



A Business Survey Project on
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT WORKERS

conducted by the

Vallejo Chamber of Commerce

on behalf of the

Workforce Development Board of Solano County



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

OF SOLANO COUNTY



Vallejo Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development Board of Solano County **SURVEY OVERVIEW**

The Vallejo Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of the Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Solano County, recently conducted a survey of Vallejo businesses on youth and youth adult workers.

This survey was developed by the Chamber, who researched the subject matter and interviewed members of the WDB's senior management team to determine survey scope. The purpose, as articulated by the WDB, was to ask Vallejo businesses about their hiring and retention practices as related to workers under 25 years old.

The survey was created in early May, 2018 with an initial rough draft. The Chamber worked with the WDB to fine-tune questions until the survey was ready. The final version had 17 questions in all. Approximate time to complete the survey was estimated at less than 5 minutes.

The survey target respondent was Vallejo businesses. It was promoted in the following ways:

- Sent directly to all 435 members of the Vallejo Chamber of Commerce:
 - o Wednesday, May 30
 - o Tuesday, June 19
 - o Wednesday, June 27
- Sent to the broader Vallejo business community in the Chamber's e-newsletter:
 - o Wednesday, June 6
 - o Wednesday, June 20
- Promoted on Facebook:
 - o Multiple promotions between June 6 and June 30
 - o Promoted as a "Boosted Post":
 - Target: 25-65+; Solano County, California, Vallejo, Business Development, Community, Business or Workforce
 - Spent \$25.53 over three weeks
 - Reached 1,136 people
 - Received 66 "post engagements"

Total # of responses: 79



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SURVEY OVERVIEW

QUESTION 1:

What is your business industry or sector?

Manufacturing	<u>1</u>
Construction	<u>3</u>
Retail	<u>5</u>
Food Service	<u>3</u>
Accommodations	<u>4</u>
Transportation & Logistics	<u>4</u>
Information Technology	<u>0</u>
Health Care	<u>4</u>
Maintenance	<u>1</u>
Professional Services	<u>30</u> (including)
Banking & Financial Services	3
Business & Management	3
Government	2
Non-profit	3
Other	<u>18</u> (including)
Automotive Services & Repair	3
Amusement & Recreation	<u>6</u>
Education	2
Maritime	3
Waste & Recycling	2
No response	<u>6</u>
TOTAL RESPONSES	<u>79</u>

Cross-section of Vallejo business types represented. Highest area of concentration is Amusement & Recreation (no surprise). Food Service is lower than expected, which could be due to the audience that received the survey.



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SURVEY OVERVIEW

QUESTION 2:

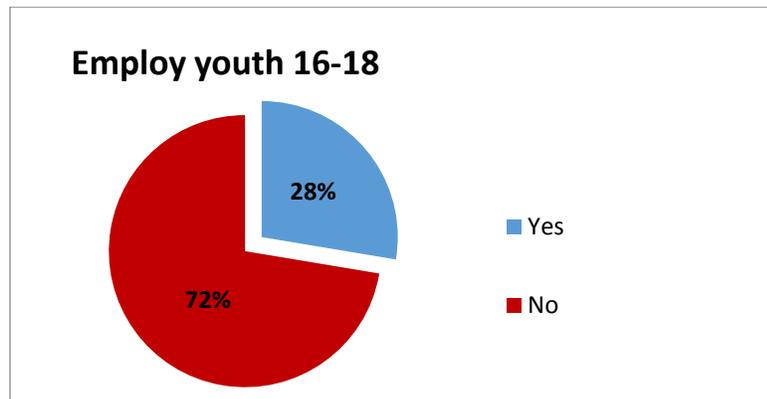
What is your business name & city?

VALLEJO: 50 respondents
FAIRFIELD: 7 respondents
BENICIA: 1 respondent
NOT STATED: 21 respondents

Business name and city provided in full survey report.

QUESTION 3:

Do you currently have any youth under 18 employed at your organization (including as interns or volunteers)?

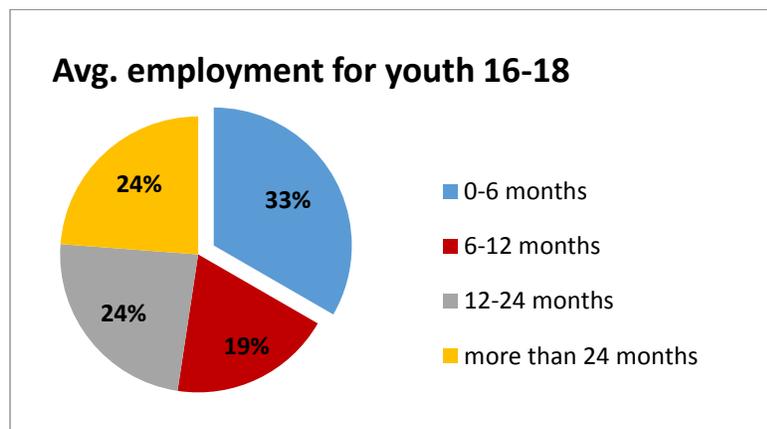


Minors are not widely employed.

KEEP IN MIND:
When answering this question, respondents already know survey is only for Vallejo businesses who have now, or in the recent past, employed someone ages 16-24.

QUESTION 4:

If yes to Question 3, what is the typical length of time a youth remains employed by your organization?



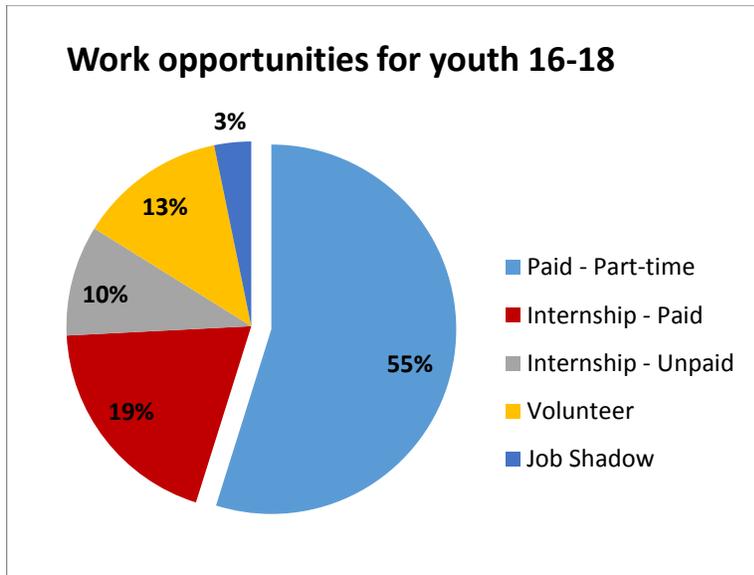
When employed, youth workers typically stay with their employer for one year or less.



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SURVEY OVERVIEW

QUESTION 5:

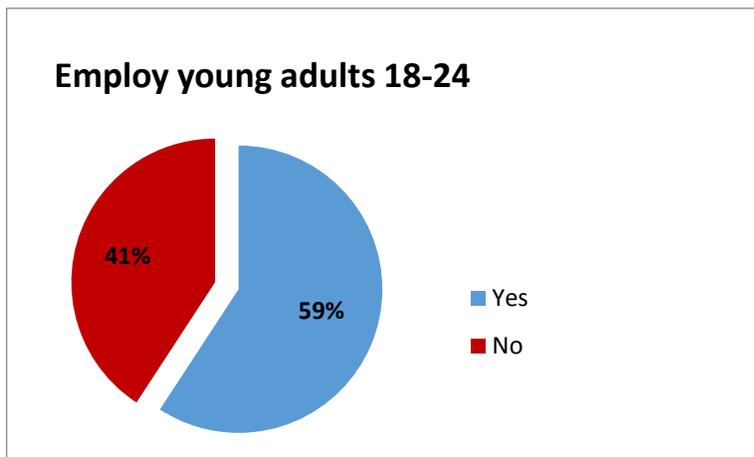
If yes to Question 3, what kind of work opportunities does your organization offer to youth?



Paid opportunities (part-time or internships) comprise the majority of work options (about 75%).

QUESTION 6:

Do you currently have any young adults aged 18 to 24 employed at your business (including as interns or volunteers)?



Majority of businesses employ young adults.

SURVEY NOISE:
28% of respondents hire youth;
59% hire young adults
87% total – where are the other 13%?

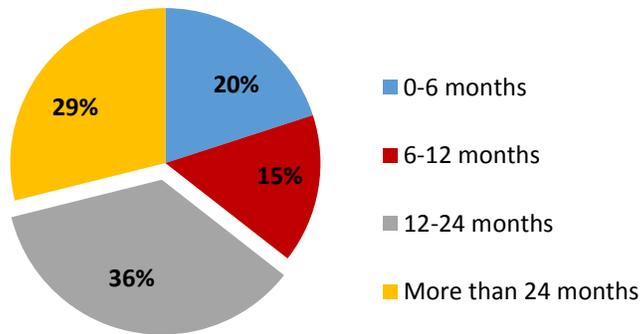


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QUESTION 7:

If yes to Question 6, what is the typical length of time for a young adult to remain employed at your establishment?

Avg. employment for young adults 18-24

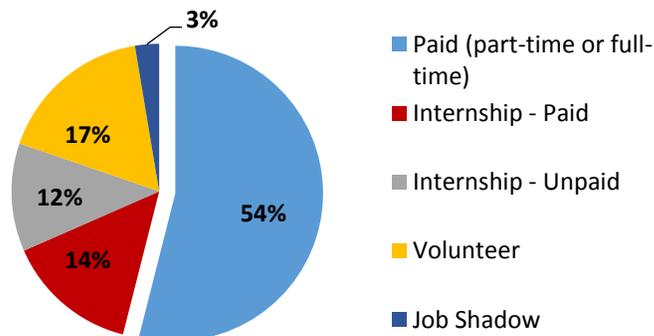


Young adults are better equipped to stay with a work opportunity. Approximately 2/3 of young adults stay employed at least one year.

QUESTION 8:

If yes to Question 6, what kind of work opportunities does your organization offer to youth?

Work opportunities for young adults 18-24



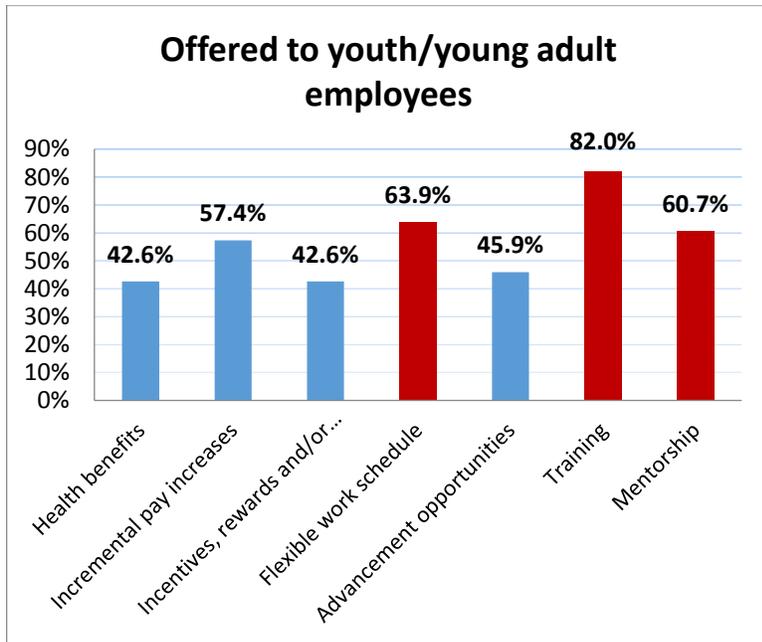
Employers offer a variety of work opportunities. Approximately 2/3 of young adults are paid employees.



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SURVEY OVERVIEW

QUESTION 9:

Which of the following does your organization offer to its youth/young adults employees?

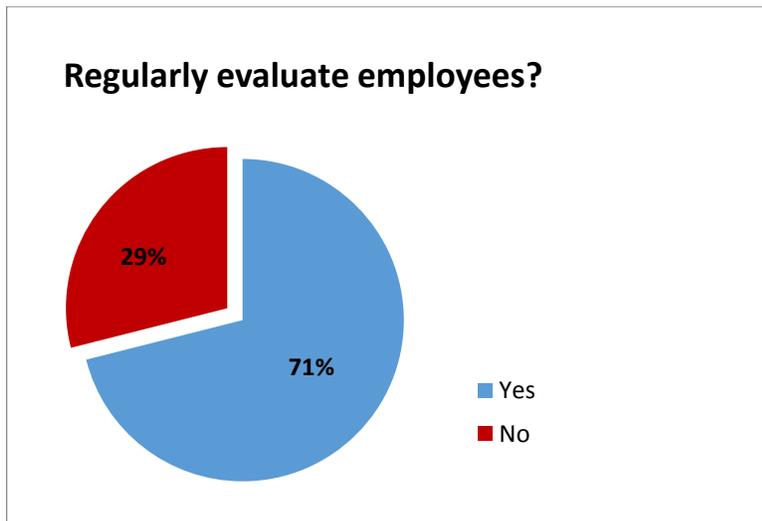


The majority of employers offer benefits and support valuable to youth and young workers.

TO THINK ABOUT:
How does this compare to companies who don't employ youth/young adults?

QUESTION 10:

Do you regularly evaluate all employee performances in your organization?



Majority of employers (but not all) regularly evaluate employees.

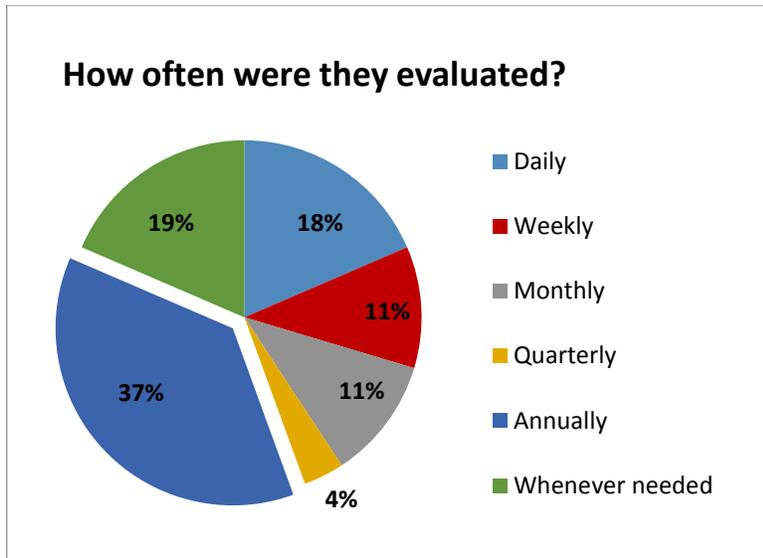
KEEP IN MIND:
The term "evaluate" may have affected response. Small businesses may consider this a term for a formal evaluation process when in fact they likely evaluate informally.



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SURVEY OVERVIEW

QUESTION 11:

If yes to Question 10, how often do you provide staff feedback?

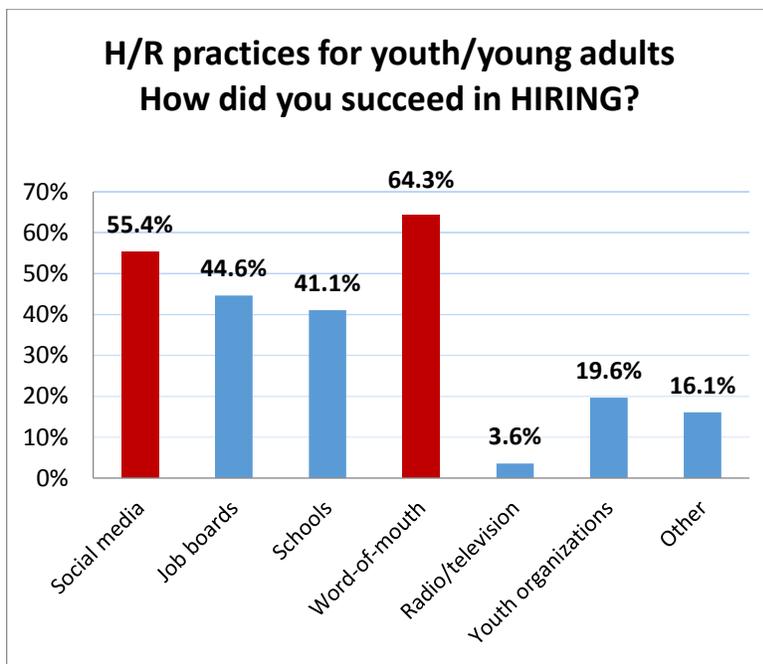


Annual reviews are the most common. Does this work best for workers from all age groups? Employers should be encouraged to evaluate young workers more and youth workers even more frequently.

POINT OF INTEREST:
 Evaluating once per year doesn't work for youth, whose avg. employment lasts less than a year. For young adults, once per year is less effective.

QUESTION 12:

What H/R practices help you succeed in HIRING youth/young adults for employment?



Youth and young adult workers are more likely to respond to work opportunities learned about via social media or personal contacts. Traditional recruiting methods are not as effective when hiring youth/young adults.

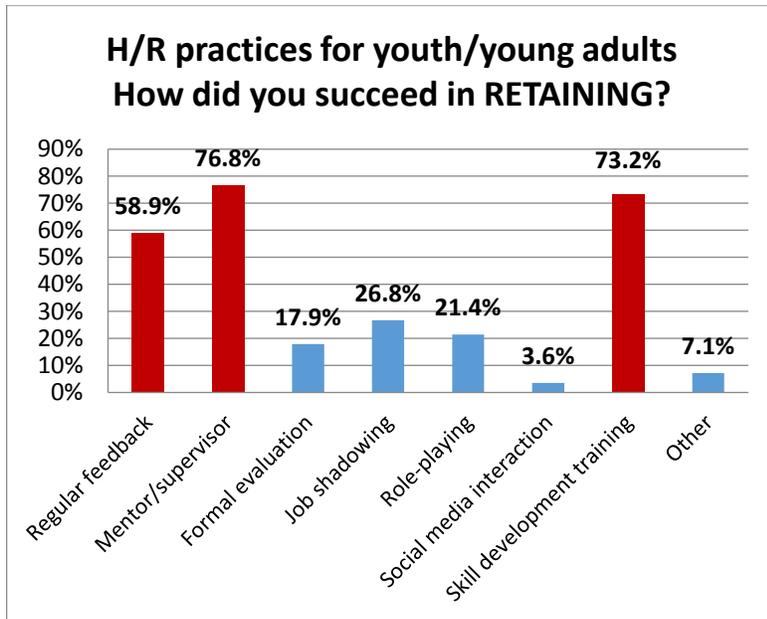
POINT OF INTEREST:
 Successful H/R efforts use tools familiar to, and trusted by, youth and young adults.



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SURVEY OVERVIEW

QUESTION 13:

What H/R practices help you succeed in RETAINING youth/young adults for employment?



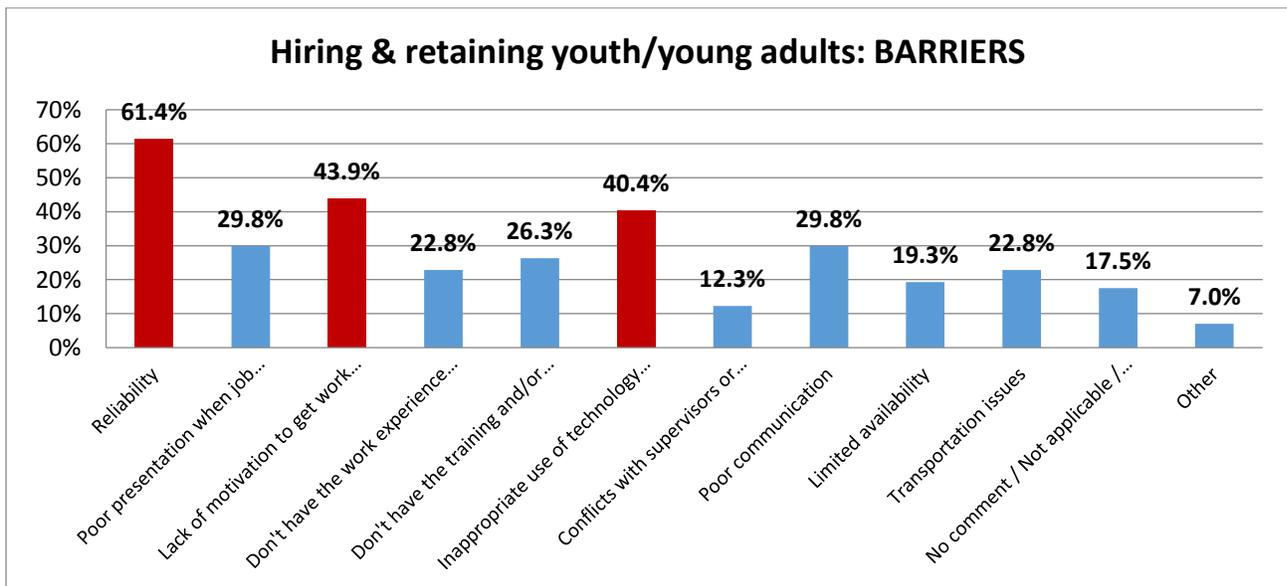
Youth/young adult workers are retained through mentorship and supportive interactions. The classic “supervisor/employee” relationship doesn’t work nearly as well.

Significant gaps indicated strong “best practices” preferences.

WANT TO RETAIN THESE WORKERS?
 Training, Supervision, and Feedback – it’s that simple.

QUESTION 14:

Which of the following barriers with youth/young adults have you faced in hiring & retaining?



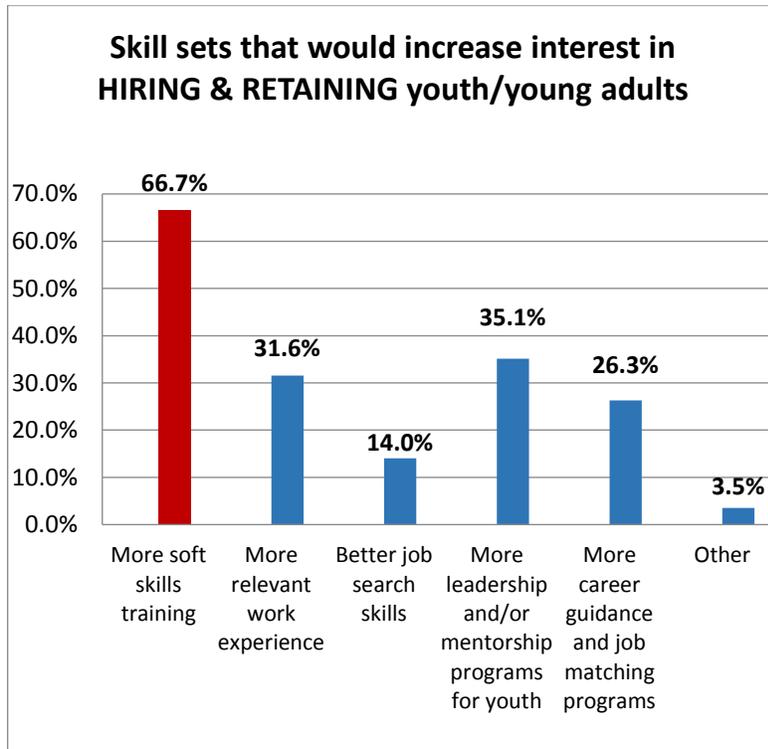
Reliability, motivation, and inappropriate use of technology are the top barriers faced by youth/young adult workers.



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SURVEY OVERVIEW

QUESTION 15:

Which of the following skill sets in youth/young adults would increase your interest in hiring & retaining?



Employers overwhelmingly desire youth/young adults workers acquire more soft skill training. Community leadership & mentorship programs for youth/young workers would help increase their confidence, which would improve soft skills.

Career guidance gives these workers a career target, which helps with preparing for and staying employed.

QUESTION 16:

What benefits do you think youth/young adults bring to the workforce?

42 responses overwhelmingly point at creativity and the three “E”s – energy, enthusiasm & excitement – as benefits youth/young adults bring to the workplace. Other comments included:

- Drive to succeed
- Greater ability to use technology
- Fresh perspective
- Want to learn/be taught

QUESTION 17:

What advice would you give youth/young adults today to increase their chance of employability?

44 responses such as:

- Be responsible
- Use your manners and show respect
- Be reliable, show up on time
- Wear appropriate clothing
- Be prepared and be ready to work
- Show you are serious
- Be patient and work hard
- Listen
- Make the effort to learn and do the work



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Workforce Development Board of Solano County
SURVEY OVERVIEW

SUMMARY

This survey, which targeted Vallejo businesses, focused on youth and young adult workers. Respondents were all either Vallejo-based or regularly engaged in business in Vallejo. A broad swath of industries are represented, with Amusement & Recreation and Retail comprising the top two business types and Professional Services the top business category.

Results show the majority of Vallejo employers are interested in hiring and retaining young adult workers. While youth (under 18) have fewer opportunities for employment, both groups are mainly hired as paid employees when hired. Youth tend to stay at their job for one year or less, while young adults typically stay at least one year. This is to be expected as some young adults face more life decisions and take a more active role in managing their life, especially with paying their own bills.

The process of hiring youth/young adults is more successful when using new methods of advertising the job opportunity. Youth/young adults were most responsive to a personal promotion of the job, especially word-of-mouth and social media. This makes sense given youth/young adult use of social media and technology, which are trusted resources for this group.

Retaining youth/young adult workers succeeded best when accompanied by proactive oversight focused on developing skills and providing feedback. They are not likely to seek these answers as they lack motivation and are unreliable. Therefore, the best employment environment for youth/young adults includes supervisors who have the time and capacity to mentor.

Youth/young adult workers will benefit from a stronger focus on soft skills training, a long-standing issue for this group. Employers would like to see more emphasis on community youth leadership & mentorship programs, which aid in soft skill development. Employers also like schools to be more proactive in connecting youth/young adults to local businesses for internships, job shadowing, and paid part-time jobs.

When asked, employers see youth's status (as young) as the key benefit. Youth/young adults are more enthusiastic and excited, hungry to learn, and eager to impress. Employers love the fresh perspective offered by youth/young workers, along with their knowledge (and use) of technology. These benefits are lost, however, when accompanied by poor manners and dress, tardiness, a lack of respect for authority, and a lack of effort.



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SURVEY OVERVIEW

FINAL THOUGHTS

The information in this survey confirms the good and not-so-good of youth and young adult employees. For employers looking to engage this group, it is clear there is much to be gained from youth/young adult employees provided the business is equipped to find, hire, train, support and grow those employees. This isn't much different than the workforce in general. What differs are the tools needed.