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Alberta Chambers of Commerce

ALBERTA PERSPECTIVES

PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE ALBERTA LABOUR MARKET

A REPORT TO ALBERTA CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

September 2022

1

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

About the Research

OBJECTIVES

- This is the sixth survey of the Alberta public undertaken for Alberta Perspectives.
- This survey is the companion to the Hiring Intentions survey recently undertaken among Chamber members and members of related organizations. Where appropriate and the questions are similar, results from the employers' survey are shown.
- Like the Hiring Intentions survey, this research explores labour market issues, but from the public's perspective.
- Issues explored include:
  - Concerns regarding a recession;
  - Ease or not of finding work and why/why not easy;
  - Perceptions of staffing shortages and use of incentives;
  - Satisfaction with skills and confidence skills will continue to be relevant in the near future;
  - Skills most interested in acquiring, interest in acquiring, and preferred means to acquire skills;
  - Extent work/skills have changed over time and why;
  - Extent undertaken skills training, how frequently. and how skills were acquired; and
  - Issues relating to unemployment.

METHODOLOGY

- As in previous public surveys, the ACC made use of an online panel of 800 members living in Alberta who have agreed to complete a survey in return for an incentive.
- Respondents were screened to ensure they were either currently working or, if not, were either a homemaker/stay at home parent on maternity leave, unemployed and looking for work, or if retired had some interest in re-entering the work force. That is, only those with some potential to enter the workforce were included in the survey.
- One of the goals of the survey was to explore issues related to the long-term unemployed (defined as six months or more). However, few of those currently long-term unemployed and looking for work could be found by chance in the panel. This suggests that, in order to survey this population in sufficient numbers to be meaningful, specific screening questions would need to be developed and deployed in future public surveys.
- The public survey took place between August 2nd - 9th , 2022.

2

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Overview of Findings

- The idea of regular skills upgrading and new skills acquisition appears to be becoming part of the culture of many workplaces across the province. Much of this is initiated by employers as the most frequent source of upgrading /new skills acquisition occurs in the workplace.
- At the same time, most Albertans also appear to see the need for regular, and in some cases continuous, skills upgrading/acquisition.
- Even among those satisfied with their current skills or confident that their skills will be relevant over the next few years, there is an interest in upgrading/acquisition - again suggesting a commitment to this as a part of working life.
- There is some evidence that some of those who are not currently in the labour market made a choice to retire or cease looking for work because their skills were becoming outdated and, rather than seek to upgrade, chose to withdraw. This suggests that future research could explore ways to motivate some of this population to upgrade skills/acquire new skills as a way of, in part, relieving the pressure on a very tight labour market.
- Another area for future exploration is the fact that a large proportion of the workforce have upgraded skills or acquired new skills online and that interest in future skills upgrading/acquisition online is high. The nature of this online learning is unclear from this research, but may have implications for the quality of this learning and certification that should be examined in future surveys.

Key Findings

1

THERE HAS BEEN A DRAMATIC SHIFT OVER THE LAST YEAR IN THE ISSUES THAT CONCERN THE PUBLIC.

In all, between one-in five and one-quarter identify inflation and health care as the most pressing issue for them, replacing concerns about the economy overall as the top issue.

The dramatic improvement in the price of oil and gas, and the impact this has had on the provincial economy, is reflected in the drastic decline in this issue and as well compared with two years ago the decline in concern with exporting Alberta's oil and gas.

When asked directly about the risk of a recession in the province, a large majority believe this is at least somewhat likely and will have an impact on them and their situation.

2

THE PUBLIC AND BUSINESSES HAVE SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THE STATE OF THE LABOUR MARKET AND AVAILABILITY OF JOBS.

A majority of the public believe it is not easy to find the kind of work people are qualified for and that the labour market is not as tight as described by employers.

While a minority believe lots of jobs are available now, more take the view that it is not easy; not so much because jobs may not be available, but because employers looking for workers don't pay well and are seeking workers with a few years of experience.

Working Albertans are less likely than employers to believe that organizations will have a need for more employees in the next six months and are less likely to believe there will be staffing shortages. However, half do acknowledge there will be some shortage, but few see these as significant shortages.

Key Findings

3

SKILLS UPGRADING AND ACQUISITION APPEARS TO BE FREQUENT OR ONGOING FOR MANY IN THE LABOUR FORCE.

Two-thirds have undertaken skills training and upgrading, either on a continuous basis or multiple times.

Skills upgrading and acquisition appears to be a part of the work culture and, in fact, when asked what 'people' related (soft) skills they would most like to acquire, almost half make reference to continuous learning. This suggests it is becoming a mind set for many in the work force.

Related to this, there is a high level of interest in upgrading skills or acquiring new skills. Seven-in-ten say they are at least somewhat interested. Of interest; there is only a mild relationship between interest in acquiring skills and satisfaction with existing skills or confidence that existing skills will continue to be needed. This again suggests the idea of acquiring and renewing skills is now becoming deeply embedded in the culture of work.

4

THE EXTENT OF SKILLS UPGRADING AND/OR ACQUISITION MAY EXPLAIN WHY MOST APPEAR SATISFIED WITH THEIR EXISTING SKILLS.

In all, large majorities of the work force appear satisfied with their current skill set and are confident their skills will be relevant into the near future.

In all, only one-in-five are not satisfied. In fact, among this group, 81% are at least somewhat interested in upgrading skills and 32% are very interested, compared with 70% and 25%, respectively, among workers generally. This suggests that many among this group may well upgrade skills or acquire new skills.

When asked what kind of skills they would most like to acquire, the more technical skills in IT/technology and data related are most often cited.

Key Findings

WHILE IT IS CLEAR THAT SKILLS UPGRADING AND ACQUISITION ARE OFTEN ONGOING, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE KIND OF WORK UNDERTAKEN IS CHANGED.

Half of workers report that the work they do has not changed since they started working.

But, this group have as strong an interest in skills upgrading as those who have changed the work they do. This suggests, even within the same type of work, skills upgrading is taking place.

Among those reporting changing the type of work they do (41%), many have changed the type of work multiple times. The most important motive is new skills being acquired.

Of interest, those reporting being laid off or unemployed in the last five years are also more likely to be doing a different kind of work and this likely was necessitated by being unemployed or laid off and may well have led to new skills acquisition.

THE WORKPLACE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT LOCALE FOR SKILLS UPGRADING AND/OR ACQUISITION.

Workers most frequently report that this has been the source of upgrading and/or acquisition and this, together with online courses/programs, are the preferred places for future upgrading/acquisition.

The fact that workplace upgrading/acquisition is most frequently cited suggests that many employers are engaged in upgrading employees skills. However, this is less common in smaller workplaces.

The use of online courses and programs, and the interest in them for future skills upgrading or acquisition, suggests that this is becoming a major way for skills to be upgraded and may raise questions about the quality and the certification (if any) being provided.

What is also of interest is the infrequent mention of post- secondary institutions as sources of skills acquisition/upgrading.

7

ALMOST ONE-THIRD OF ALBERTANS REPORT BEING UNEMPLOYED OR LAID OFF IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS.

In all, a quarter of those currently working and over half of those not currently in the labour force report being unemployed/laid off in the last five years.

Many in this situation report that they are or were unemployed for six months or more, but in many cases it appears that the person chose to retire or no longer seek work. Given the tight labour market, persuading some of these former workers to return to the labour force may help ease this problem.

However, some of the reasons for being unemployed also relate to skills, with one-third saying that there are few jobs available for the skills they have. This suggests there continues to be workers who may need skills upgrading and who, for whatever reason, are not getting it.

3

DETAILED FINDINGS

3a

ISSUES AND RECESSION RELATED

Health care and inflation have become the dominant concerns of Albertans supplanting other issues, such as the provincial economy and exporting Alberta's oil, in importance.

- Health care is especially important to seniors (33%), inflation is less important in Calgary and Edmonton (19%) than the rest of the province (28%), while Calgary residents are more likely to focus on climate change as an issue (9%) than those elsewhere in Alberta (4%).

Most important issue facing Alberta

	Jul '19	Jul '20	Jul '21	Jul '22	TOTAL Aug'22
Health care (access and quality)	12%	9%	13%	22%	24%
Inflation	-	-	-	24%	23%
Exporting Alberta's oil and gas	26%	17%	12%	7%	9%
Negative attitudes towards the oil and gas industry	-	-	-	7%	8%
Provincial economy	24%	25%	20%	7%	7%
Climate change/global warming	7%	3%	6%	5%	6%
Taxes	5%	2%	4%	4%	4%
Federal government relations	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%
Interest rates	-	-	-	3%	3%
Provincial deficit and debt	4%	6%	10%	2%	3%
Education (access and quality)	3%	5%	6%	3%	3%
Controlling provincial government spending	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Unemployment	9%	11%	10%	4%	1%
Public safety regarding COVID-19	-	12%	7%	2%	1%
Continued development of Alberta's coal resources	-	-	-	1%	1%
Regulatory burdens on business	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%

Q1. Which of the following do you believe to be the most important issue facing Alberta, that is the one you are personally most concerned about?
Base: Total sample (n=800)

In addition to concerns about inflation, a majority (84%) of Albertans expect a recession in the next year and that it will have an impact on them primarily by potentially forcing a limitation on their spending.

- Among those working, 40% say work could be slower or less of it, while a quarter feel they could lose their job (23%) or be laid off (23%).

Likelihood of Alberta experiencing recession in next year

	TOTAL
TOTAL LIKELY	84%
Very likely	34%
Somewhat likely	50%
Not too likely	15%
Not at all likely	1%
TOTAL NOT LIKELY	16%

Impact of recession on self and situation

	TOTAL
TOTAL MAJOR/SOMEWHAT IMPACT	72%
A major impact	27%
Somewhat of an impact	45%
Not too much of an impact	21%
No impact	3%
TOTAL NOT TOO MUCH/NO IMPACT	24%
Don’t know/not sure	4%

Ways recession would impact

	TOTAL
Might have to limit my spending	71%
Might be slower at work/less work	34%
Might not be able to pay loans or line of credit	32%
Members of my household could lose a job or be laid off	30%
Could lose my job	19%
Could be laid off	19%
Other	5%
Don't know/not sure	4%

Q2. How likely is it that Alberta will experience a recession in the next twelve months? Base: Total sample (n=800)
Q3. How much of an impact would a recession have on you and your situation? Base: Total sample (n=800)
Q4. In what way would a recession have an impact on you? (check all that apply) Base: Major or somewhat at Q3 (n=577)

3b

LABOUR FORCE AND SKILLS RELATED

While many employers report difficulty hiring workers, suggesting a tight labour market, this is not the view among the public. In fact, more believe it is difficult for people to find the work they are qualified for than feel it is easy (54% to 38%, respectively).

- The main reason given for it being easy is that there are lots of jobs available, while it is not easy because those looking for workers don't pay well, want workers with experience, are too picky about who they hire, or people don't have the needed skills.

Level of ease for qualified workers to find employment in province

	TOTAL
TOTAL EASY	**38%**
Very easy	**5%**
Somewhat easy	**33%**
Not too easy	**40%**
Not at all easy	**14%**
TOTAL NOT EASY	**54%**
Don't know/not sure	**8%**

Main Reason why it is "easy" to get employment

	TOTAL
Lots of jobs now available	**63%**
Most organizations looking for workers don't pay well	**11%**
Organizations want workers with a few years experience	**8%**
Many people don't have the skills employers are seeking	**6%**
Organizations are more picky about who they hire	**4%**
It's a long time since I was working	**3%**
Other	**3%**
Don't know/not sure	**2%**

Main Reason why it is "not easy" to get employment

	TOTAL
Most organizations looking for workers don't pay well	**28%**
Organizations want workers with a few years experience	**20%**
Organizations are more picky about who they hire	**17%**
Many people don't have the skills employers are seeking	**16%**
Lots of jobs now available	**3%**
It's a long time since I was working	**3%**
Other	**6%**
Don't know/not sure	**7%**

Those who say it is easy to find work include: those in management positions (49%) and those with a trade (46%).
Those less likely to say it is easy include: those not working (28%), those who have been unemployed in the last 5 years (23%), those reporting a disability (21%), those working as staff (34%), those of non-European origin (34%), and those very interested in upgrading their skills (31%).

Q5. How easy or difficult, do you imagine it is for people to find the kind of work they are qualified for in the province? Base: Total sample (n=800)
Q6. Which of the following comes closest to the main reason you believe it is (RESPONSE TO Q5) for people to find the kind of work they are qualified for? Base: Easy or Not easy at Q5 (Easy n=303, Not easy n=430)

While those working are less likely than businesses to believe their organization has a staffing shortage and that this is impacting production or sales, nonetheless 43% still report that they are experiencing at least a moderate staffing shortage and almost half (48%) believe this is having an impact.

- Those in management positions are somewhat more likely than other employees to believe their organization is facing a staffing shortage (50%) and that this is impacting sales and production (53%).

Change in number of employees at workplace in next 6 months

	TOTAL PUBLIC	Business
Will increase	18%	39%
Will decrease	16%	5%
Will stay the same	50%	49%
Don't know/not sure	16%	7%

Extent organization is experiencing staffing shortage

	TOTAL PUBLIC	Business
SIGNIFICANT/ MODERATE	43%	62%
Significant	14%	30%
Moderate	29%	32%
Mild	26%	18%
No shortage	23%	20%
MILD/NO SHORTAGE	49%	38%
Don't know/not sure	8%	-

Impact of staffing shortage in organization

	TOTAL PUBLIC	Business
SIGNIFICANT/ MODERATE	48%	71%
Significant impact	13%	33%
Moderate impact	35%	38%
Mild impact	31%	21%
No impact	14%	8%
MILD/NO IMPACT	45%	29%
Don't know/not sure	7%	-

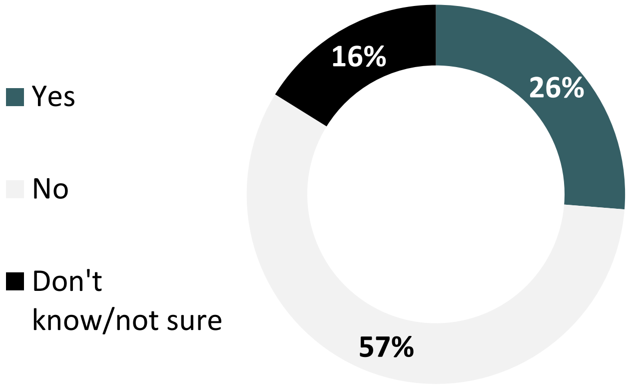
Q13. Aside from any seasonal fluctuations, do you anticipate any change in the number of people employed at your place of work in the next 6 months? Base: Public: Full or part-time worker (n=588), Business: (Jul '22 n=560)
Q14. To what extent is your organization currently experiencing a staffing shortage, that is you have insufficient qualified candidates to meet your organization's needs? Base: Public: Full or part-time worker (n=588), Business: (Jul '22 n=525)
Q15. To the best of your knowledge, how much of an impact, if any, is your staffing shortage causing in loss of production or sales opportunities? Base: Public: Full or part-time worker (n=404), Business: (Jul '22 n=390)

A quarter of those working believe their firm is offering incentives to attract potential employees and, unlike businesses, they are most likely to believe this includes raising wages or compensation.

- Those employees who believe their firm is facing significant or moderate shortages are somewhat more likely to say their firm is offering incentives (30%) as are those in management positions (31%).

Organization offering incentives to attract potential employees

TOTAL



Incentives being offered . . .

	TOTAL PUBLIC	Business
Raise wages or compensation	51%	45%
Provide flexible hours or work arrangements	35%	54%
Offer skills training	26%	50%
Expand benefits	25%	30%
Allow staff to work from home, all or partly	20%	23%
Make jobs full time rather than contract or part time	15%	22%
Covering relocation costs	11%	13%
Other, please specify	9%	7%
Nothing new, beyond normal offering to potential employees	10%	20%
Don't know	7%	4%

Q16. To the best of your knowledge is your organization offering incentives to attract potential employees. Base: Full or part-time worker (n=404)
Q17. What incentives, if any, is your organization offering or planning to offer to attract talent? (Please check all that apply) Base: Public: Full or part-time worker, and excludes No or DK at Q16 (n=106), Business: (Jul '22 n=371)

Most (75%) workers appear at least somewhat satisfied with their work-related skills and the same proportion believe their current skills are and will remain relevant over the next few years. But, one-in-five who are currently working appear less than satisfied (22%) and not confident (19%) regarding their skill set.

Satisfaction level with own work-related skills

	TOTAL	Currently working	Not working
TOTAL SATISFIED (7,6,5)	**75%**	75%	78%
Very satisfied (7)	**32%**	33%	31%
(6,5)	**43%**	42%	48%
(4)	**11%**	12%	7%
(3,2)	**7%**	7%	5%
Very dissatisfied (1)	**3%**	3%	4%
TOTAL DISSATISFIED (3,2,1)	**10%**	10%	9%
No opinion	**4%**	4%	5%

Confidence level in current skills being relevant and needed over next few years

	TOTAL	Currently working	Not working
TOTAL CONFIDENT (7,6,5)	**75%**	78%	64%
Very confident (7)	**39%**	41%	32%
(6,5)	**36%**	37%	32%
(4)	**12%**	11%	14%
(3,2)	**6%**	6%	9%
Not at all confident (1)	**3%**	2%	6%
TOTAL NOT CONFIDENT (3,2,1)	**9%**	8%	15%
No opinion	**4%**	3%	7%

Q18. How satisfied are you with the type of work-related skills work you have? Base: Total sample (n=799), Working (n=632), Not working (n=167)
Q19. How confident are you that the skill sets you have will continue to be relevant and needed over the next few years? Base: Total sample (n=799), Working (n=632), Not working (n=167)

Soft skills abilities, such as continuous learning and the development of leadership and decision-making, are in high demand as skills to upgrade, while the more technical skills in demand for upgrading or acquiring are IT/technology and data related in many ways (e.g. financial/accounting, data analysis, software/computer programming, analytics and quantitative skills and digital content development).

- Among those 35–44 years of age, leadership related skills (43%) are particularly important.

People skills/competencies would most like to upgrade

	TOTAL	Currently working	Not working
Continuous learning	**45%**	47%	36%
Leadership and decision-making skills	**33%**	34%	27%
Problem-solving skills	**23%**	23%	23%
Instructing, training counselling or teaching people	**21%**	21%	21%
Adaptability/resiliency	**18%**	19%	14%
Relationship-building skills	**18%**	18%	18%
Judgement and risk-management skills	**18%**	18%	16%
Negotiation	**17%**	19%	12%
Interpersonal skills	**17%**	17%	14%
Personal management	**16%**	16%	13%
Collaboration/team skills	**15%**	16%	10%
Commitment to quality	**11%**	11%	12%
Service orientation	**10%**	10%	10%
None, I am comfortable with the people skills I have	**11%**	9%	17%
Don't know/not sure	**7%**	6%	10%

Work-related technical skills/competencies would most like to upgrade or acquire

	TOTAL	Currently working	Not working
Information technology and data management	**25%**	23%	33%
Industry-specific technical skills	**25%**	23%	32%
Financial/accounting skills	**24%**	23%	27%
Data analysis	**21%**	21%	21%
Software/computer programming	**20%**	19%	25%
Analytics and quantitative analysis	**18%**	18%	17%
Digital content development	**16%**	15%	19%
Cyber security	**14%**	13%	16%
Basic business acumen	**13%**	13%	12%
Skilled trades (e.g. construction, welding, electrical)	**12%**	12%	14%
Coding for developing software and/or apps	**12%**	11%	14%
Experimentation and design thinking	**10%**	10%	9%
Manual dexterity (e.g. mending, repairing, assembling, constructing)	**6%**	6%	6%
Basic science and math skills	**4%**	3%	6%
Basic numeracy and literacy	**3%**	3%	3%
None, I am comfortable with the technical skills I have	**14%**	15%	11%
Don't know/not sure	**9%**	9%	9%

Q21. Thinking about the work-related skills people skills and competencies, which, if any, would you most like to upgrade? (Please check all that apply) Base: Interested at Q20 (n=549), Working (n=448), Not working (n=101)
Q22. Which of the following work-related technical skills and competencies, if any, would you most like to upgrade or acquire? (Please select all that apply) Base: Interested at Q20 (n=549), Working (n=448), Not working (n=101)

For four-in-ten of the population, the kind of work they have undertaken has changed since they started working and for many this has occurred multiple times. The main reasons for these changes are mostly related to learning/acquiring new skills and promotions.

- Work changes and their number are highly age related and increase steadily with age. By age 55 – 64, 58% report they are doing a different kind of work since they started working and, of this group, half (48%) report having changed the type of work they do at least four times.
- Level of education also appears implicated in changing the type of work undertaken. Those with a high school or college education are more likely to be doing the same kind of work compared with those with a university education (59% to 46%, respectively). But, those who report being unemployed in the last five years are among the least likely to be doing the same type of work (37%).

Kind of work you do has changed over time since started working

	TOTAL
Doing much the same kind of work	51%
Doing a different kind of work	41%
Not been working lately	4%
Don’t know/not sure	4%

Among those most likely to be doing a different kind of work are those reporting being unemployed (49%) or laid off (45%) compared with those not unemployed or laid off (39%).

Number of times kind of work has changed over career

	TOTAL
Once	12%
Twice	18%
Three times	33%
Four times	17%
Five to nine times	17%
Ten or more times	3%

Main reasons for changing the kind of work you do

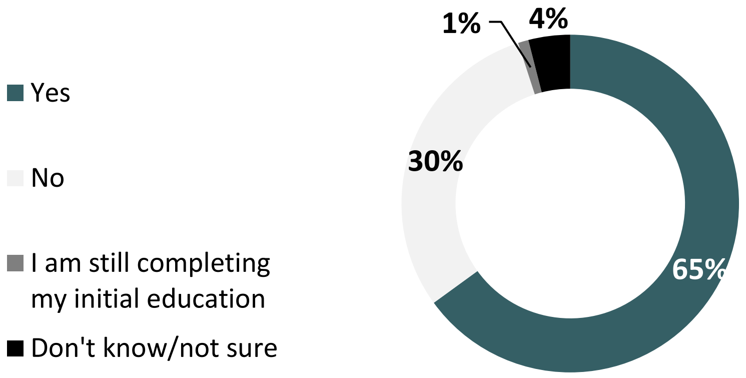
	TOTAL
Learnt/acquired new skills	52%
Promotions	35%
Did not like the kind of work I was doing	24%
Previous industry/sector has shrunk in size	16%
Skills were out of date	5%
Changed jobs	5%
Changed location	2%
Family situation has changed	1%
Acquisition/merger	1%
Technology changes	1%
Other	1%
Don't know/not sure	3%

Q23. Since you first started working, have you been using the same basic set of skills, doing the same kind of work, even if you may have changed workplaces, or has the kind of work you do changed over time? Base: Has had a job at Q7 (n=787)
Q24. How many times has the kind of work you do changed over your career? Base: Doing a different kind of work at Q23 (n=323)
Q25. And what has been the main reasons for changing the kinds of work you do? (Please check all that apply) Base: Doing a different kind of work at Q23 (n=323)

Two-thirds of the population report having undertaken some form of skills training/upgrading since completing their initial education and doing this multiple times. For some, this is an ongoing process.

- Skills training/upgrading is again heavily age related. By age 55 - 64, 75% report skills training/upgrading.
- The extent of skills training/upgrading also seems influenced by the type of work undertaken. Those most likely to report training/upgrading are in management positions (75%) professionals (75%) or in supervisory roles (72%), while those in customer service roles are the least likely to report upgrading/acquisition (60%)

Undertaken skills training/upgrading since completing initial education



Number of times changed or upgraded skills

	TOTAL
Once	13%
Twice	16%
Three times	15%
Four times	6%
Five or more times	11%
Annually	5%
It is ongoing	28%
Don't know/not sure	6%

Q27. Since completing your initial education, whether it was high school, an apprenticeship, college or university have you undertaken any skills training/upgrading since, this could be at work or online or at a post-secondary institution or some other way? Base: Completed initial education (n=788)

Q28. How many times have you changed or upgraded your skills? Base: Yes at Q27 (n=516)

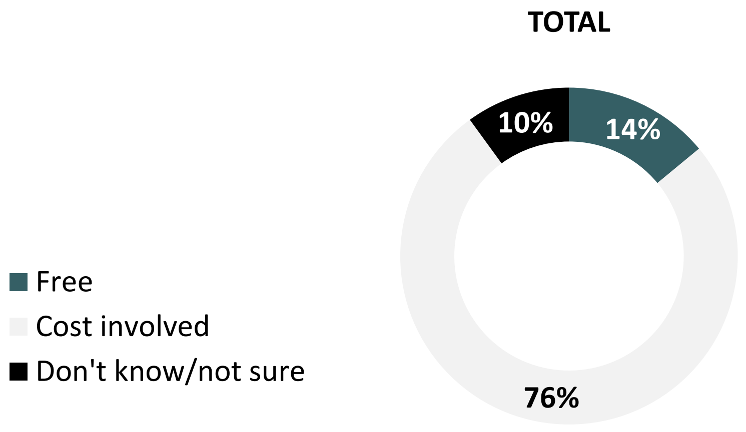
On the job and online (largely paid for rather than being free) are the two most frequently used means of skills training/upgrading. Some also report learning on their own or through a professional association. Universities and colleges are also cited, but less frequently.

- On the job training seems less common among small businesses. Among those with fewer than 10 employees, only 53% reported on the job training. However, for organizations of this size, training through a professional association is cited quite frequently (38%).

Ways skills acquisition/upgrading undertaken

	TOTAL
On the job/at work	**63%**
An online course/program	**48%**
I taught/learnt on my own	**33%**
Through my professional association	**30%**
A university	**20%**
A private college or training provider	**16%**
A community college	**14%**
Other	**2%**
Don't know/not sure	**1%**

Online training/course free or cost involved



Q29. How was this skills acquisition/upgrading undertaken? (Please check all that apply) Base: Yes at Q27 (n=516)
Q30. Was this online training/course free or was a cost involved? Base: Online course/program taken at Q29 (n=246)

Interest is high (70%) in upgrading/acquiring new skills, with one-quarter saying they are ‘very’ interested. When asked to identify where they wanted to complete this upgrading/acquisition, online or at work were preferred.

- There is only a mild relationship between interest in skills upgrading/acquisition and satisfaction with their own work-related skills or confidence in the relevance of existing skills. This suggests that the desire to upgrade or acquire new skills is not being driven by lack of satisfaction or confidence with existing skills, but other factors.
- Further, those who are doing the same kind of work since they started working have the same level of interest as those doing a different kind of work, suggesting that interest in acquiring new skills is not limited to those who have changed the kind of work they do. This suggests that even staying with the same basic kind of work can involve skills upgrading and an interest and desire for upgrading.

Level of interest in upgrading skills or acquiring new work-related skills

	TOTAL	Currently working	Not working
TOTAL INTERESTED	**70%**	72%	62%
Very interested	**25%**	27%	19%
Somewhat interested	**45%**	45%	43%
Not too interested	**21%**	19%	29%
Not at all interested	**9%**	9%	9%
TOTAL NOT INTERESTED	**30%**	28%	38%

Those most interested in upgrading/acquiring skills: Working full-time (75%, 29% ‘very’); aged 25 – 34 (86%, 38% ‘very’); disabled (80%, 34% ‘very’); college educated (74%, 25% ‘very’); dissatisfied with existing skills (81%, 32% ‘very’).

Preference of place for upgrading or acquiring new work-related skills

	TOTAL
An online course/program	**30%**
On the job/at work	**29%**
A university	**8%**
Learn on my own	**7%**
Through my professional association	**6%**
A private college or training provider	**6%**
A community college	**4%**
Other	**2%**
Don't know/not sure	**8%**

Those preferring online: college educated (39%); doing administration work (39%); management position (36%).
Those preferring at work: high school educated (41%); work in customer service (34%).

Q20. How interested are you in upgrading your existing skills or acquiring new work-related skills? Base: Not a full-time student (n=788), Working (n=625), Not working (n=163)
Q31. If you were to upgrade existing skills or acquire new skills how or where would you prefer this to take place? Base: Interested at Q20 (n=543)

3c

UNEMPLOYMENT

Three-in-ten report being unemployed or laid off in the last five years.

- A large number of those not working report having been unemployed (34%) or laid off (24%) in the last five years - including those retired, a homemaker/stay at home parent, on maternity leave, or unemployed and not looking for work - and this suggests the situation they report may, in part, be stimulated by becoming unemployed or laid off.
- Those most likely to report being unemployed or laid off include: those working on contract (62%); households with incomes of <$50k (53%); disabled persons (50%); manual workers (48%); those with a trade (43%); high school educated (50%); those anticipating a recession will have a major impact on them (41%); those very interested in skills upgrading (37%); those in customer service (38%); and those in sales (35%).

Unemployed or laid off in last five years

	TOTAL
Yes, unemployed	13%
Yes, laid off	17%
No	68%
Don't know/not sure	2%

Q32. Have you been unemployed or laid off in the last five years? Base: Never had a job at Q7 (n=779)

Among those unemployed, six-in-ten (62%) were unemployed just once in the last five years. However, there are a wide variety of reasons for the unemployment with COVID related issues being cited as well as choice of leaving or retiring.

Individual times unemployed in last five years

	TOTAL
Once	62%
Twice	14%
Three times	8%
Four times	1%
Five or more times	2%
Other	10%
Don’t know/not sure	4%

Main reason for unemployment

	TOTAL
Chose to quit/retire	21%
Organization temporarily shut down due to COVID-19	17%
Lack of work	15%
I had health issues	13%
Organization went out of business due to COVID-19	10%
Maternity leave	10%
Previous industry/sector has shrunk in size	9%
Drop in oil prices and resulting lay offs	8%
I was fired	8%
Had to care for family member	3%
Other	7%
Don't know/not sure	5%

Q33. How many individual times have you been unemployed in the last five years? Base: Unemployed (n=105)
Q34. What was the main reason you were/are unemployed? Base: Unemployed (n=105)

Almost three-quarters of those unemployed in the last five years were unemployed for six months or longer and a number of the reasons are skills related issues (e.g. few jobs available for their skills, skills not what employers are seeking and skills out of date).

Length of time most recently unemployed

	TOTAL
Less than a week	3%
Less than a month	1%
Less than three months	8%
Less than six months	10%
Between six months and a year	28%
Over a year	45%
Don't know/not sure	6%

Main reason you were unemployed

	TOTAL
Few jobs available for the kind of skills I have	31%
Taking some time off from working	27%
Employers not willing to pay what the amount I am seeking	17%
Dealing with health issues	16%
Can't find a suitable job	16%
Chose to quit/retire	16%
My skills are not what employers are looking for	7%
I lacked the number of years' experience employers are seeking	6%
Had to care for family member	3%
My skills are out of date	2%
Other	5%

Q35. Thinking about the most recent time you were unemployed, how long were you/have you been unemployed for? Base: Unemployed (n=105)
Q36. What was/is the main reason you were/have been unemployed for the length of time you were or have been? (Please check all that apply) Base: Been unemployed for less than 3 months to over a year at Q35 (n=95)

4

ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

Almost eight-in-ten respondents are working and 14% are retired (but have some interest an in re-entering the work force).

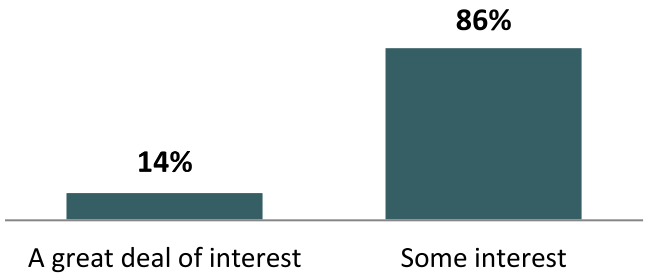
- Those retired with an interest in working are both between ages of 55 – 64 and 65+.

Situation

	TOTAL
Working full time	65%
Working part time	14%
Full-time student	2%
Part-time student	<1%
Homemaker/stay at home parent	4%
Unemployed and looking for work	3%
Unemployed and not looking for work	1%
Retired	14%

Retirees interest in re-entering work force

TOTAL



QC. Which of the following best describes your situation? (Please check all that apply) Base: Total sample (n=800)
QE. Although you are retired, how much interest do you have in re-entering the workforce? Base: Retired at QC (n=113)

The majority (64%) of Albertan workers report working for mid to large organizations employing 50 or more people (with about one-third reporting 500 or more employees) and in a wide variety of sectors led by health care.

Number of people employed by organization in Alberta

	TOTAL	Currently working	Not working
None, just me	**7%**	7%	8%
1-4	**8%**	8%	7%
5-9	**7%**	7%	8%
10-19	**6%**	6%	4%
20-49	**9%**	9%	6%
50-199	**17%**	16%	21%
200-499	**11%**	10%	13%
500+	**36%**	37%	32%

Industry/sector of organization

	TOTAL	Currently working	Not working
Health care	**12%**	13%	10%
Retail	**10%**	9%	14%
Government	**9%**	10%	5%
Education	**9%**	8%	11%
Energy/utilities	**8%**	8%	7%
Natural resources	**7%**	7%	8%
Financial services	**7%**	6%	7%
Transportation/warehousing	**6%**	6%	4%
Construction/real estate	**5%**	5%	8%
Manufacturing	**5%**	6%	1%
Tourism/hospitality/entertainment	**5%**	5%	3%
Agriculture/food production/distribution	**4%**	5%	3%
Technology/aerospace/software development	**3%**	4%	2%
Business services	**3%**	4%	1%
Not-for-Profit/charity	**3%**	4%	1%
Personal services	**3%**	3%	4%
Military/police/fire/first responders/security	**2%**	2%	2%
Legal	**2%**	2%	-
Arts/design	**1%**	1%	1%
Media/communications/marketing	**<1%**	<1%	-
Other	**10%**	9%	11%
Don't know/not sure	**1%**	1%	2%

Q9. How many people does/did your organization employ in Alberta? Base: Total sample (n=799), Working (n=632), Not working (n=167)

Q10. In what industry or sector does/did the organization you work/worked for operate? Base: Total sample (n=799), Working (n=632), Not working (n=167)

While, as expected, staff in an organization is the most frequently reported position, owners/partners and managers are also included in the survey.

Position within organization

	TOTAL	Currently working	Not working
Owner/partner	10%	10%	10%
Senior management (CEO, VP)	4%	4%	3%
Director/manager	14%	14%	17%
Supervisor	12%	11%	17%
Staff	53%	56%	43%
Contract Staff	4%	3%	8%
Other	3%	2%	3%

Functions of type of work

	TOTAL	Currently working	Not working
Professional	31%	33%	24%
Administrative	24%	22%	32%
Customer service	18%	18%	19%
Managerial	18%	17%	21%
Technical	16%	17%	11%
Supervisory	15%	14%	20%
Sales	14%	13%	18%
Trade	10%	10%	9%
Manual	9%	8%	10%
Scientific	4%	5%	1%
Creative	4%	4%	5%
Artistic	1%	1%	1%
Other	7%	7%	8%

Q11. What position do/did you have within the organization you are/were with? Base: Total sample (n=799), Working (n=632), Not working (n=167)
Q12. Which of the following functions best describes the type of work you do/did? (Please check all that apply) Base: Total sample (n=799), Working (n=632), Not working (n=167)

SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

PHYSICAL OR MENTAL DISABILITY

n=	800
Yes	11%
No	88%
Don’t know/not sure	2%

ANNUAL HH INCOME

n=	800
Under $50,000	13%
$50,000 - $99,999	30%
$100,000 - $149,999	22%
$150,000 or more	21%
Prefer not to answer	14%

YEARS LIVED IN ALBERTA

n=	800
All my life	35%
5 years or less	5%
6 – 10 years	7%
11 – 15 years	7%
More than 15 years	46%

INDENTIFY AS . . .

n=	800
NET: Indigenous	3%
Métis	2%
First Nations (status or non-status)	1%
Inuit (Inuk)	<1%
None of the above	97%

ETHNIC/CULTURAL HERITAGE *(“None of the above” at “Identify as . . .”)*

n=	775
Western European (UK, Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, etc.)	51%
Eastern European (Poland, Hungary, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, etc.)	19%
Canadian	11%
East Asian (China, Korea, Japan, Taiwan, etc.)	9%
South Asian (India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc.)	4%
Southeast Asian (Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, Cambodia, etc.)	3%
African	1%
Middle Eastern (Israel, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, etc.)	1%
West Indian (Caribbean)	1%
White/Caucasian	1%
South/Central/Latin American	1%
Northern European	1%
Other	1%
Prefer not to answer	9%

STATUS

n=	800
Canadian citizen	96%
Permanent resident, that is an Immigrant who is not yet a citizen	3%
Temporary resident for work purposes	<1%
Hold a student visa	<1%

WHERE LIVE

n=	800
Calgary area	32%
Elsewhere in southern Alberta	11%
Central Alberta	13%
Edmonton area	31%
Northwest Alberta	5%
Northeast Alberta	6%
Mountain parks	2%

SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE

n=	800
16 – 24	2%
25 – 34	16%
35 – 44	19%
45 – 54	23%
55 – 64	22%
65 and over	17%

ARE YOU . . .

n=	800
Male	50%
Female	49%
Transgender	<1%
Prefer not to answer	<1%
Other	<1%

WORK SITUATION *(excludes those not working full or part-time)*

n=	632
Owner/partner in organization you work at	11%
Employee of organization you work at	84%
Contractor	4%
Other	1%

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

n=	788
Less than high school	2%
High school diploma	14%
Some college	6%
College diploma	9%
College certificate/certification	13%
Apprenticeship	5%
Some university	5%
Undergraduate degree	28%
Post graduate degree	11%
Professional degree	5%
Other	1%