Employer Satisfaction Survey: FY24 Results

Context
Near the beginning of the 2022 calendar year, a group of stakeholders at Hennepin Technical College met to discuss the institution's employer satisfaction survey. In the past, this survey had been administered by the Student Life and Career Development team. However, due to retirements and other institutional obligations, the survey had not been conducted in several years. The team developed a new process whereby employers would be asked questions about the skills and preparation Hennepin Technical College graduates had been given and the overall quality of the graduates as workers. Fiscal Year 2023 was chosen as the first year to administer the new iteration of the survey. Fiscal Year 2024 results serve as the first time we are able to start reporting longitudinal trends.

This survey – and the results discussed herein – aligns with an institutional commitment to ensure high quality education to its students. As part of Hennepin Technical College's ongoing accreditation efforts, this survey is considered to be in alignment with Criterion 4 of the Higher Learning Commission which examines an institution's teaching and learning. In specific, Core Component 4.A – which pertains to an institution ensuring the quality of its education offerings – has a sub-component which focuses on evaluating the success of graduates to ensure that the credentials it represents as preparation for employment fulfills this purpose. This survey serves as an indirect measure of the success of our students in terms of their preparation for employment as rated by their employers.

Methods
The Institutional Research team created a list of potential employers from two sources. First, employers listed by students via results from the Graduate Follow-Up Survey were included. Second, Institutional Research worked with administrative assistants to collate a list of employers serving on Program Advisory Committees across campus. In sum, 87 individuals and/or companies were listed from these two sources. The Institutional Research team took one of two approaches when reaching out to these 87 contacts. If an email address had been listed, the Institutional Research team emailed the individual (or company email) directly to request participation in the survey. If no email address had been made available, the Institutional Research team went to the company website, submitted a form request, and within the form asked the company to participate in the survey. Individuals were initially invited to participate on the first Monday of October. The survey remained open for data collection until the first Monday in December. The complete survey instrument can be found in Appendix A.

Results
The response rate was 5.7% as a total of five responses were collected from the 87 individuals and/or companies contacted. Although this may seem small, response rates of 5%-10% are not uncommon when a "cold call" approach is taken via email/form submission. To be considered statistically representative of a population, data sets should have at least 30 responses. The research team did not achieve this number and, therefore, we cannot extrapolate these findings to fit the general population of 2023 HTC graduates.

Responses were positive (Table 1). For all 16 skills employers were asked to rate, a majority of respondents rated our students as performing either "Very Well" or "Well" for the metric. This demonstrates that our students are commonly performing strongly in the areas the institution and employers deem most important.

The one area with the strongest performance by students, based on employers who rated student skills either "Very Well," was with regard to accepting responsibility. In sum, 60.0% of employers held this viewpoint. The skill with the worst rating pertained to showing initiative. 20.0% of employers rated students as "Very Poor" for this metric.

Table 1 Response Distribution to Survey Questions

Metric	Very Well	Well	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Produces quality work	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Uses technology (tools, equipment) properly/safely	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Applies environmental health and safety regulations	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Communicates well orally	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Communicates well in writing	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Demonstrates necessary math skills	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Demonstrates necessary computer skills	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Exhibits critical thinking/problem-solving skills	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Demonstrates community/global awareness	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Follows job-related rules and regulations	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Follows instructions	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Pays attention to job details	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Shows initiative	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%
Accepts responsibility	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Exhibits a positive work attitude	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
To what degree do the skills/abilities match your needs?	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%

	Yes	No			
Would you hire an HTC graduate again?	80.0%	20.0%			

Green shading: highest rated skill by respondents
Red shading: lowest rated skill by respondents (three-way tie)

Respondents were asked to identify the job title(s) held by the HTC graduate(s) at their companies (Table 2). Of the four responses provided to this question, each job title was unique.

Table 2 Job Titles on which Employers Rated Hennepin Technical College Graduates

Job Title	Number
Apprentice Pipefitter	1
Carpenter	1
Electronic Controls Designer	1
LDA	1

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were invited to add any additional comments they may have had about the survey or the HTC graduates they hired. Only one participant meaningfully engaged with this question. Nonetheless, the response was positive and centered upon the theme that the institution produces exceptional graduates:

- "We have a long history of working with the tech schools and rarely come across a poor hire."

Future Improvements

This employer satisfaction survey can be improved. Most importantly, additional responses would provide a more robust picture of graduates' abilities. The responses were not enough to be extrapolated to fit the entire population of our graduates, and none are representative for an individual job title/industry skill. Having more employers engage with the survey would provide better insight into the skills we provide to specific industries.

Hennepin Technical College

Program Name:

EMPLOYER SATISFACTION SURVEY OF HENNEPIN TECHNICAL COLLEGE GRADUATES

The purpose of this survey is to learn how employers rate the skills of students who have graduated from Hennepin Technical College (HTC). Results of this survey will be used to improve instruction and/or curriculum at the college. Considering HTC graduates you have hired in the past year, please circle the appropriate ranking of their **entry-level** knowledge, skills and behaviors as listed below. If you have hired multiple HTC graduates, **please average your ratings.**

Skill	Very Well	Well	Average	Poor	Very Poor	N/A
Produces quality work	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Uses technology (tools, equipment) properly/safely	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Applies environmental health and safety regulations	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Communicates well orally	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Communicates well in writing	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Demonstrates necessary math skills	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Demonstrates necessary computer skills	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exhibits critical thinking/problem-solving skills	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Demonstrates community/global awareness	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Follows job-related rules and regulations	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Follows instructions	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Pays attention to job details	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Shows initiative	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Accepts responsibility	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
Exhibits a positive work attitude	5	4	3	2	1	N/A
To what degree do the skills/abilities match your needs?	5	4	3	2	1	N/A

Overall Rating – Would you hire an HTC graduate again?   Yes   No

Please tell us which company you are representing. [text box for response]

For those hired in the last year, what job title(s) do the HTC graduates have at your organization? [text box for response]

Please use the back of this sheet if you wish to clarify or expand on your ratings. Thank you for completing this survey!

Appendix B Longitudinal Data

Response Distribution to Survey Questions, by Fiscal Year

Metric	FY	Very Well	Well	Average	Poor	Very Poor
Produces quality work	2024	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2023	58.6%	27.6%	10.3%	0.0%	3.4%
Uses technology (tools, equipment) properly/safely	2024	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2023	55.2%	31.0%	10.3%	0.0%	3.4%
Applies environmental health and safety regulations	2024	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2023	58.6%	27.6%	13.8%	0.0%	0.0%
Communicates well orally	2024	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2023	58.6%	17.2%	13.8%	10.3%	0.0%
Communicates well in writing	2024	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2023	40.7%	33.3%	18.5%	7.4%	0.0%
Demonstrates necessary math skills	2024	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2023	44.4%	37.0%	14.8%	0.0%	3.7%
Demonstrates necessary computer skills	2024	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2023	53.6%	32.1%	10.7%	0.0%	3.6%
Exhibits critical thinking/problem-solving skills	2024	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	2023	58.6%	17.2%	13.8%	6.9%	3.4%
Demonstrates community/global awareness	2024	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2023	46.2%	30.8%	19.2%	0.0%	3.8%
Follows job-related rules and regulations	2024	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	2023	63.0%	25.9%	7.4%	0.0%	3.7%
Follows instructions	2024	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	2023	58.6%	20.7%	17.2%	0.0%	3.7%
Pays attention to job details	2024	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	2023	62.1%	20.7%	6.9%	3.4%	6.9%
Shows initiative	2024	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%
	2023	64.3%	17.9%	14.3%	0.0%	3.6%
Accepts responsibility	2024	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	2023	64.3%	25.0%	7.1%	0.0%	3.6%
Exhibits a positive work attitude	2024	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	2023	66.7%	25.9%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%

To what degree do the skills/abilities match your needs?	2024	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
	2023	64.3%	21.4%	10.7%	0.0%	3.6%

		Yes	No
		Yes	No
Would you hire an HTC graduate again?	2024	80.0%	20.0%
	2023	93.1%	6.9%