategic Training Solutions team to identify key workforce issues with employers in the greater Westchester County area.
- The goal of this project was to gather input and compile data from area organizations about their workforce needs by business sector, to help frame a collaborative strategy to ensure that area employers have the best qualified workforce for the jobs of today and tomorrow.
- HRG developed and facilitated 5 focus group meetings, a meeting with the WCA Board or Directors, and a survey, from 3/23/18 to 4/20/18.
- The following report is a summary of these meetings and the survey, and includes input from major business sectors, including Healthcare, Hospitality, Real Estate, Energy, Technology, Legal, Business Services, and Financial Services.

National Trends

According to a recent Adecco survey of 500 employers, “92% identified a job skills gap, and nearly half believed the gap was in "soft skills"—communication, critical thinking, creativity and collaboration.

Another study by the AMA of 2,000 business executives indicated that communication is one of the 4 most important skills lacking in today’s workforce.

Which of the following do you feel BEST defines the “gap” in the U.S. workforce skills gap?



SOURCE: ADECCO

CNBC

Critical Skills Survey

95% of executives said these skills were important in growing their organization...

76% of executives said it's these skills that will become more important in the next three to five years...

Yet 57% of employees do not excel in these skills...

[TO VIEW THE SURVEY RESULTS >](#)

Q: What challenges do you currently face with recruiting new employees?

Focus Group Summary

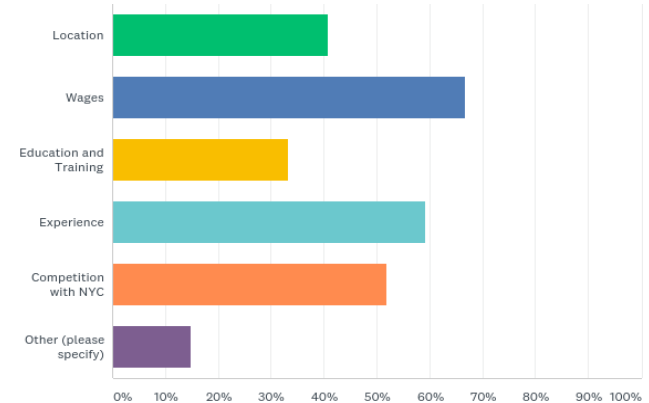
- ✓ Meeting compensation requirements – competition with NYC (higher wages)
- ✓ Difficult to find people at higher management levels with broad skill sets
- ✓ Difficult to attract entry level workers – nature of work, lose candidates to NYC
- ✓ Office location/transportation
- ✓ Challenge to recruit millennials - competition with NYC
- ✓ Candidates lack basic business skills
- ✓ Candidates interested in flexibility, not rigid work schedules
- ✓ Attitudes and work ethic issues
- ✓ Housing affordability
- ✓ Fitting into company culture

Industry-specific:

- ✓ Banking – limited pool with credit skills/knowledge

Additional Comments: Lack of good public transportation, live-work-play communities, corporate workplace for spouses

Survey Summary



Q: What are the most prominent skill gaps in your organization?

General

- ✓ Communication Skills
 - ✓ Evident across all organization levels
 - ✓ Personality, work styles
 - ✓ Conversational, listening skills
 - ✓ “Pitching” – Sales
 - ✓ Business Writing
 - ✓ Presentation skills
- ✓ Relationship-Building (Internal/External)
- ✓ Customer Service
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Management Soft Skills
- ✓ Leadership Skills
- ✓ Basic business skills
- ✓ Emotional Intelligence
- ✓ Critical Thinking

Industry specific – Skills:

- ✓ Credit skills/knowledge
- ✓ Data management
- ✓ Data entry
- ✓ Analytical skills
- ✓ Cybersecurity
- ✓ Underwriting
- ✓ Medical Coding

Industry specific – Positions:

- ✓ Data Scientists
- ✓ Network Engineers
- ✓ Credit Analysts, Investment Bankers, “Universal Banker”
- ✓ Nurses Aides, Specialty RN areas, RN/LPN/HHA/Direct care, Psychologists/Physicians, Medical tech, Pharmacy, Physical Therapists, Compliance/coding
- ✓ Building Operating Engineers
- ✓ Culinary in hospitality
- ✓ Call Center

Q: What skills and experience do you seek in finding candidates for hard to fill positions?

General

- ✓ Communication – oral, written, research
- ✓ Leadership/management experience
- ✓ Prior supervisory experience with documented effectiveness in managing multiple tasks with inadequate resources and tight timelines
- ✓ Previous experience in similar position
- ✓ How to overcome workplace challenges
- ✓ Critical thinking
- ✓ Ability to work on one's own and as part of team to reach goals
- ✓ Self-motivated, outgoing personality
- ✓ Ability to think on ones feet
- ✓ Emotional maturity - insight into own strengths, weaknesses
- ✓ Ability to separate own needs from those of the organization
- ✓ Willingness to learn and experiment
- ✓ Empathy, compassion, resilience
- ✓ Computer skills
- ✓ Uninterrupted work record
- ✓ University graduates that want to work in the Westchester area
- ✓ Technology, CSM
- ✓ Extensive experience in higher education, public relations skills

Industry-Specific

- ✓ Experience working with people with developmental/intellectual disabilities
- ✓ Passing drug tests
- ✓ Proficiency in Civil Engineering Design
- ✓ RNs with Medical surgical experience
- ✓ Minimal certification of a CDA
- ✓ Definite understanding of home care
- ✓ Credit Analysis experience

Q: What types of training topics are of interest to you and your organization?

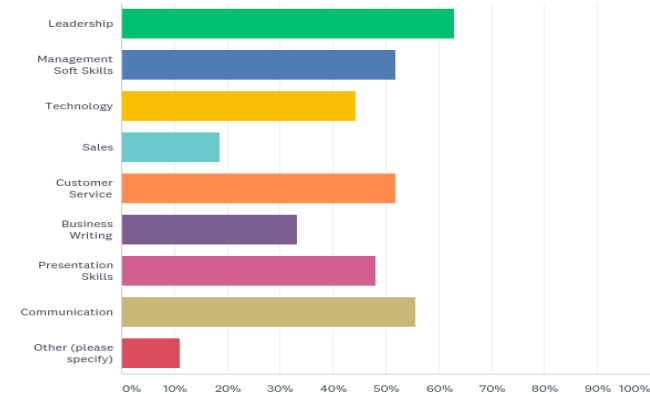
General:

- ✓ Communication Skills
 - ✓ Presentation Skills
 - ✓ Business Writing
- ✓ Leadership Skills
- ✓ Management Soft Skills
 - ✓ Interview Skills, Team Dynamics, Emotional Intelligence, Relationship Building
- ✓ Customer Service
 - ✓ Dealing with Clients
 - ✓ Customer Satisfaction
- ✓ Multi-generational Training
- ✓ Technology Skills - PC
- ✓ Diversity/Sensitivity Training
- ✓ Business Etiquette/ Socializing Skills
- ✓ Sales training / Salesforce
- ✓ Interpersonal Skills

Industry specific:

- ✓ Consistent product branding
- ✓ Legal writing
- ✓ Equity/credit training
- ✓ Management education for nurses
- ✓ Nursing assistant
- ✓ RN management
- ✓ Labor relations
- ✓ Credit evaluation skills
- ✓ Utility accounting
- ✓ Civil Engineering tech skills

Survey Summary



Q: What learning modalities have worked best for your team members?

- In general, across all sectors - blended or hybrid training are most popular training modality

Banking

- ✓ Larger financial institutions have formalized internal, management training programs primarily for industry specific training
- ✓ Small to midsize provide regulatory and compliance training online
- ✓ Other types of training facilitated via OJT, classroom, hybrid, mentor
- ✓ Many questioned the effectiveness of webinars

Healthcare

- ✓ Hybrid, classroom, one on one, on-line

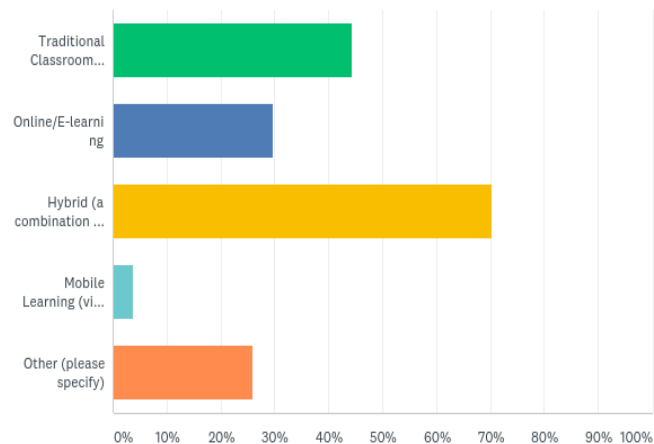
Hospitality

- ✓ Hybrid, classroom, OTJ, webinars

Business Services

- ✓ OJT, webinars, job shadow

Survey Summary



Q: Is there an internal training department within your organization?

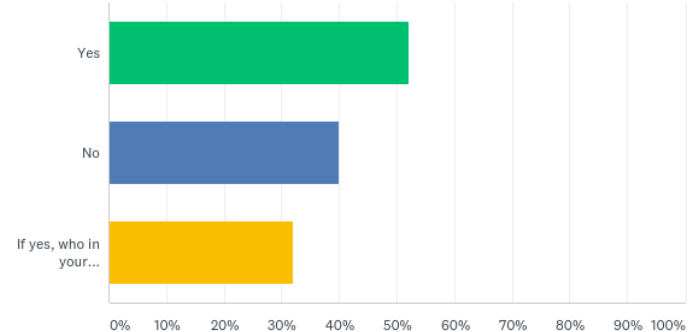
Focus Group Summary

- ✓ Larger companies have internal or corporate training departments with Area Trainers
- ✓ Most small to mid-sized companies do not have an internal training department

Q: Does your organization utilize outside training providers?

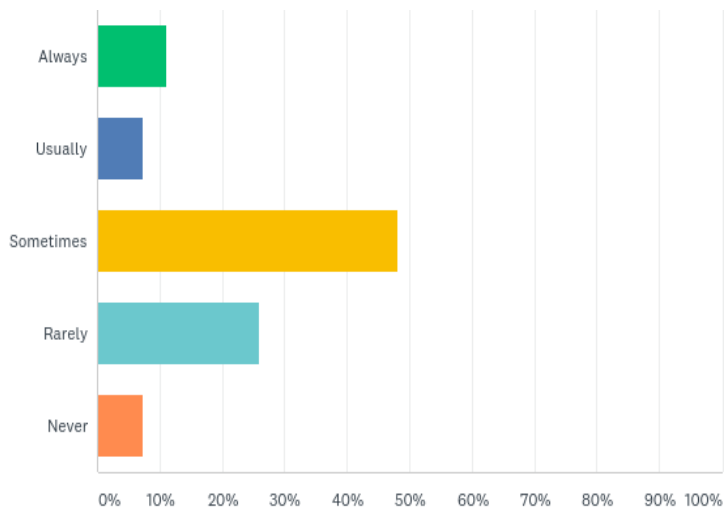
- ✓ Many would consider the use of external trainers or sending their employees out for specific training needs
- ✓ Several seek outside facilitators to deliver company curricula

Survey Summary



Q: Does your organization utilize outside training providers?

Survey Summary



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Always	11.11% 3
Usually	7.41% 2
Sometimes	48.15% 13
Rarely	25.93% 7
Never	7.41% 2
Total Respondents: 27	



Workforce Trends- Westchester Focus Group

Recruitment: Area employers across all industry sectors face serious challenges in their effort to fill entry level positions

- ✓ Lack of interest in open positions
- ✓ Competition from NYC
- ✓ Millennial pay expectations
- ✓ Housing affordability impacts ability to work for companies based in Westchester

Skill Gaps: Employers greatest area of concern - all aspects of communication

- ✓ Most evident as it relates to Millennials and Gen Z
- ✓ Includes written, verbal and relationship building skills
- ✓ Translates to lack of basic business skills -i.e. memos, emails, letters, taking messages, initiating one-on-one communication, etc.

✓ **Training:** Overarching need for improved Communication Skills - Presentation, Business Writing, Relationship-Building

- ✓ Additional- Leadership Training, Customer Service, Management Soft Skills, Multi-generational Training
- ✓ Most companies use hybrid/blended learning - Combination of classroom, OJT, mentor, webinar, on-line
- ✓ Some question effectiveness of webinars/on-line training, as learners lose focus due to distractions/multi-tasking



WCA/HRG Research Analysis on Workforce Development: Focus Group, Survey Summary of Findings

- Employers acknowledge workforce development challenges are having a negative impact on their ability to grow
- Common challenges across all industries/business sectors include:
 - Recruiting
 - Business Communication
 - Transportation/location
 - Housing costs
- Employer cite lack of collaboration between employers and universities
- Employers are open to outside facilitators and resources to help develop their talent