Employee Recruitment, Training and Retention

2025 Employer Survey Results

Timiskaming District

FAR NORTHEAST TRAINING BOARD (FNETB)
your local labour market planning network

COMMISSION DE FORMATION DU NORD-EST (CFNE)
votre réseau local de planification du marché du travail

Canada

EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO EMPLOI ONTARIO

Ontario

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Canada

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LIMITATIONS:
While the survey results are a snapshot based on the input of employers who responded across various industry sectors, it is important to note that it is not representative of all employers in the FNETB.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The FNETB would like to thank the employers who took the time to answer the 2025 survey. Employer outreach is greatly enriched by the collaboration and support of the local organizations that assist and support this project by distributing the survey to their members. The participating business organizations in 2025 were:

- Cochrane Board of Trade
- Northern Corridor Chamber of Commerce
- Kirkland Lake District Chamber of Commerce
- Temiskaming Shores & Area Chamber of Commerce
- Timmins Chamber of Commerce

EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND RETENTION

2025 Employer Survey Results

INTRODUCTION

There are twenty-five workforce planning board across Ontario funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. The Far Northeast Training Board (FNETB) is one of four workforce planning boards across northeastern Ontario. Other workforce planning boards in the northeast include Algoma Workforce Investment Corporation), the Labour Market Group and Workforce Planning for Sudbury and Manitoulin.

A key mandate of workforce planning boards is to conduct research and analyze what is happening in the local labour market. In addition to using various data sources such as business data from Statistics Canada and the Census, workforce planning boards also conduct industry-specific research, consult key stakeholders throughout the year and lead partnership projects. All of this is used to support and inform local workforce development strategies and local actions.

An important part of the community outreach is to collect input from employers about the challenges they are facing with their workforce in terms of recruitment, training and retention. As a result, the four workforce planning boards in the northeast conducted a survey of employers in their respective areas.

METHODOLOGY

All four workforce planning boards across the northeast developed a common assessment tool and timeline for implementation of the survey. Employers were asked to answer key questions related to: industry demographics, workforce changes in 2024 and anticipated changes in 2025, hard-to-fill positions, recruitment practices, skills and training requirements, impact of technological and environmental changes and challenges/opportunities moving forward.

The survey was administered between April 30th to May 30th, 2025. Survey Monkey was used as the platform to administer the survey. Various strategies were used to get the word out, including direct emails and the use of social media. This report is an analysis of the results for the Timiskaming area.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS AND THEIR BUSINESS

For the Timiskaming region (from Kirkland Lake to Temiskaming Shores), a total of 85 employers started the survey and while there was some drop-off in respondents as the survey progressed, around three-quarters completed the survey.

INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED *(85 responses)*
Respondents reflect a range of industries. Table 1 provides the breakdown of respondents by industry and compares the percentage distribution with the actual percentage distribution of businesses in the Timiskaming region. The color-coding in Table 1 highlights where the survey percentage share is significantly greater (green) or significantly lower (red) than the actual distribution based on the Canadian Business Counts data as of December 2024.

TABLE 1: NUMBER AND PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY INDUSTRY

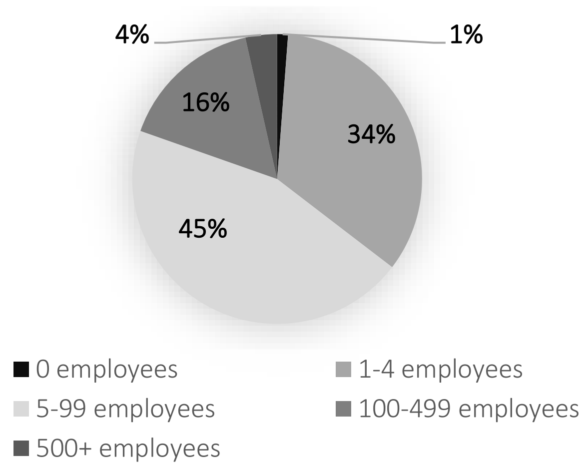
	SURVEY		ACTUAL
INDUSTRY	NUMBER	PERCENT	PERCENT
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3	**3.5%**	5.1%
Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas Extraction	5	**5.9%**	1.4%
Utilities	0	0.0%	0.6%
Construction	8	**9.4%**	12.9%
Manufacturing	6	**7.1%**	3.6%
Wholesale Trade	2	2.4%	3.3%
Retail Trade	15	17.6%	16.8%
Transportation and Warehousing	0	**0.0%**	5.2%
Information and Cultural Industries	0	0.0%	1.4%
Finance and Insurance	6	**7.1%**	3.4%
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	1	**1.2%**	3.3%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	4	4.7%	5.6%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	0.0%	0.3%
Administration and Support, Waste Mgmt	0	**0.0%**	3.4%
Educational Services	5	**5.9%**	1.3%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	12	14.1%	12.5%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	5	**5.9%**	1.6%
Accommodation and Food Services	2	**2.4%**	6.6%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	6	**7.1%**	9.6%
Public Administration	5	**5.9%**	2.1%
TOTAL	**85**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Actual figures are from Statistics Canada's Canadian Business Counts, December 2024, Timiskaming and Cochrane

PERSON COMPLETING THE SURVEY *(85 responses)*

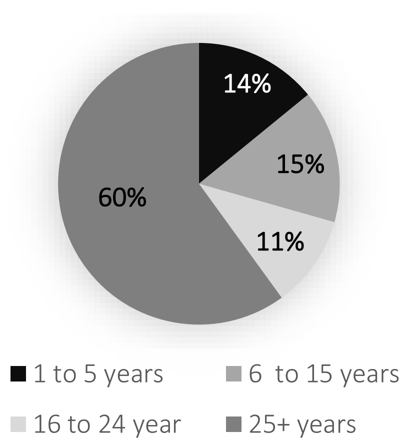
Eighty-five percent of the surveys were completed by a senior person in the organization as follows: owner (42%); human resources (18%); and supervisor/manager (25%). Others (15%) included in that category are those in an Executive Director's role, in an administrative or frontline position.

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (*85 responses*)



45%
of the 85 respondents had between 5 and 99 employees.

YEARS OF OPERATION (*85 responses)*



60%
of the 85 respondents were in business for 25 years or more.

Note: For the following questions in this section, the respondent was allowed to pick more than one selection.

TYPE OF BUSINESS *(85 responses)*

- 65% private for-profit sector
- 18% not for profit/registered charity employer
- 6% franchise
- 5% non-government funded not for profit employer
- 5% Indigenous business
- 2% government-funded for-profit employer
- 1% Francophone business.

65%
of the 85 respondents were private sector for profit businesses.

32%
of the respondents have employees who are 65 or over

CURRENT WORKFORCE BY AGE COHORT: *(85 responses)*

- 58% employ someone under 25 years old
- 92% employ someone between 25 and 55
- 59% employ someone 55 or over
- 32% employ someone 65 or older.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF CURRENT WORKFORCE *(85 responses)*

Respondents were asked about the demographic composition of their workforce. Almost all respondents hire both males and females, and slightly more than half (57%) employ Francophones. Nearly half employ Indigenous persons (45%) and 39% indicated hiring immigrants or other cultural groups. A slightly smaller proportion (35%) employ domestic students, while 15% indicate that they hire international students. Around one out of five (19%) employ people with a known physical disability while 12% indicate that they hire people with a known developmental disability.

- Males (84%) and females (93%)
- Francophones (57%)
- Indigenous (45%)
- Immigrants/other cultural groups (39%)
- Students: Local students (35%), International students (15%)
- People with a known disability: physical disability (19%), developmental disability (12%)

SUCCESSION PLAN *(85 responses)*

When asked about succession planning, less than a third of respondents have a succession plan in place either for key roles or for some key roles:

- 54% acknowledge that they do not have a formal succession plan
- 14% say that they have a succession plan in place for key roles
- 18% say that they have a succession plan in place for some key roles
- 7% say they are currently developing a succession plan
- 7% of respondents say they do not know if their business had a succession plan.

54%
of the 85 respondents do not have a formal succession plan

SURVEY FINDINGS

Limitations: While the survey results are a snapshot in time and based on the input of employers who responded across various industry sectors, it is important to note that it is not representative of all employers in the Timiskaming region but rather a reflection of the experience and current situation of those who responded to the survey.

WORKFORCE HIRINGS AND SEPARATIONS IN 2024

SEPARATIONS IN 2024 *(85 responses)*
A separation is defined as a retirement, a dismissal/termination, an employee who left or quit, a permanent layoff, a temporary layoff, or any other termination of employment.

Respondents were asked if their business or organization experienced any separations in 2024. Of all respondents, 69% said yes, 28% said no and 2% were uncertain. Among those who did experience a separation, a further question explored why and approximately how many employees this impacted. Table 2 illustrates the responses provided. A category called 'other' was included and respondents provided a wide range of reasons including either it was too far to travel, left to start their own business, transferred to another site, and left for higher pay or better hours.

By far, the single largest reason for separation was that the employee quit (85%), followed by termination (68%) and retirement (43%). In most instances, the separation involved 1-9 employees.

REASONS FOR SEPARATIONS IN 2024 *(53 responses)*

Table 2: Type of separation and approximate number of employees involved

	Any number of employees	1-9 employees	10-24 employees	25-49 employees	50+ employees
Employee quit	85%	64%	15%	4%	2%
Employee retired	43%	43%	0%	0%	0%
Temporary layoff	13%	9%	2%	2%	0%
Permanent layoff	15%	15%	0%	0%	0%
Dismissal/Termination	68%	64%	2%	2%	0%
Left for more flexible work (i.e., remote work)	29%	23%	6%	0%	0%
Other	19%	17%	0%	2%	0%

HIRING IN 2024 *(82 responses)*

Similarly, respondents were asked whether they hired any employees in 2024. Seventy-seven percent (77%) of respondents indicated that their business hired in 2024, 22% did not and 1% were uncertain. The total number of respondents who indicated that they had hired was 82, while the total number who indicated they had experienced a separation was 85, virtually an identical number.

By far, the primary reason for hiring was to fill an existing vacancy (88%), followed by a hiring in response to growth or expansion (42%) or to replace a person who retired (37%). "Other" responses included hiring an intern, hiring a project consultant, and hiring for a Home Support Worker Training program. As in the case of separations, the large majority of these hirings involve 1-9 employees.

REASONS FOR HIRES IN 2024 *(60 responses)*

Table 3: Reasons for new hires in 2024

	Any number of employees	1-9 employees	10-24 employees	25-49 employees	50+ employees
Retirements	37%	32%	3%	2%	0%
Filling existing vacancies	88%	68%	13%	3%	3%
Growth/expansion	42%	30%	8%	2%	2%
Restructuring	15%	15%	0%	0%	0%
Technological changes	7%	7%	0%	0%	0%
Other	5%	3%	2%	0%	0%

OCCUPATIONS FOR WHICH RESPONDENTS HIRED IN 2024 *(55 responses)*
Respondents were then asked to list occupations for which they hired the greatest number of employees.

- Labourers
- Sales associates, customer service representatives
- Administrative staff, clerical
- Supervisors, superintendents
- Managers, executive directors
- Personal support workers, home support workers
- Nurses (RN, RPN, NP)
- Social and community services workers
- Welders, welders-fitters and machine operators
- Early childhood educators and assistants
- Millwrights

ANTICIPATED WORKFORCE CHANGES IN 2025

HIRING IN 2025 *(79 responses)*

Respondents were further probed about whether they had already hired in 2025 (January to May 2025) as well as whether they planned to hire between June and December 2025.

Table 4: Already hired or plan to hire in 2025					
	Any number of employees	**1-9 employees**	**10-24 employees**	**25-49 employees**	**50+ employees**
Already hired in 2025	82%	70%	10%	2%	0%
Plan to hire in 2025	72%	56%	11%	4%	2%

REASONS FOR HIRING IN 2025 *(56 responses)*
The proportion by reason is very similar to the reasons provide for the hires in 2024. The only noticeable difference is that in 2024 respondents indicated hiring slightly more for "Filling existing vacancies".

Table 5: Reasons for new hires in 2025					
	Any number of employees	**1-9 employees**	**10-24 employees**	**25-49 employees**	**50+ employees**
Retirements	27%	27%	0%	0%	0%
Filling existing vacancies	79%	67%	7%	6%	0%
Growth/expansion	46%	36%	7%	2%	2%
Restructuring	7%	7%	0%	0%	0%
Technological changes	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%
Other	7%	7%	2%	0%	0%

OCCUPATIONS FOR WHICH RESPONDENTS HIRED OR PLAN TO HIRE IN 2025 *(51 responses)*

The occupations for which respondents had hired or expected to hire in 2025 were generally similar to those for which they had hired in 2024, notably among the larger categories: labourers, sales associates and customer service representatives, administrative staff, managers and executive directors. Engineers and instructors, teachers or professors were also mentioned on top of the list.

HIRING CHALLENGES

BIGGEST HIRING CHALLENGES *(73 responses)*

Respondents were asked about the challenges they face when hiring. Table 6 illustrates the biggest challenges employers face when recruiting new employees. The two biggest challenges were that applicants lacked the skills required (59%) and the low number of applicants (52%).

Table 6: Biggest challenges when recruiting new employees

Challenge	Percent
Applicants lack the skills required	59%
Low number of applicants	52%
Applicants lack work experience required	45%
Applicants lack the qualifications required	41%
Competition from other employers	38%
Applicants lack soft skills (communication, work ethics, etc.)	37%
Compensation expectations	33%
Location challenges	30%
Other	7%

The “Other” category included: not having incentives for applicants to move to northern communities, people not showing up to work, and lack of physical fitness, - addiction (smokers) incompatible with the work conditions and environment.

48%
Identify housing as a challenge

OTHER CHALLENGES TO EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION: *(73 responses)*

Respondents were further asked about other factors which affected their ability to recruit and retain employees. Responses were as follows:

- Lack of houses or apartments to rent (48%)
- Lack of public transportation (27%)
- Lack of daycare (21%)
- Lack of houses to purchase (14%)
- Lack of reliable and affordable high-speed internet (1%)

HARD TO FILL POSITIONS *(70 responses)*

Respondents were next asked to list the occupations that are the hardest to fill for their business or organization. The most commonly cited occupations were:

- Managers and executive directors
- Sales associate and customer service representatives
- Millwrights
- Supervisors and superintendents
- Electricians
- Administrative staff, clerical
- Instructors, teachers or professors
- Labourers
- Mechanics
- Heavy equipment operators
- Maintenance workers
- Welders, welders-fitters or machine operators

ADAPTING WHEN VACANCIES CANNOT BE FILLED *(73 responses)*

Respondents were asked how they adapt or will adapt where they cannot fill all their vacancies, for each of 2024 and 2025. Table 7 shows their responses as a percentage of all those who replied to this question.

As shown in Table 7, having current staff work more overtime is the most common way of coping with unfilled vacancies, followed by redistribution of work and cross training for current employees.

Table 7: Strategies to adapt when vacancies cannot be filled

	2024	2025
More overtime for current staff	55%	55%
Redistribution of work	43%	44%
Cross training for current employees	37%	43%
Subcontract/Outsourcing	23%	30%
Offer job placements and internships	12%	14%
Access staffing agencies	10%	7%
Diversify our workforce	14%	14%
Offering remote work options	14%	14%
Implementation of technology/automation	10%	16%
Reduction of our workforce	8%	4%
Other	12%	11%

In the "Other" category, the following were mentioned:

- Recruiting from other communities
- Reposting positions
- Owners doing overtime
- Limit the range of services offered and only accept contracts that can be fulfilled.
- Reducing working hours

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING PRACTICES

METHODS USED TO RECRUIT CANDIDATES: *(72 responses)*

Table 8 shows the selections of respondents from a list which was provided expressed as a percentage of all those who answered this question, for each of 2024 and 2025.

Around two-thirds of the employers are using employee referral, free online job boards/online posting and social medias, while a large majority rely on word-of-mouth to recruit job candidates. More than half are using local employment service agencies and their own business/organization's website

Table 8: Recruitment methods used to find candidates for job vacancies

	2024	2025
Word of mouth, personal contacts, referrals, and informal networks	78%	81%
Employee referrals	64%	61%
Free online job boards/online postings	65%	71%
Social media (Facebook, LinkedIn)	61%	71%
Our business/organization's own website	50%	60%
Local employment service agencies	57%	61%
Job fairs	33%	32%
On-site job signs or posters	33%	36%
Paid online job boards/online postings	38%	38%
Onsite recruitment at schools, colleges and universities	25%	28%
Print and online news media	25%	25%
Trade or professional publications or websites	18%	19%
Radio ads	10%	7%
Executive search companies/Headhunters	8%	7%
Other	6%	3%

In the "Other" category, respondents mentioned a method already mentioned above or not recruiting at all.

AREAS WHERE RESPONDENTS RECRUIT (*72 responses)*

Respondents were asked where they search for new employees by choosing as many options as applied from a list of five: within their community/district, in other Northern Ontario communities/districts, in Southern Ontario, in other provinces, or internationally.

- 97% recruit within their community/district
- 56% recruit from other Northern Ontario regions
- 36% recruit in Southern Ontario
- 25% from other provinces
- 15% said they also recruited internationally.

USE OF LOCAL EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Forty-six respondents, representing 64% in the answers in Table 8, said they had used local employment services.

When asked to name the service they had made use of, the most frequently named service was local employment services. A number cited Indeed, headhunters, staffing agency, their own website, Enterprise Temiskaming, local newspaper or the parish bulletin.

64%

of the respondents said that they had used local employment services

Others mentioned a specific program, such as Canada-Ontario Jobs Grant, Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation, student wage subsidy and job placement incentives.

SKILLS REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING *(70 responses)*

Respondents were asked to select the five most important skills from a list of thirteen that they look for when hiring. The percentage responses of all respondents to this question are listed in Table 9.

Table 9: Most important skills when hiring

Skill	Percent
Work ethics, dedication and dependability	80%
Customer service	50%
Self-motivation and independence	50%
Teamwork and interpersonal skills	47%
Willingness to learn	46%
Oral and written communication	37%
Time management and organization skills	36%
Ability to follow instructions	33%
Professionalism	33%
Technical	31%
Problem solving and creativity	30%
Computer literacy	19%
Analytical/Research skills	9%

The 'TOP 5" skills that employers look for when hiring:

1. Work ethic, dedication and dependability
2. Customer service
3. Self-motivation and independence
4. Teamwork and interpersonal skills
5. Willingness to learn

SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEE TRAINING *(70 responses)*

Employers were asked if they provide or support training for their employees. Respondents were once again given a list of options and could choose as many that apply. In response to this question:

- 69% of respondents said they fund employee training or education (either fully or in part)
- 50% offer flexible work schedules
- 46% supply information on opportunities available
- 20% use government hiring and training incentives
- 10% replied other.

In the "other" category, 2 respondents stated that they do not provide training. Other respondents mentioned offering training pending availability, having an online training platform, and outsourcing training to be offered on site.

SOURCES OF TRAINING *(70 responses)*

Respondents were asked to choose as many responses as relevant to their business regarding common sources of training for their employees. Options and responses include:

- On-the-job training (87%)
- Peer-to-peer training (57%)
- Online webinars/workshops (51%)
- College (40%)
- Industry professional association (39%)
- Distance/online education (30%)
- University (19%)
- Private trainer (14%)
- Adult learning centre (9%)
- Local union (6%)
- School board (3%).

87%

of the respondents identify on-the-job training as the most common source of training for employees

OBSTACLES TO TRAINING *(70 responses)*

A list of obstacles was provided, and respondents were asked to choose all obstacles that were relevant to their business:

- Cost of training (60%)
- Distance to travel for training (50%)
- Loss of trained employees to other employers (39%)
- Relevant programs not offered in the region (37%)
- Loss of productivity during training periods (34%)
- Lack of awareness of training programs available (23%)
- Lack of awareness of support for employee training (20%)
- Lack of awareness of legislated training requirements (4%)
- Other (7%).

In the “Other” category, respondents mentioned the inability to replace employees on shiftà, and no training available for necessary company related basic needs.

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS *(70 responses)*

Respondents were asked whether they provide employment experience opportunities to students and youth. The survey provided 12 categories of experiences, including paid and unpaid coop placements for high school, college or university students, paid and unpaid internships, high school and college apprenticeships, summer jobs and part-time jobs.

Table 10: EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS

Employment experience opportunity	Percent
Summer jobs for students	61%
Unpaid high school Coop placements	40%
Part-time jobs for students	33%
Unpaid college Coop placements	23%
College apprenticeships	21%
Paid college Coop placements	19%
Paid high school Coop placements	17%
Paid internship	17%
High school apprenticeships	16%
Unpaid university Coop placements	14%
Paid university Coop placements	11%
Unpaid internship	6%

Of all respondents who answered this question, 86% provided at least one of these opportunities and 46% provided at least three such opportunities.

12 respondents mentioned not offering any of these opportunities to students and youths.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES *(66 responses)*

Respondents were asked about the impact of technological and environmental changes on their industry, both currently and in the future. Thirty-two percent said that none of these changes had a current impact and 21% mentioned it will not have a future impact on their business or organization. There were five technological/environmental changes identified by 23% to 30% of the respondents as having a current impact, namely: cloud-based technology, cyber-security, digitalization, artificial intelligence and real time data collection, management and analysis.

And for future impact, the following were identified: artificial intelligence, digitalization, cyber-security and cloud-based technology.

Five issues showed larger increases in concern for their future impact:

1. Artificial intelligence
2. Autonomous equipment
3. Electrification
4. Digitalization
5. Automation and robotics

Table 11: Impact of Technological and environmental changes on the workforce

Changes	Current	Future
No impact on our business/organization	32%	21%
Cloud-based technology	30%	23%
Digitalization	27%	32%
Cyber-security	29%	24%
Real time data collection, management and analysis	23%	21%
Artificial intelligence	27%	35%
Automation and robotics	15%	20%
Autonomous equipment	8%	14%
Environmental regulations	20%	17%
Electrification	6%	6%
Climate change	18%	21%
Other	6%	5%

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES ON THE WORKFORCE

(66 responses)

When asked about what impact these technological and environmental changes will have specifically on their workforce. The biggest impact predicted by respondents was on the need for upskilling and reskilling:

- Our workforce will need continuous upskilling or reskilling (47%)
- Our workforce will need advanced computer skills (32%)
- Workforce productivity will improve (27%)
- Our workforce will decrease – some jobs will be lost (20%)
- Health and safety requirements will change (20%)
- Our workforce will need data management skills (20%)
- Our workforce will need project management skills (17%)
- It will facilitate remote work arrangements (17%)
- Our workforce will increase – new jobs will be created (15%)
- Other (9%) respondents who chose this mostly said they did not know or that it was not applicable to them. Other responses were all of the above and the changes pose a higher data security risk in a highly confidential fields (ie use of AI).

Respondents were invited to name the occupations which they thought would be most impacted by technological and environmental change. The most common responses were the following:

- Sales associates, customer service representatives
- Managers, executive directors
- Administrative staff, clerical
- Personal support workers, home support workers
- Supervisors, superintendents.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES MOVING FORWARD

CURRENT AND FUTURE IMPACT OF TARIFFS *(64 responses)*

Given the current news, regarding the US tariffs, respondents were asked about the impact that tariffs have or could have on their business or organization. Table 12 shows the percentage of respondents selecting each impact, both currently and in the future.

In most instances, a higher percentage of respondents are expecting a future impact than they currently experience, which is understandable since clarity on those tariffs were still unpredictable at the time of the survey (May 2025).

The need to raise prices, restricting spending due to uncertainty and supply chain disruptions are the three most common impacts selected. While fewer are currently delaying growth or expansion plans, a little more than a quarter (28%) expect that will be the case in the future.

Table 12: Current and future impact of US tariffs on business or organization

Nature of impact	Current	Future
Our supply chain will be impacted	38%	49%
We will have to raise our prices	31%	42%
We will have to restrict spending because of uncertainty	34%	41%
No impact on our business/organization	27%	16%
We will delay growth/expansion plans	14%	28%
We will have difficulty honoring existing contracts	19%	22%
We will reduce our hours, staff and operations	3%	16%
Other	11%	11%

Among those who chose “Other,” respondents mentioned potential losses in tourism, customer growth, and not knowing how bad it will impact if there is a raise in lumber tariff.

CONCLUSION

The Northeast Ontario Employee Recruitment, Training and Retention Survey was administered to employers in the Far Northeast Training Board area during the month of May 2025. In total, 85 employers in the Timiskaming area started the survey and while there was some drop-off in respondents as the survey progressed, around three-quarters completed the survey.

While this report reflects the insight of those who responded to the survey, it nevertheless confirms a number of workforce issues related to recruitment, training and retention that have been fairly consistent across the region over the past years.

More specifically, it is not surprising that three quarter view workforce issues as the biggest challenge for their business or organization in the next three years, either the challenge of recruiting or retaining employees, concerns regarding the large number of retirements, and worry that there are not enough qualified job candidates to fill labour needs.

That being said, many felt genuine optimism for the local economy because of growth opportunities, including high expectations arising from expansion of the mining sector. And while new technologies pose new challenges, these advancements are also viewed as tools to increase productivity and expand their businesses.

In closing, while the insights gained from this survey highlight what we might already understand about local workforce needs and issues, they also show that employers appear to be resilient and optimistic about the local economy and new paths moving forward. They see growth opportunities, are seeking new markets and are looking at ways to improve their business.

All of the topics discussed here are important as we move into the future to ensure a prosperous and growing economy with a robust workforce that is ready, trained and balanced to meet the needs of employers.