



INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS BRIEF

2002 EMPLOYER SURVEY STUDY

In spring 2003, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness surveyed 263 employers of Tidewater Community College (TCC) graduates from the class of 2002. Every two years the survey is conducted for purposes of program assessment and to gain knowledge of employers' perceptions of graduates' skills and professional behaviors, as well as to rate TCC's occupational/technical training and general education preparation. Highlights of the study are provided below.

- Employers of 2002 graduates indicated that TCC training adequately prepared graduates in nine areas of knowledge and skills. The percentages range from 79% (math skills) to 95% (understanding written information) across the nine areas. Similar to the 2000 Employer Survey, understanding written information was rated the highest (95% more than adequate or adequate) and showed a 7% increase over the previous Employer Survey rating of 88%. Among the remaining eight categories, there was evidence of improvement in writing skills (88% in 2002 vs. 82% in 2000) and solving problems (92% in 2002 vs. 89% in 2000).
- Although the vast majority rated math skills as adequate (79%), this area continued to be the lowest rated area. Employers were generally positive about employee's knowledge and skills. However, two skill areas most often cited for needing improvement were solving problems (5%) and thinking creatively (5%).
- Employers were overwhelmingly satisfied with graduates' professional behaviors in terms of cooperation with others, initiative, dependability, and decision-making skills. Satisfactory ratings ranged from 89% to 95% for each area mentioned above. Similar to results of the 2000 Survey, the area most often cited for "needs improvement" was decision-making skills (9%).
- Occupational/technical training was rated excellent or good by 92% of the respondents (51% excellent, 41% good), and general education was rated excellent or good by 93% of the respondents (52% excellent, 41% good). Compared to the previous Employer Survey, a greater percentage of the 2002 respondents rated general education as excellent (52% compared to 46%).
- Ninety-five percent (95%) of employers rated the overall job performance of TCC graduates as either excellent (59%) or good (36%). There was no difference in the ratings of graduates from college transfer versus occupational/technical degree programs. Further proof of employer satisfaction is the finding that 98% of the employers indicated they would hire a TCC graduate from the same program if an appropriate position became available, up from 95% in 2000.
- TCC's successful efforts in workforce development are evidenced by the comment of one employer who stated, "TCC continues to be a good resource for us. Thanks!"