

## SURVEY OF OCCUPATIONAL AND SKILLS SHORTAGES

*In top business enterprises in Metro Manila  
(Second of a four-part series)*

### Background

This issue of LABSTAT Updates which discusses the two categories of "hard-to-fill" occupations is the second of a four-part series based on statistics culled from the results of the Survey on Occupational and Skills Shortages conducted by the Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics (BLES) from April to July 2008 covering large business enterprises based in Metro Manila. A total of 667 enterprises participated in this survey out of the 829 initial samples selected or a response rate of 80.5%. The samples were drawn through stratified simple random sampling from the 2007 List of Top 5,000 Corporations in the Philippines as compiled by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The survey reference period was 2007.



### Two Forms of "Hard-to-Fill" Occupations

- On the overall, two categories of "hard-to-fill" occupations can be distinguished: (1) occupations with **few applicants** reflecting supply shortage; and (2) occupations **with large applicants**, but with few qualified ones, reflecting excess supply or surplus. In either case, the problem of **jobs and skills mismatch** is often the culprit.
- Occupations with few applicants depict a situation where not

enough professionals or skilled graduates are available to fill all the jobs being created in a particular occupation. This holds true for a number of occupations such as pharmacists; ship and aircraft controllers and technicians; maritime transport supervisors; and heavy truck and lorry drivers. Also included in this category are 8 unit groups of occupations which have fewer than 15 applicants per 10 vacancies as shown in Table 6.

**TABLE 6 – Hard-to-Fill Occupations With Few Applicants  
in Large Enterprises in Metro Manila: 2007**

Occupation Title	Number of Vacancies	Number of Applicants	Number of Applicants Per 10 Vacancies	Median Duration of Recruitment (in months)
1. Pharmacists	29	20	7	8.5
2. Ship and aircraft controllers and technicians	39	30	8	4.0
3. Machinery mechanics and fitters	19	16	8	12.0
4. Production managers in agriculture, fishery and forestry	11	9	8	7.5
5. Maritime transport supervisors	3	3	10	4.0
6. Heavy truck and lorry drivers	42	47	11	2.5
7. Medical doctors	8	9	11	10.0
8. Motor vehicle mechanics	10	11	11	4.5
9. Building and related electricians	9	10	11	4.0
10. Well drillers and borers	5	6	12	5.0
11. Air transport service supervisors	11	14	13	8.5
12. Welders and flamecutters	85	122	14	6.5

*Source: Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics, Survey of Occupational and Skills Shortages.*

- Of greater importance is the second category which consists of occupations where the number of applicants is disproportionately large in relation to the number of vacancies.
- For this category of occupations, employers often experienced recruitment difficulties amid the large number of applicants. This is so because most applicants do not have the specific skills or area of specialization that match the qualifications or competencies employers are looking for.
- Jobs and skills mismatch occurred for many reasons. Among them are the shortcomings of the educational system to keep up with the changing skills demand of the industries and the inadequate labor market information that can guide parents and students on career choices that will ensure good jobs after graduation.
- Survey results revealed the presence of 18 unit groups of occupations in the “hard-to-fill” list with applicant-to-vacancy ratio exceeding 100 applicants per 10 vacancies. Beyond this is another list that contains 33 unit groups of occupations with applicant-to-vacancy ratio ranging from 50 to 100 applicants per 10 vacancies. Some of these occupations are found in Table 7. As expected, call center agents are included in the list as well as computer programmers, electrical engineers, architects, accountants and auditors, to mention a few.

**TABLE 7 – Selected Hard-to-Fill Occupations With Large Number of Applicants in Large Enterprises in Metro Manila: 2007**

Occupation Title	Number of Vacancies	Number of Applicants	Number of Applicants Per 10 Vacancies	Median Duration of Recruitment (in months)
<b>Managers, Managing Proprietors and Supervisors</b>				
1. Operation managers in construction	7	150	214	11.5
2. Supply and distribution managers	3	52	173	8.0
<b>Professionals</b>				
1. Computer programmers	83	969	117	8.0
2. Electrical engineers	147	1,338	91	9.5
3. Systems analysts and designers	210	1,180	56	8.0
4. Architects	22	265	120	2.0
5. Accountants and auditors	164	928	57	8.0
<b>Technical and Associate Professionals</b>				
1. Technical and commercial sales representatives	285	1,661	58	4.0
2. Administrative secretaries	59	434	74	5.5
3. Safety, health and quality inspectors	57	355	62	5.5
<b>Clerks</b>				
1. Stock clerks	37	1,024	277	6.5
2. Receptionist and information clerks (call center agents)	1,220	5,650	46	7.5
3. Cashiers and ticket clerks	568	2,095	37	7.5
<b>Trades and Related Workers</b>				
1. Linemen, line installers and cable splicers	304	1,002	33	9.5

Source: Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics, Survey of Occupational and Skills Shortages.

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