

SURVEY OF OCCUPATIONAL AND SKILLS SHORTAGES

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

Background

This issue of LABSTAT Updates is the third 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.

This issue presents statistics on "easy-to-fill" occupations and those occupations that appeared in both the "hard-to-fill" and "easy-to-fill" lists.



"EASY-TO-FILL" OCCUPATIONS

- As a general rule, "easy-to-fill" occupations are characterized by a large pool of applicants competing for few vacant positions. This type of vacancy was present in three of every five respondents (60.4% or 230) with

reported job openings in 2007. This proportion was reported highest in mining and quarrying (72.7%); agriculture, fishery and forestry (71.4%); and hotels and restaurants (71.1%).

TABLE 8 - Distribution of Respondents with Easy-to-Fill Occupations in Large Enterprises in Metro Manila by Industry: 2007

| Sector/Industry | Total Samples | With Vacancy | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | Total | | Easy to Fill | |
| | | No. | % | No. | % |
| ALL SECTORS | 667 | 381 | 57.1 | 230 | 60.4 |
| AGRICULTURE, FISHERY & FORESTRY | 12 | 7 | 58.3 | 5 | 71.4 |
| INDUSTRY | 200 | 87 | 43.5 | 51 | 58.6 |
| Mining and Quarrying | 21 | 11 | 52.4 | 8 | 72.7 |
| Manufacturing | 109 | 46 | 42.6 | 30 | 65.2 |
| Electricity, Gas & Water Supply | 23 | 11 | 47.8 | 6 | 54.5 |
| Construction | 47 | 19 | 40.4 | 7 | 36.8 |
| SERVICES | 455 | 287 | 63.1 | 174 | 60.6 |
| Wholesale & Retail Trade | 163 | 85 | 52.1 | 46 | 54.1 |
| Hotels & Restaurants | 46 | 38 | 82.6 | 27 | 71.1 |
| Transport, Storage & Communications | 45 | 30 | 66.7 | 19 | 63.3 |
| Financial Intermediation | 53 | 41 | 77.4 | 27 | 65.9 |
| Real Estate, Renting & Business Services | 71 | 40 | 56.3 | 24 | 60.0 |
| Private Education | 19 | 14 | 73.7 | 8 | 57.1 |
| Health & Social Work | 21 | 18 | 85.7 | 11 | 61.1 |
| Other Community, Social & Personal Service Activities | 37 | 21 | 56.8 | 12 | 57.1 |

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

- More specifically, a total of 144 unit groups of occupations were identified in this survey as “easy to fill”. This figure corresponds to a total of 7,563 vacant positions the details of which are shown in List 5 to be made available at BLES website (<http://www.bles.dole.gov.ph>). Said vacancies consisted largely (63.9%) of occupations below the levels of managers and professionals. Table 9 shows the top unit groups of occupations perceived by respondents as “easy to fill” in each major occupation group.
- Receptionists and information clerks garnered the biggest number of applicants per 10 vacancies (269) – this suggests that on the average, there were 269 applicants for every 10 vacant positions. It was followed by car, taxi and van drivers (116); debt collectors and related workers (105); cooks (87); and administrative secretaries (86). Other occupations in the list were accounting and bookkeeping clerks (85); technical and commercial sales representatives (84); professional nurses (79); and linemen, line installers and cable splicers (79).

**TABLE 9 - Top Easy-to-Fill Occupations in Large Enterprises
in Metro Manila by Major Occupation Group: 2007**

| Occupation Title | Number of Vacancies | Number of Applicants | Vacancy- Applicant Ratio |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Managers, Managing Proprietors and Supervisors | | | |
| 1. Sales and marketing managers | 62 | 265 | 43 |
| 2. Operations managers in restaurants and hotels | 39 | 47 | 12 |
| Professionals | | | |
| 1. Professional nurses | 119 | 946 | 79 |
| 2. College, university and higher education teaching professionals | 128 | 223 | 17 |
| Technical and Associate Professionals | | | |
| 1. Technical and commercial sales representatives | 346 | 2,900 | 84 |
| 2. Administrative secretaries | 103 | 886 | 86 |
| 3. Electrical engineering technicians | 50 | 261 | 52 |
| Clerks | | | |
| 1. Receptionists and information clerks | 1,098 | 29,529 | 269 |
| 2. Accounting and bookkeeping clerks | 341 | 2,894 | 85 |
| 3. Debt collectors and related workers | 218 | 2,280 | 105 |
| Service Workers | | | |
| 1. Waiters, waitresses and bartenders | 1,346 | 8,452 | 63 |
| 2. Cooks | 590 | 5,135 | 87 |
| Trades and Related Workers | | | |
| 1. Linemen, line installers and cable splicers | 206 | 1,618 | 79 |
| 2. Aircraft engine mechanics and fitters | 140 | 300 | 21 |
| Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers | | | |
| 1. Car, taxi and van drivers | 91 | 1,053 | 116 |
| 2. Machine-tool operators | 158 | 198 | 13 |
| Laborers and Unskilled Workers | | | |
| 1. Helpers and cleaners in offices, hotels and other establishments | 130 | 743 | 57 |
| 2. Domestic helpers and cleaners | 37 | 213 | 58 |

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

Professional Nurses: a Shortage or Surplus?

- Of interest to note is the inclusion of professional nurses in the list of "easy-to-fill" occupations. A closer examination of the survey data revealed that some vacancies for nurses also appeared in the list of "hard-to-fill" occupations. However, comparing the two

data sets would validate the observation of a "surplus" of nurses rather than a "shortage". This is so because the number of nurses in the "easy-to-fill" list far exceeded the number in the "hard-to-fill" list.

**Table 10 – Vacancies for Professional Nurses
in Large Enterprises in Metro Manila: 2007**

| Occupation Title | Easy-to-Fill List | | Hard-to-Fill List | |
|---------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| | Vacancies | Applicants | Vacancies | Applicants |
| Professional nurses | 119 | 946 | 54 | 44 |

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

- More specifically, a total of 119 job openings for *professional nurses* was reported in this survey as “easy to fill” for which there were 946 applicants. These figures mean a ratio of about eight (8) applicants for every vacant position. Some 54 nursing positions were reported as “hard to fill”. These vacancies attracted only 44 applicants. A closer look at the data revealed that the probable reason could be the low salary offered by the employers. This finding confirms the observation that there exists now a “*surplus*” of professional nurses in the country.

OCCUPATIONS IN THE MIXED LIST

- Another list of occupations generated from the survey is a list that contains a set of occupations that appeared in both the “hard-to-fill” and “easy-to-fill” occupation lists (List 6 to be made available at BLES website). The list includes a total of 86 unit groups of occupations and has been very useful in deciding whether a particular occupation is hard to fill or easy to fill.
- On the overall, about two-thirds (65.2%) of the occupations in the “hard-to-fill” list are found in the “mixed list”. This proportion varies across major occupation groups but is particularly high among managers (67.7%), professionals (71.9%), and technical and associate professionals (64.3%) and particularly low among trade and related workers (35.7%) and plant and machine operators and assemblers (44.4%).
- Of greater importance, however, are 44 unit groups of occupations that are found only in the “hard-to-fill” list as they closely approximate the definition of what many considered as supply “*shortage*”. These occupations as shown in Table 11 are by nature mostly unique or peculiar to a sector and not a numerically large occupational group within the total workforce. Nevertheless, they are considered vital and key to the success of the business.

**TABLE 11 - Occupations Found Only in the "Hard-to-Fill" List,
Large Enterprises in Metro-Manila: 2007**

| Major Occupation Group | Type of Occupations |
|---|--|
| 1. Managers, Managing Proprietors and Supervisors | Sales supervisors in wholesale trade; production and operations managers in transport, storage and communications; production and operations managers in agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishery; air transport service supervisors; directors and chief executives of corporations; supply and distribution managers; maritime transport service supervisors; production and operations managers in manufacturing; general managers/managing proprietors of restaurants; and road transport service supervisors. |
| 2. Professionals | Architects; geologists and geophysicists; librarians, archivists and curators; lawyers; chemists; optometrists and opticians; town planners and related professionals; and philologists, translators and interpreters. |
| 3. Technical and Associate Professionals | Ship and aircraft controllers and technicians; estate agents; broadcasting and telecommunications equipment; teaching associate professionals; mining and metallurgical engineering technicians; social work associate professionals; athletes and related workers; chemical engineering technicians; draftsmen; and travel consultants and organizers. |
| 4. Clerks | Telephone switchboard operators |
| 5. Trades and Related Workers | Agricultural or industrial –machinery mechanics and fitters; motor vehicle mechanics and related trades workers; plumbers, pipe fitters and other related workers; electronics fitters; building maintenance man; roofers; upholsterers and related workers; electrical mechanics and fitters; and compositors, typesetters and related workers. |
| 6. Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers | Bus drivers; well drillers and borers and related workers; crane, hoist and related plant operators; mining plant operators; and motorized farm and forestry plant operators. |
| 7. Laborers and Unskilled Workers | Building construction laborers |

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

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