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RECRUITING THE NEXT WAVE:

A SURVEY OF STUDENT EMPLOYEE OPINION
IN THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE
SUMMER 2000



Canada

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FINAL REPORT

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PREFACE

This report invites departmental and agency leaders, human resources advisors and all designers of staffing strategies to consider students' desires with respect to longer-term Public Service employment. The information presented supports both general and specific recruitment strategies by providing the critical insights required to realize these plans.

As we go to press, the tight labour market we have been experiencing over the last couple of years has temporarily subsided in many areas. While skill shortages continue in selected areas, the situation of broader labour market shortages have abated somewhat due to a more general economic slowdown. The longer-term prognosis, however, remains one of concern about increased potential for labour market shortages and continuing concerns about the competitiveness of the Public Service. Let us take this opportunity to prepare for what will be an increasingly competitive labour market in the future.

This report also highlights the need for leaders in departments to review and improve their practices for developing and managing student assignments to maximize the potential recruitment benefits from these programs. Some of today's students are tomorrow's leaders.

Scott Serson
President - Public Service Commission of Canada

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As part of the ongoing challenge to position Public Service recruitment efforts in an increasingly competitive labour market, the Public Service Commission of Canada (PSC) undertook a survey of students employed in the federal Public Service during the summer of 2000. The survey targeted students employed through the Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP) and the Co-operative Education Program (Co-op). This study builds on the PSC's 1997 report, *Facing the Challenge*, which examined the labour market intentions of Canadian university students. The findings provide insights into student's employment experience with in the federal Public Service and their specific interests with respect to a future career. This report focuses on three primary areas:

- factors important to students when considering a future career;
- the quality of their student placement experience, and
- their overall perceptions of the Public Service including their interest in a future career with the federal government.

The survey was administered through the Internet, allowing us to do a census of the entire student population working for the federal Public Service. The polling firm, Ipsos-Reid, contacted the students, directed them to the survey web-site, and collected the data. A total of 3487 students completed surveys. The large number of responses provided extremely high levels of confidence in our results at the aggregate level and allowed for more detailed analysis at the regional, departmental and employment equity group level.

Recent studies on youth in the labour market have emphasised the qualitatively different expectations of the current generation of new entrants. The findings from this survey, however, indicate that many traditional aspects of the employment relationship, such as wages, type of work, work life balance, and job security, remain central to a competitive offer of employment.

The results of this research demonstrate that the important differences in what potential labour market entrants desire from an employer may not be generational, but may be found in the variability among segments of the workforce (i.e. field of study, region, gender and employment equity status).

This final report includes both overall survey results and more detailed analysis by demographic groups. The report highlights the importance of student assignments in positioning the students' longer-term view of the federal Public Service as a career employer. The findings also illustrate some important differences one finds both in the sub-populations and in the various regional labour markets, and highlight the need for more tailored recruitment strategies.

The study draws three basic conclusions.

- First, the single most important investment that can be made in marketing the Public Service is enhancing the student job placement. Students who have a positive assignment, that is an assignment that matches their interest and field of study and is structured, well planned and organised, were much more likely to indicate they would return to the Public Service for career employment. By providing quality

assignments managers and departments can have a direct impact on their own recruitment efforts.

- Second, the disparities between what students want in a career and what they believe the Public Service can offer in a career presents serious challenges to marketing the Public Service. Among the five factors most important to students in choosing a career job, only two factors, work-life balance and work related to field of study were considered highly likely to be found in a federal Public Service career.
- Third, the variable response patterns found among different demographic groups would enable niche marketing. For jobs that have special educational and skill requirements, it may be helpful to draw on the relationship between field of study and student perceptions. Similarly, for jobs in particular regions or for efforts targeted at equity groups, there is information from this study that would help shape specific appeals to sub-populations of students.

We see this research as an investment in the future. It provides a diagnostic of student opinion relative to the federal Public Service and it comes sufficiently early to position the Public Service for the recruitment challenges that lie ahead. This study is one part of our program of studies and research that is trying to unravel the views and interests of both our current and potential employees. The emerging picture is helping us better anticipate recruitment issues and plan for the future.

HIGHLIGHTS

With respect to their summer employment, respondents chose student jobs primarily to gain work experience for a future career:

- students felt the job should offer them adequate pay (78.0%) and work related to their field of study (74.2%).
- approximately three-quarters of students (73.8%) also indicated that their summer employment was important to forming contacts for a future career in the Public Service.

When asked to select their three top motivators in choosing a future career, students were very clear about what they were looking for in an employer:

- interesting work was ranked as most important by nearly two-thirds of students (62.9%),
- competitive wages was seen as a top factor by about half of students (51.7%),
- work related to their field of study was a priority for 41.6%,
- balance of work and personal life was important for just under one third of students (29.6%).

When students envision a future career with the federal government, they see a workplace that will provide:

- a work environment which respects the differences among people (80.2%),
- an ability to balance work and personal life (80.2%),
- access to training and development (78.8%),
- the flexibility to move through different areas of the organisation (66.3%), and
- the opportunity to work in their field of study (65.4%).

Unfortunately only two of these areas fall within the priorities of students when seeking a job after graduation. Comparably, fewer students felt that the Public Service was likely to be competitive with respect to wages (52.2%).

Students were generally positive about their placement experiences. For almost all survey items related to workplace characteristics (i.e. structure of assignment, quality of work, sense of inclusion, relations with managers), the majority of students expressed satisfaction. Students indicated they:

- felt they had made a contribution to their work unit (89.6%),
- were treated as part of a team (86.1%),
- supervisors were available for meetings (86.1%),
- supervisors valued their work (82.9%),
- utilised relevant skills and knowledge (74.3%),
- felt they were assigned interesting work (68.4%).

On a less positive note, almost half of students (47.5%) claimed they did not have enough work to do during their placement and one quarter (25.2%) of students believed their work was not related to their field of study.

The determination of success of the student programs may be found in the level of endorsement that students accorded to student programs, and whether they would recommend to others or pursue a Public Service career.

- 89.0% would recommend their student program to another student,
- 78.4% would seek student employment in the same program,
- students were more likely to recommend a career in the Public Service to others (66.8%) than to pursue it themselves (50.4%).

Exposure to the Public Service gained through summer student employment may provide an invaluable competitive advantage in attracting future recruits: half of student employees were positive about future work with the federal government as compared to 18% of Canadian university students surveyed three years ago.¹ Through better targeted marketing strategies it will be possible to make these strategies even more effective recruitment vehicles.

1.0 BACKGROUND

Demographic and Labour Market Context

There is widespread acknowledgement that large portions of the workforce will retire over the next decade as the baby boom generation leaves the labour force.² Within the federal Public Service annual departures are estimated to reach 9,000 by 2010, and approximately 45% of the present workforce will be eligible to retire over the next 10 years.³ This increase in retirements comes in a period when labour pools are beginning to shrink, both due to a booming economy and a shrinking youth cohort (15-24 years).

Statistics Canada projects a continual decline in youth as a percentage of population up to 2021⁴. The proportion of the population over 45 will rise from 36 percent to 45 percent between now and 2011. Over the same period the proportion of 15 to 24 year olds in the population will remain unchanged at 13%.⁵ With the exception of Provinces of Alberta and BC, by 2010, the retiring cohort (54-64 years) will outnumber youth, creating conditions for major labour shortages.⁶

Within this context, youth recruitment is becoming increasingly competitive. The unemployment rate of Canadian youth (15 to 24 years olds) declined rapidly between 1998 and 2000.⁷ The strength of the economy over the last couple of years and growing shortages of skilled highly educated labour, provide a bellwether of times ahead. In the U.S. a strong economy has produced a sellers' market for new entrants to the workforce: "these days, all the anxiety (of the job search) seems to be on the side of the overworked corporate recruiters as the always gruelling season has become even tougher"⁸. Jobtrak.com, a large job Web site aimed at college students, says it has seen a 50% increase in (job) postings since last March (2000) alone.⁹ This increased competition for new graduates has resulted in a growing "War for Talent" within the labour market, which include a growing list of incentives such as signing bonuses, high pay, stock options and other benefits.

Despite current forecasts of an economic downturn in the short-run, the demographic shift we are currently experiencing is probably great enough to keep labour markets tighter than during previous recessions. The last recession of the early 1990's greatly reduced the participation rate of youth in the labour market, pushed up rates of enrolment in post secondary education, and lengthened the transition period from school to work¹⁰. Given the demographic curve and potential for retirement departures from the workforce, it is unlikely that any short-term down cycle will have as profound a negative effect on the school to work transition. In some instances employers who were not able to fill all their vacancies due to a competitive labour market are indicating that the downturn will be an opportunity to fill their open positions.

Response in the Marketplace

A recent survey conducted by the Conference Board of Canada indicated that 83% of employers reported shortages of skilled labour, and a further 63% expected skill shortages to become more pronounced¹¹. The conclusion of many employers in this market is that "it is

of paramount importance to engage in long-term planning today to begin to address not just current skill needs, but also to access what skill the workforce of the future will need”¹². Succession planning in an increasingly competitive environment centres both on supply and demand concerns.

While the majority of companies’ have responded to an increasingly competitive environment by marketing their organisation as a great place to work, this may not be the most effective strategy. According to the Conference Board of Canada, the most effective predictor of recruitment success was augmenting student programs. The best strategies for improving competitiveness included: enhancing partnerships with educational institutions, developing co-operative education opportunities and developing a better understanding of the needs and values of the new generation of employees.

Innovative companies seeking to recruit well-educated young workers have been focusing on understanding this new generation of employees. A number of surveys and research studies have been conducted on youth entering the labour market in order to gather strategic intelligence on the various graduating cohorts¹³. Firms such as Wetfeet.Com conduct an annual survey of potential entrants to the labour market. Their survey looks at how students define their career preferences, what they value in an employer, and how student recruitment is changing. The goal of this and similar research is to help employers develop more effective recruiting strategies by enabling them to understand thoroughly the student perspective.¹⁴

Career Preferences and the School to Work Transition

There are conflicting analyses about what new entrants to the labour market actually want. Popular literature such as *Chips and Pop* suggest that today’s graduates have very unique perspectives on the labour market and employers need to be tuned into what the current generation requires to remain competitive¹⁵. This includes a work place that provides “challenge, collaboration, task variety and greater impact”. On the other hand work undertaken looking at the differences between the Generation X¹⁶ and Baby Boom cohorts in the US, working in the public sector has found little difference between these groups’ interests with respect to work values.¹⁷ This study found that contrary to the literature and stereotypes about the Gen-Xers, there was a relatively homogenous pattern of what employees want across age cohorts. Similarly, in Canada, Graham Lowe has taken issue with the nexus generation thesis. He says that while the research is generally accurate in depicting the generation, the analysis of nexus differences is faulty. He argues that nexus employees work values are not unique to this age group, and that the nexus generation itself contains several distinct cohorts with different predominant values in each cohort.¹⁸

Students’ preferences with respect to a future career are strongly shaped by their experiences in both the educational system and the labour market.¹⁹ This is particularly true with respect to the relationship between field of study, students’ expectations and employment outcomes²⁰. The state of the economy and the labour market itself, however, are the key determinants in shaping students’ transition from school to work.

A short decade ago, the country was mired in a recession, which had profound effects on the school to work transition. As a result of the recession in the early 1990s, students began

to stay in school longer, and made the transition into the labour market later in life. During this period, there was a persistent decline in youth participation in the labour market, falling from 71.0% in 1989 to 61.4% in 1997.²¹

Staying in school longer provides young people with an opportunity to better prepare themselves for the labour market. There is evidence that the longer they remain in school the better their prospects in the labour market. Among the 1995 graduating class the unemployment rate is lower for university graduates (9%), than for college (10%) and trade/vocational graduates (15%)²². When students are able to build up their human capital, they have a better opportunity for higher wages and more stable jobs.

Between 1997 and 2000, labour market conditions changed dramatically for students. The summer of 2000 was the height of the economic boom²³ creating a sellers' market for highly skilled employees. The unemployment rate of Canadian youth (15 to 24 years olds) has declined rapidly over this period, as the Canadian economy has experienced solid and broad based employment growth. By June 2000, the youth unemployment rate was only 1 per cent above its pre-recession low in 1989.²⁴

Within such a labour market, students have choices and are able to exercise them. For some recruiters, it is no longer a case of placing a help wanted ad and waiting for the résumés to roll in. Recruitment and retention are now part of a "War for Talent".²⁵ In skill shortage areas such as information technology, recruiters have started to entice students to enter the workforce even before they complete a degree.²⁶

Positioning the Federal Public Service

Because of tightening labour markets and the ageing of the baby-boom generation, the Public Service Commission of Canada (PSC) has focused increasing attention on issues related to the recruitment of new labour market entrants to the federal Public Service. In October 1997, the PSC, in co-operation with the Public Policy Forum (PPF), conducted a survey of 2,537 Canadian University Students, about their career aspirations and their perceptions and attitudes about the job market they were about to enter. (The survey was published as *Facing the Challenge: Recruiting the next generation of University Graduates to the Public Service*).²⁷

The report found that the federal Public Service was not necessarily considered an employer of choice among potential university graduates. A relatively small percentage of university graduates were interested in working in the federal Public Service (18%) and an even smaller percentage (8.4%) actually expected to find work there. The students' responses in that survey also "demonstrated an overall low level of awareness with respect to opportunities within the federal Public Service"²⁸. These results were not surprising given the context. The survey was undertaken at a time when the Public Service was doing little hiring as it was completing the most significant period of downsizing in its history. This was also a period when the contribution of the public sector to the social and economic good was no longer as well understood as it once was.

A limitation of this initial study was that it could tell us very little about the attitudes of the students who actually had some experience working in the federal Public Service. Such

students would have a better perspective on working in government and would offer a more informed opinion about their prospects for and interest in Public Service work. We therefore examined the experience of students working in the two main programs for student employment: the Post-Secondary Co-operative Education and Internship Program (Co-op) and the Federal student work employment program (FSWEP).

Surveying students with first hand experience working in government would help us better understand the needs and interests of this pool of possible future recruits. We would also understand how they might influence others' attitudes by what they were telling their fellow students about their time in government. These students are important to the federal Public Service not only as potential recruits, but also as indirect marketers of the Public Service to their peers.

Within the federal Public Service concerns about the renewal of the workforce have been widely discussed. The government has given priority to the renewal of its workforce. The 1999 Speech from the Throne targeted workforce renewal, in particular recruitment, as a key priority. In response, the Clerk of the Privy Council created and chaired a working group of the Committee of Senior Officials (COSO)²⁹ to examine issues of recruitment.

The action plan emerging from this sub-committee included this survey of FSWEP and Co-op students. The purpose of this survey was to enhance our understanding of the competitive position of the Public Service in the labour market. The survey was designed to build upon the findings of the *Facing the Challenge* report, and to provide COSO, hiring managers, and the human resources community with an understanding of student's experiences in the federal Public Service, their views towards working in the Public Service, and perhaps most importantly intelligence on what students are looking for in a prospective employer.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

In July-August 2000, the Public Service Commission conducted a survey of students employed in the federal Public Service through the Post-Secondary Co-operative Education and Internship Program (Co-op) and the Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP). The survey was designed by the Research Directorate of the PSC as a web-based survey to be administered to all students working in the federal Public Service over the summer of 2000.

The study invited participation from all departments covered by the Public Service Employment Act (PSEA), as well as several Separate Employers, such as Parks Canada, the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. In total, 85 departments and agencies were approached of which, 63 participated in the survey (Appendix 1).

The Student Survey was administered via the Internet through the polling firm, Ipsos-Reid. Students received a letter from Ipsos-Reid inviting them to participate with a confidential and unique Personal Identification Number (PIN), which allowed the student to access the survey on the Internet. The student then completed and submitted the survey on-line. The survey was made available in alternate media through a 1-800 number, to ensure accessibility for all potential respondents.

Contacting Students

Although the survey was designed to be delivered via email only, alternative arrangements were made to contact those who did not have an email address. The students received their letter of invitation through:

- **Email:** Participating departments and agencies provided to the PSC lists of email addresses of students working for them during the summer of 2000. The students then received the letter via an E-mail message.
- **Direct mail:** Participating departments and agencies supplied a list of the work or home addresses for those students who did not have an email address. Hard-copy letters were then mailed to students directly.
- **Mail to supervisor:** Departments and agencies supplied lists of the mailing addresses of the students' supervisors who then distributed the hard-copy letters to students.

Forty-nine departments received their letters of invitation by email only. Eleven departments received invitations by email and mail. Statistics Canada, Parks Canada and the Department of National Defence received only hard copy letters of invitation.

To encourage a higher response rate, each participant had the opportunity to enter a draw for six prizes of \$500. The contractor supervised the draw in order to ensure confidentiality.

Survey Administration

The survey was conducted between July 31, 2000 and August 31, 2000. Of the 6950 students who were invited to participate in the survey, 3305 received their invitations via email, 3226 were provided with hard-copy invitations through their supervisor or HR contact, and 419 students were reached through direct mail.

Response Rates

A total of 3487 students responded to the survey. The overall response rate was 50.2%, with the highest response rate from Parks Canada³⁰. For departmental response rates see Appendix 1.

The highest response rate was from those students who received their invitation via email (about 60%). Those students with Internet access at work were able to respond more easily. In addition, those sent invitations by email were also sent two reminder notices by email. These reminders boosted the number of respondents.

The response rate for students who received hard copy letters was approximately 40%. To determine how many students actually received the hard copy letters of invitation, each of the 103 contacts in departments and agencies were phoned or emailed to check on the status of the invitations and to confirm that the letters arrived and were distributed.

Data Management

Survey data was collected by Ipsos-Reid and compiled in an SPSS dataset, delivered to the Research Directorate of the PSC. Where possible, Ipsos-Reid recorded written responses into existing response categories, and grouped responses to the survey's two open-ended questions. Given that summer 2000 population statistics for both FSWEF and Co-op programs were not available at the time data analysis commenced, there was no weighting of responses according to departmental or regional distribution of the population.

Analysis of Responses

The respondent size of 3487 allowed for overall statements to be made with $\pm 1.6\%$ precision, 19 times out of 20. The probability of committing the error of permitting a false positive result from a statistical test was set at less than 1 out of 100 times, or $p < .01$.

Responses were analysed with respect to groups based on demographic variables (such as language, gender, employment equity status, age, education level and field of study), student work variables (student program, region, type of work, and previous student work experience), and examined for relationships among responses to other survey items.

The small number of respondents who identified themselves as persons with disabilities did not allow for more detailed analyses for this group. For this reason, examination of the results did not include comparisons of responses from persons with and without disabilities, and consequently, are not presented in this report.

3.0 PROFILE OF STUDENTS

Student Program ³¹

Of the 3,487 respondents who participated in the survey, (68.8%) obtained a job placement through the Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP). An additional 22.9% obtained their jobs through Co-operative studies or internship programs (Co-op). Other programs included Young Canada Works (1.3%) and the National Research Council (NRC) Summer Student Program (0.7%). Among the students surveyed, over one in three (35%) reported that they had previously been employed in the federal Public Service through either FSWEP or Co-op.

Table 3.1 Language, Gender, Employment Equity Status

First Language	Total		FSWEP		Co-op	
English	2347	67.3%	1584	66.1%	550	69.0%
French	1028	29.5%	762	31.8%	197	24.7%
Gender	Total		FSWEP		Co-op	
Male	1321	37.9%	839	35.0%	381	47.8%
Female	2166	62.1%	1558	65.0%	416	52.2%
Employment Equity Groups	Total		FSWEP		Co-op	
Aboriginal Peoples	209	6.0%	158	6.6%	9	1.1%
Persons with Disabilities	43	1.2%	36	1.5%	5	0.6%
Visible Minorities	415	11.9%	258	10.8%	126	15.8%

Table 3.2 Age and Education

Age	Total		FSWEP		Co-op	
20 and Under	1047	30.0%	804	33.6%	115	14.5%
21-23	1648	47.3%	1101	45.9%	445	55.8%
24-26	473	13.6%	318	13.3%	126	15.8%
27 and Over	298	8.5%	165	7.0%	103	13.0%
Education	Total		FSWEP		Co-op	
High School	278	8.0%	201	8.4%	3	0.4%
College / CEGEP / Technical	636	18.2%	436	18.2%	159	20.0%
University – Undergraduate	2272	65.2%	1553	64.8%	572	71.8%
University – Graduate	155	4.4%	84	3.5%	55	6.9%
Professional Degree	128	3.7%	111	4.6%	7	0.9%

Language

Students were asked to indicate their first language and the degree to which they considered themselves bilingual. The majority of students (67.3%) reported English as their first language, 29.5% reported French. The rest chose a language other than Canada's two official languages. The language profile of respondents was similar to that of the overall student population employed by the federal Public Service in 1999³².

Gender and Employment Equity Groups

Almost two-thirds of respondents (62.1%) were women although the gender composition among Co-op students was more evenly split (See: Table 3.1) The gender composition of respondents reflects the gender makeup of the student population employed in the previous year.³³

Almost one in five students (19.1%) identified as a member of one of the employment equity groups. The representation rates of Aboriginal peoples and visible minorities were 6.0% and 11.9%, respectively, higher than the rates found in the overall federal Public Service (3.0% and 6.2% respectively). Persons with disabilities comprised only 1.2% of respondents which is considerably lower than their representation rate in the federal Public Service (4.8%), but somewhat similar to that found among younger Public Service employees (0.8% of those aged 25 years or younger).

Age and Education

The age of the respondents ranged from sixteen to above sixty with an average age of 22. The vast majority of respondents were university students (73.3%). Students enrolled in college, CEGEP and technical schools made up 18.2% of the respondent group, with high school students comprising another 8.0%.

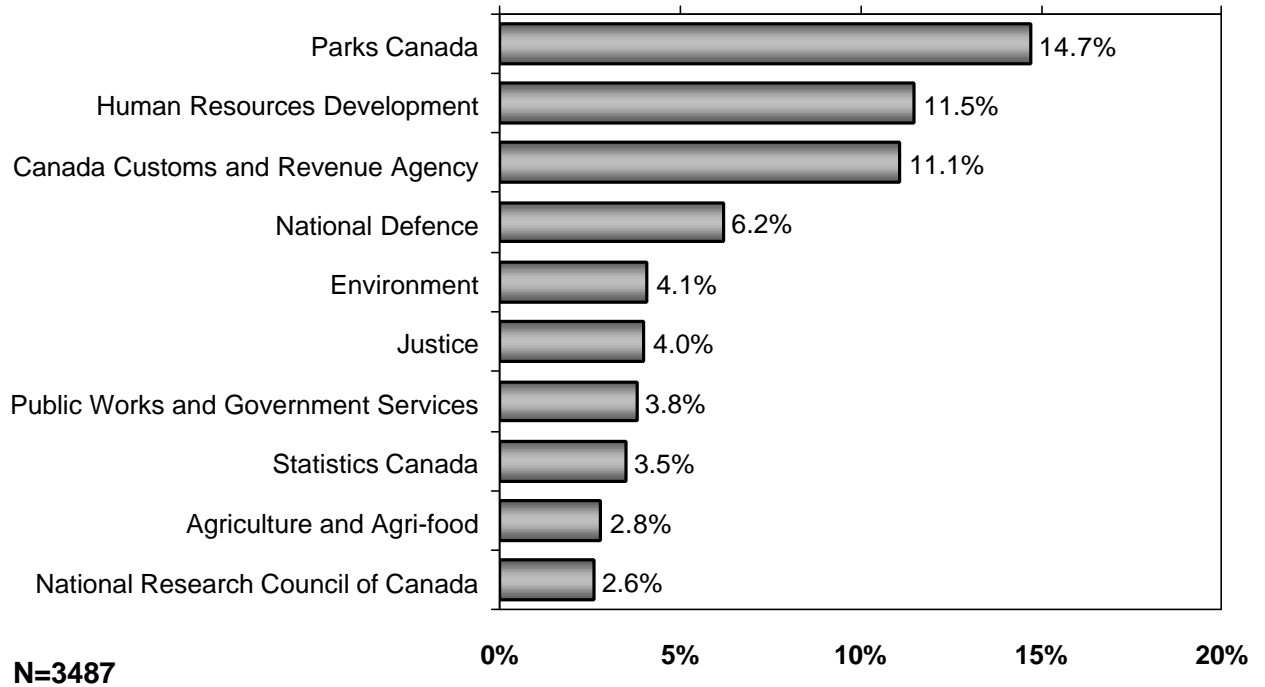
Regional Distribution

The regional distribution of respondents is representative of the FSWEF and Co-op student population across Canada.³⁴ Further, the regional composition of respondents is similar to that of the overall federal Public Service workforce. More than one third of the respondents (35.2%) were employed in the National Capital Region (NCR). Slightly less than one in six respondents worked in either Quebec (15.4%) or in Ontario (14.5%). 5.9% of students worked in Alberta, 5.2% in both British Columbia and Manitoba, 4.2% in both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, 3.4% in Saskatchewan, 3.3% in New Brunswick, 2.4% in Newfoundland, 0.5% in the Northwest Territories and 0.3% in the Yukon.

Departmental Distribution

Differing departmental response rates accounted for some variability in the departmental distribution of respondents (Chart 3.1). As depicted in the accompanying chart, the largest portion of students worked at Parks Canada (14.7%). Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) (11.5%), Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (11.1%), and National Defence (6.2%) were also major employers of the students working over the summer in the federal Public Service.

Chart 3.1 Ten Largest Departments and Agencies



Universities

Post-secondary students were drawn from over 60 universities and colleges across the country. The key feeder institutions were located in the NCR, Ontario and Quebec, which is not surprising given the concentration of students and jobs in these regions.

Table 3.3 Top Twelve Universities

University	N	%
University of Ottawa	388	11.1
Carleton University	180	5.2
University of Waterloo	102	2.9
Université Laval	93	2.7
University of Prince Edward Island	93	2.7
The University of Manitoba	92	2.6
Université, de Sherbrooke	81	2.3
University of Alberta	77	2.2
Université du Québec à Hull	68	2.0
Dalhousie University	63	1.8
Queen's University at Kingston	63	1.8
University of British Columbia	60	1.7

Of the twelve universities supplying the most students to summer employment in the federal government, seven are located in Ontario and Quebec (Table 2). Further, two academic institutions in the NCR accounted for 17.3% of the respondent group: University of Ottawa (11.1%) and Carleton University (5.2%). The third largest supplier of summer students was the University of Waterloo, which has an extensive co-operative studies program. Surprisingly a relatively small university, the University of Prince Edward Island, was the fourth largest supplier of students employed in the federal Public Service. The majority worked with Veterans Affairs Canada, the main federal employer on the island.

Field of Study

This factor provides insights into both which fields of study are supplying students for summer employment and what are the perspectives of students' in particular academic disciplines. This information can support recruitment efforts in those specialisations where it is becoming more difficult to recruit. Excluding high school level respondents, the main fields of study reported by the respondents are listed in Table 3.4 below. There were more students in Commerce/Management and Business Administration (21.2%) than any other field of study, followed by Social Sciences (14.4%), Computer and Information Sciences (11.7%) and Engineering and Applied Sciences (8.9%). Public Administration students made up a relatively small proportion of respondents (2.7%).

Table 3.4 Field of Study

Field of Study	Total (N=3191)		FSWEP (N=2184)		Co-op (N=793)	
Biological / Agricultural Studies	303	9.5%	210	9.6%	61	7.7%
Commerce / Management / Business Administration	677	21.2%	507	23.2%	144	18.2%
Computer / Information Sciences	373	11.7%	157	7.2%	201	25.3%
Education	144	4.5%	131	6.0%	2	0.3%
Engineering & Applied Sciences	283	8.9%	102	4.7%	143	18.0%
Fine & Applied Arts	139	4.4%	102	4.7%	27	3.4%
Health Professions	116	3.6%	106	4.9%	3	0.4%
Humanities	204	6.4%	154	7.1%	41	5.2%
Interdisciplinary / No Specialisation	40	1.3%	32	1.5%	2	0.3%
Mathematics & Physical Sciences	106	3.3%	49	2.2%	43	5.4%
Public Administration	85	2.7%	48	2.2%	35	4.4%
Social Sciences	458	14.4%	361	16.5%	69	8.7%
Law / Criminal Justice	142	4.5%	134	6.1%	2	0.3%

Type of Student Work

Students identified the type of work they did during their placement and were allowed to choose more than one response. Almost half (45.3%) of the respondents indicated that they did clerical work such as filing and data entry. Over one-third of respondents indicated that they were working with the public (34.7%), followed by computer/IT work (29.3%), communications (22.2%), and administrative work (15.6%). Table 3.5 below summarises these results by educational level.

Table 3.5 Type of Work by Educational Level

Type of Work	Total	High School	College / CEGEP / Technical	University Under-graduate	University - Graduate	Professional Degree
N	3487	278	636	2272	155	128
Research - Social Science	9.3%	0.4%	1.9%	10.4%	32.9%	17.2%
Policy Development	5.5%	1.4%	1.1%	6.1%	17.4%	10.2%
Research - Natural / Physical Sciences or Engineering	11.9%	5.0%	4.9%	14.7%	17.4%	5.5%
Communications	22.2%	16.2%	11.6%	25.3%	30.3%	22.7%
Working with the Public	34.7%	55.4%	26.3%	34.9%	20.6%	45.3%
General Labour	2.9%	12.2%	4.1%	1.6%	0.0%	3.1%
Outdoor Work	11.0%	41.7%	8.6%	8.8%	3.2%	6.3%
Computing Work / Information Technology	29.3%	13.7%	37.4%	29.9%	24.5%	20.3%
Clerical Work	45.3%	38.5%	47.3%	46.7%	32.3%	43.8%
Administrative Work	15.6%	8.3%	13.5%	17.2%	11.6%	18.0%
Human Resource Work	1.6%	0.0%	0.9%	1.8%	3.9%	3.1%
Law Enforcement	1.7%	0.0%	2.0%	1.8%	1.3%	1.6%

Note: More than one response could be chosen therefore percentages will add to >100%.

Students from different levels of education tended to perform different types of work. University graduate students were more often involved in research, communications and policy development than other students. Almost half of those working toward a professional degree (e.g. law) specified working with the public among their work duties. Computing/IT work was done by over one-third of students from college/CEGEP and technical schools. More so than the work of post-secondary students, high school student work was characterised by outdoor work, working with the public and general labour. Clerical work was selected by large numbers of students to describe their work, regardless of level of education.

There were large differences in the type of work performed based on student program, as outlined in Table 3.6. Co-op students were more than twice as likely than FSWEF students to be involved in research-related work, policy development and computing/IT work. On the other hand, FSWEF students were much more likely to list working with the public, general labour, and clerical work.

Table 3.6 Type of work by Student Program

Type of Work	Total (N=3487)		FSWEP (N=2397)		Co-op (N=797)	
Research - Social Science	325	9.3%	180	7.5%	124	15.6%
Policy Development	191	5.5%	95	4.0%	79	9.9%
Research - Natural / Physical Sciences or Engineering	414	11.9%	196	8.2%	162	20.3%
Communications	773	22.2%	522	21.8%	197	24.7%
Working with the Public	1211	34.7%	1046	43.6%	71	8.9%
General Labour	102	2.9%	73	3.0%	9	1.1%
Outdoor Work	385	11.0%	320	13.4%	12	1.5%
Computing Work / Information Technology	1023	29.3%	555	23.2%	402	50.4%
Clerical Work	1581	45.3%	1220	50.9%	241	30.2%
Administrative Work	544	15.6%	411	17.1%	99	12.4%
Human Resource Work	57	1.6%	44	1.8%	10	1.3%
Law Enforcement	59	1.7%	57	2.4%	2	0.3%

4.0 STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS

4.1 REASONS FOR ACCEPTING STUDENT JOB

As noted earlier, in the private sector student programs are seen as the most effective recruitment tool available.³⁵ The Public Service Commission has recognised the value of its student programs as a recruitment mechanism, and has created bridging mechanisms to allow departments to directly hire students through these programs. Student programs give students an opportunity to try out prospective employers and apply what they are learning in a practical setting.

In this competitive environment employers need to know what attracts students to their workplace, what competitive advantage their workplace offers in this critical initial step in the recruitment process. Identifying the drivers that bring students to work in the Public Service can help shape recruitment efforts for student programs, as well as subsequent efforts to attract students into full-time employment.

The reasons for students accepting a Co-op placement, summer job, or part-time work with an employer such as the federal government is heavily shaped by students' experiences in the educational system and the labour market. During the 1990s, youth have reduced their level of participation in the labour market in favour of going to school. (In 1989 only 9.2% of people aged 17-19 had never worked for pay; in 1998 the proportion was 26.3%.) At the same time students' transition from school to work became longer. The lengthening of the school to work transition and the lower rates of labour market participation among youth have increased students' need to gain work experience to assist their transition to the labour market. Furthermore, about 80% of youth that do work find themselves in service sector jobs that pay very poorly and have no relevance to their field of study or their future career plans.³⁶ Rising tuition fees and the increased levels of student debt create added incentives for students to take summer employment outside the service sector.

For students, work placements provide an edge in the transition from school to work. Students with job experience have less difficulty finding employment upon graduation. Employment experience can help the transition into the labour market as about 10% of new graduates find employment through a previous employer.³⁷

To identify the key motivators for accepting a student job, the students we surveyed were given an array of eight possible reasons for working in the federal Public Service, and rated their importance on a five-point scale.³⁸

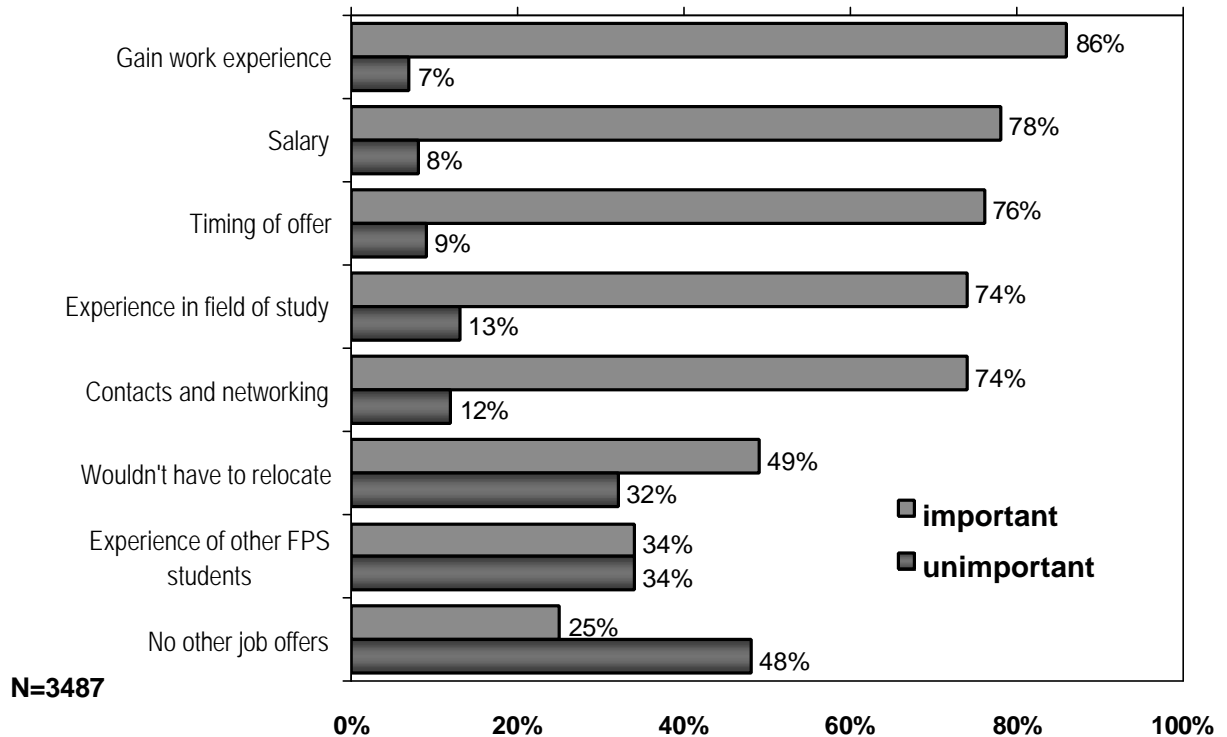
Overall Results

- *a student job should offer relevant work experience, a competitive salary, and work related to the student's field of study*
- *three-quarters of students feel it is important to form contacts that could lead to future employment in the federal Public Service*

The data in Chart 4.1 suggests that students are looking for specific factors in a summer job including:

- opportunities to gain relevant work experience for a future career (86%),
- a competitive salary (78%),
- a timely job offer (76%),
- opportunities to gain work experience in their field of study (74%), and
- forming important contacts for future work (74%).

Chart 4.1 Reasons for Taking Student Job



The majority of these factors centre on positioning the student for longer-term employment. It is not surprising that students rated gaining work experience as the most important factor in a placement. Over the past decade the “portion of youth (those aged 15 to 24) with no job experience increased from 9.8% in December 1989 to 24.6% in December 1997”.³⁹ In addition, previous research has shown that their Co-op experience was helpful in finding a job after graduation, and even more graduates indicated that previous work experience was helpful⁴⁰.

The desire for placements that offer experience in their field of study also relates to their longer-term career interests. Students cited working in their field of study as a key factor in choosing a job after graduation (See: Section 4.2 below). Given the significance of job experience in gaining future employment, students are taking summer jobs to provide them with better positioning in the labour market with respect to their own areas of study. The results of this survey indicate that students are aware of the potential value of a student assignment in helping them find future employment.

With respect to competitive salaries for a student job, we found that students who expect to carry a debt load upon graduation are more likely to cite the importance of this factor. Clearly the increasing cost of post-secondary education and the rising levels of debt affect student's choices of summer jobs.

Demographic Differences

While the key trends are clear, we find that certain sub-groups of students put different weightings on the above-mentioned issues. The key differences with respect to their reasons for accepting a student job are highlighted below. The differential responses we are seeing in this and other sections may require a more focused marketing strategy. These issues will be discussed further in the conclusion.

Women: Salary was an important factor in accepting the student job offer for more women (80.8%) than men (73.4%). This finding may indicate that women consider federal Public Service student wages as satisfactory as compared to men. Although women and men expected to carry similar student debt loads, women with greater debt were more likely to say that the student salaries offered by the federal Public Service factored into their decision to take the student job. Men, on the other hand, placed less importance on student salary relative to other job factors.

Visible Minorities: For visible minority students it is noteworthy that the job factor that they valued most was gaining experience for their future careers. While other factors such as salary were highly rated, visible minority students were less attracted to the Public Service by student salary (71.8%) than non-visible minorities (78.8%). Having no other job offers at the time factored into visible minority students decision to accept their summer job (35.7%) while it was important for only one-quarter of non-visible minority respondents (23.9%).

Aboriginal Peoples: Located primarily in the north and west of the country, Aboriginal students expressed a greater desire to accept a student job in their own location (60.3%) than non-Aboriginal students (48.1%), perhaps suggesting that Aboriginal students are less mobile.

Regions: Across the regions of Canada, students accorded varying levels of importance to student job factors, particularly for salary. For students in the Atlantic Provinces, salary figured highly in their decision to accept their student jobs, ranging from 95.9% endorsement in PEI to 87.8% in Newfoundland, and contrasting with lower levels in British Columbia (71.4%), Quebec (72.4%) and the NCR (73.6%). Further, work related to field of study figured more prominently in the minds of NCR students when deciding to accept their student job than for other students.

Field of Study: Understanding the motivations of students from different fields of study may allow for more targeted efforts to attract these students to student work in the federal Public Service. Not surprisingly, Public Administration students were accepting their federal Public Service student jobs with their future careers in mind. These students were concerned with finding work experience relevant to their future career (95.3%), gaining work experience related to their field of study (89.4%) and forming contacts and networking for future work in the federal Public Service (92.9%).

For students in Computing/IT, there was great import placed on gaining work experience for a future career (92.8%) and finding work related to their field of study (90.1%).

Similarly, those studying Mathematics and Physical Sciences were quite interested in acquiring experience for their careers (91.5%) and conducting work that was related to their field of study (85.8%).

Summary

Since student employment is one key means to finding new recruits, it is important to be aware of what students are looking for in their summer jobs. Students have a variety of reasons for coming to work in the federal Public Service. Clearly the timing of the job offer is important, as it facilitates their choice as they look for employment. The salary is also a critical element and in many markets (e.g. the Atlantic Provinces) our wages are seen to be very competitive. The most significant reasons, however, were related to longer-term career aspirations. The vast majority of students are taking summer jobs and assignments in the Public Service, with an eye to the future, to build the necessary networks and skill sets to better position themselves in the labour market.

Students generally have the same priorities for taking summer work regardless of demographic group. The differences one finds between groups are largely a question of how much value is given to a particular item. There are however some notable exceptions with respect to region and field of study, which can provide a basis for more strategic marketing of our student programs. These differences will be further explored in the Conclusion below.

A major concern in marketing employment is ensuring that the job delivers what is expected. A failure to deliver can result in a very negative appraisal of the work experience. Given the importance students place on work experience it is also important to understand the extent to which their summer job provides them with a satisfactory work experience. This will be examined in a subsequent chapter concerning the students' satisfaction with their job placements. (see: Section 4.4 Quality of Workplace Experience).

4.2 MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN CHOOSING FUTURE CAREER

As our earlier discussion noted, today's graduates want their future careers to involve genuinely interesting work that is related to their chosen field of study. They do not want a sense of being trapped in a dead-end position, without any opportunity for promotion. Reflecting their belief in the value of education, they want employment that will support their commitment to lifelong learning by providing ready access to training.⁴¹ They also believe that having a good job means being employed in circumstances that enable them to balance work and personal life.

The ability of the Public Service to attract high calibre graduates in this environment is dependent on our ability to understand the needs and values of the new generation of labour market entrants.

In our survey, we explored the degree of importance students attach to future career factors. Competitiveness of compensation and benefits, the relevance of the work to their studies, and organisational reputation were just some of the 15 characteristics that students rated. They indicated the three factors most important in their choice of a job following graduation. Factors were ranked as first, second and third most important from the list of fifteen.

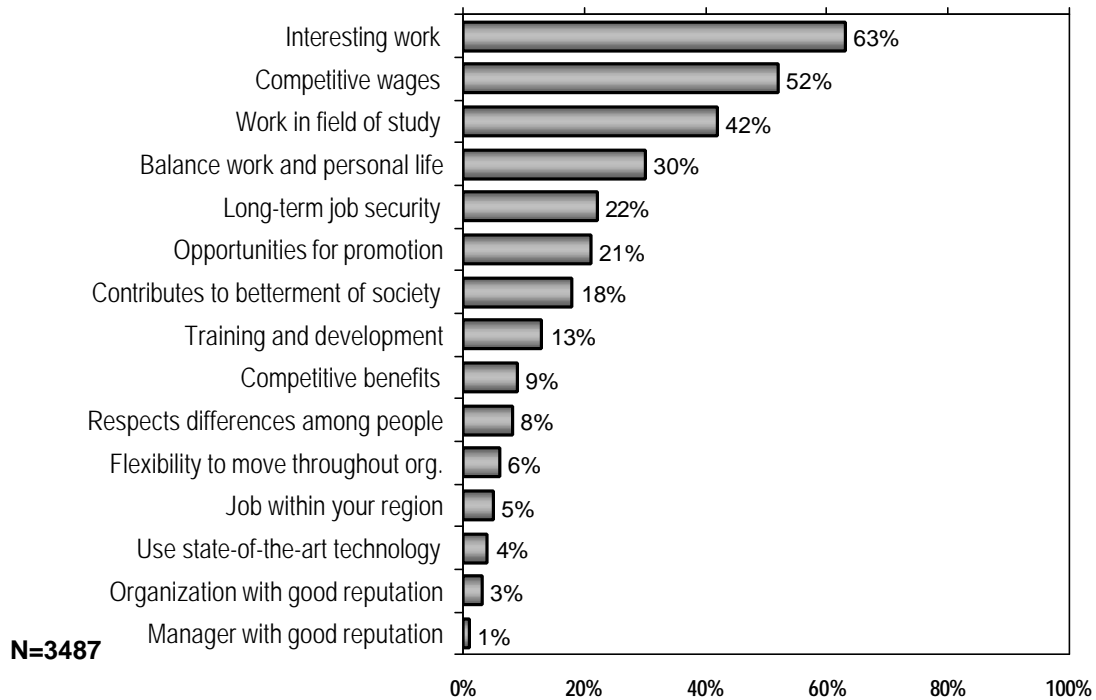
Overall Results

-- *interesting work ranked as a most important factor by two-thirds of students, followed by competitive wages, work related to their field of study, and work-life balance,*
-- *few students selected reputation of the workplace or flexibility to move within the organisation.*

The data in Chart 4.2 suggest a mix of factors including position attributes, compensation and personal fit driving students' career choices. The top five ranked factors in the survey included:

- interesting work (62.9%),
- a competitive salary (51.7%),
- work in the student's field of study (41.6%),
- balance of work and personal life (29.6%), and
- long-term job security (22.2%).

Chart 4.2 Most Important Factors in Choosing Job After Graduation



most important factors represent 1st, 2nd and 3rd rankings, percentages will add to >100%

These findings mirror the 1997 PSC-PPF study. Using a similar scale, students in that survey rated interesting work (46.8%), competitive salary (39.1%), opportunity to work in field of study (23.7%), and the ability to balance interests (19.3) as their top four priorities⁴². This indicates that student' attitudes and aspirations towards career employment have been relatively stable over the last 3 years. The findings also indicate that students employed in the federal Public Service are looking for the same aspects in a future job as other university students.

The results also show that traditional issues such as compensation and job security remain very high on students' list of priorities. It has been argued that the values and interests of today's graduates and other longer-term employees are relatively similar⁴³. Lowe reported on a study based on age showing very few differences, in what workers want from a job. However, he did indicate that younger workers (under 30) are far more likely to value job security and career development than older workers, conversely older workers (over 30) are more likely to value a sense of accomplishment in their work.

All of these findings debunk a myth that today's students want only short-term employment or want to change jobs frequently. In fact, only a small portion of students values mobility within a hiring organisation.

Interesting Work

The factor most important to students in choosing a future job was interesting work (62.9%). Clearly interesting and challenging work is the priority for students making the choice of a career. Similar findings concerning the primary importance of interesting work in job selection are echoed by surveys of American students⁴⁴ and by previous research by the PSC⁴⁵. Interesting work was generally a priority for students regardless of demographic or geographic group.

Compensation

Salary is also a significant factor in an organisation's ability to attract new recruits. Over half of respondents indicated that competitive wages (51.7%) was a priority when considering their future career. The focus on compensation is not surprising. Given the earlier discussion on student debt it is not surprising that the main priority of many students after graduation is to pay off their student loans. Money is also a significant factor in the job search for graduating students as the level of student debt they carry is increasing. In total, post-secondary students consolidated over 1.1 billion in loans in 1995/6, up 70.6% from five years earlier⁴⁶. In 1995, 55% of university graduates left school with student debt. About 75% of our respondents expected to graduate with some student debt. Graduating with student debt increases the pressure to earn a more competitive salary and may contribute to the positioning of salary above other factors.

In terms of overall compensation, factors beyond salary do not weigh heavily on student's minds when making an employment decision. Competitive benefits were a priority in choosing a job for only 9.0% of all students.

Work in Field of Study

The opportunity to work in their field of study was a most important factor for 41.6% of respondents. While the unemployment rate is low for most graduates, we noted earlier that large numbers of students have some difficulty finding work that is closely related to their field of study. In the National Graduate Survey, only about half of the 1995 graduating class reported that they were working in a field closely related to their field of study. Students' ability to find work in their field is highly dependent on the course they are enrolled in. Among the graduates surveyed, those with higher levels of education were more likely to find work closely related to their field of study: 62% of masters and 75% of doctorates. About 60% of graduates from trade and vocational schools and colleges in health, social science, engineering and natural sciences were working in areas closely related to their fields of study. Moreover, 80% of Health Sciences graduates of bachelors and masters programmes in university found work in their field of study.⁴⁷

Work Life Balance

Almost one-third of respondents ranked the ability to balance work and personal life (29.6%) as a most important factor when considering a future job. This rates as an important selling feature at a time when work-life balance appears to be deteriorating across the spectrum. A recent study by the Conference Board indicates that workplace stress has increased dramatically as a source of job problems over the past decade, with almost three-quarters of companies surveyed reporting major or minor problems in this area.⁴⁸

More specifically, the 1999 employee survey in the federal Public Service revealed that 49% of Public Servants did not feel that their workload was reasonable. A further 60% did not feel that they were able to complete their work in their regular working hours.

Job Security

Long-term job security (22.3%) was the fifth most often chosen factor. It is interesting to note that job security is an even stronger factor in today's more robust labour market than at the time of the earlier PSC-PPF study. In 1997, youth were just emerging from a period when it was difficult to find work, and when notions of flexibilization, downsizing and contingent work were extremely popular among employers. Young workers were being told that organisational loyalty was a thing of the past, and they should be prepared for a career that included numerous employers. Over the last three years labour market conditions have changed dramatically. It became a sellers' market with unemployment levels dropping to pre-recession levels.

In our current survey, high school (27.3 %) and college (32.9%) students were more concerned about job security issues than university (19.1%) students. These findings reveal that younger workers put more priority in long-term job security than older workers (over 30).

Issues not Selected as Important

Finding what students do not see as important can help focus recruitment strategies by eliminating factors that have little appeal to students. Several factors are worthy of note because few students saw them as important in choosing a job after graduation. In particular, the reputation of the manager (1.2%) and of the hiring organisation (3.4%) were not significant factors in choosing a job. However, students in a recent US survey on recruitment indicated the image and the reputation of particular employers were strong motivators for selecting an employer.⁴⁹

Also of relatively low importance were the opportunity to use state of the art technology (4.4%), and not having to move to take a job (5.4%). Finally two other items: the flexibility to move through an organisation (6.1%) and an organisation which respects the differences among people (7.9%) were much less important compared to other items. While students expected to find such elements in the Public Service, they are not a particularly strong selling point. In a number of other studies, mobility has not been seen as an important

factor driving students' career choices.⁵⁰ However, a respectful workplace tested much stronger among employment equity groups, a fact that could assist recruitment targeted to these groups.

Demographic Differences

The private sector today is becoming highly targeted in its strategies to recruit (and retain) key talent. This targeting is often aimed at people with scarce skills, mission-critical talent or characteristics that assure a workforce representative of its customer base. In the federal Public Service with its wide range of occupations and its need for Public Servants to reflect the diverse population it serves, it may be desirable to target specific sub-populations of students for similar reasons.

This section highlights those demographic, regional, and educational factors that most differentiated our student respondents. These analysis indicate areas of possible targeted recruitment.

Women: Mirroring the findings from an earlier survey of Canadian University students⁵¹, women were more concerned with finding work relating to their field of study (45.9% versus 35.0% of men). On the other hand, competitive wages was an important career factor for more men (61.9%) than women (45.7%). From a recruitment standpoint, interesting work was the most highly prized career factor and should be foremost in the development of recruitment strategies for both men and women.

Visible Minorities: Enhanced recruitment of visible minorities that ensures a more representative Public Service is in part dependent on a better understanding of the career aspirations of these designated group members. Similar to the findings of Facing the Challenge, competitive wages was favoured by more members from visible minorities (58.5%) than non-visible minority students (51.0%), but interesting work was chosen less often (53.1% versus 64.4%).⁵²

One question that we thought might differentiate students, who are employment equity group members from the non-equity group students, was the item, 'a workforce that respects differences among people'. This was not a large factor for visible minority students: only 11.4% rated this as one of their top three reasons for choosing a future job. This was higher than the rating by non-visible minority respondents (7.4%).

Aboriginal Peoples: Aboriginal students are more inclined to want a future with an organisation that is capable of giving them security and greater internal mobility. Compared to non-Aboriginal respondents, Aboriginal peoples were less inclined to highly rank interesting work (51.0% versus 63.9%) and competitive wages (43.8% opposed to 52.4%). Aboriginal students were more concerned than other students, with long-term job security (27.9% versus 21.9%) and the flexibility to move throughout different areas of the organisation (11.5% compared to 5.8%).

As with visible minorities, a greater share of Aboriginal students considered a workplace that respects differences among people (20.2%) as an important aspect of a future employer than did non-Aboriginal students (7.1%). Interestingly, although Aboriginal students cited not

having to relocate as an important reason for accepting their student placement, finding a future job within their region was not considered an important factor in selecting a career job.

Region: Differences in regional values and interests are a perennial feature of Canadian society and not surprisingly we found regional differences in students' interests in future work. These differences would make it possible to develop recruitment-marketing strategies within regions by appealing to particular patterns of interests.

While factors that most interested all students were highly rated within each province, there were different strengths and ordering of preferences. For instance, compensation factors were of greater interest to students from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Students from Newfoundland have a relatively stronger need for interesting work and a diverse workplace. Students in British Columbia and Quebec were drawn to interesting work and work-life balance. Particularly in Quebec, salary is not as strong a draw to potential recruits as interesting work and work related to field of study. In British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba the more socially conscious features of the job, were of relatively stronger importance such as the contribution of the work to society, and a workplace that respects diversity.

Table 4.2 presents regional preferences for job factors.

Table 4.2: Most Important Job Factors by Region

Region/Province	Total	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NCR	NB	NS	PE	NF
Number of respondents	3487	182	207	120	180	506	538	1227	116	146	148	82
Interesting work	63%	69%	57%	58%	67%	61%	68%	64%	59%	53%	53%	65%
Competitive wages	52%	49%	48%	52%	53%	54%	39%	56%	45%	55%	66%	54%
Work in your field of study	42%	37%	38%	38%	44%	37%	48%	43%	45%	40%	33%	35%
Balance work and personal life	30%	36%	31%	34%	24%	29%	33%	29%	24%	21%	28%	30%
Long-term job security	22%	17%	24%	23%	23%	23%	25%	17%	36%	36%	28%	23%
Opportunities for promotion	21%	18%	20%	13%	16%	20%	22%	23%	28%	23%	24%	15%
Balance work and personal life	18%	24%	23%	25%	23%	18%	18%	16%	14%	15%	14%	27%
Access to training and development	13%	10%	18%	13%	13%	15%	12%	13%	10%	11%	11%	9%
Competitive benefits	9%	6%	7%	4%	8%	10%	6%	10%	14%	8%	14%	12%
Workplace which respects differences	8%	12%	8%	13%	11%	9%	7%	6%	10%	11%	5%	13%
Flexibility to move throughout org.	6%	9%	7%	9%	6%	8%	3%	6%	4%	8%	7%	6%
Located within your region	5%	5%	7%	7%	1%	7%	7%	4%	4%	5%	11%	4%
State-of-the-art technology	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	6%	5%	3%	5%	1%	2%
Organization with good reputation	3%	3%	7%	3%	6%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
Manager with good reputation	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%

Age and Education: Different age groups made different choices for the important career factors: with increasing age, interesting work became less a priority and competitive wages gained in preference. It is not surprising that similar preferences were found when examining responses according to educational level, which is related to student age. As with older students, university students valued salary. Additionally, university students favoured a lifestyle balance and were less likely to opt for long-term job security than were other students.

Field of Study: In many respects, field of study is the most interesting area in which to examine different patterns of responses. Most issues of current and anticipated labour shortages centre around specialist occupations. This data gives us valuable insights into what future engineers, scientists or information technology specialists will evaluate in choosing their first job after graduation.

Analyses by occupation again show the strength of interesting work and competitive wages. There are however, differences in the intensity of interest in these factors. Analysis of responses by field of study revealed the following patterns: compensation factors were favoured by Commerce students and those in Engineering and Applied Sciences; interesting work and work related to field of study reveal certain polarities.

- commerce, computer science and health students gave higher priority to compensation than to other issues,
- science students were more attracted by work related to their field of study,
- and students in education preferred long-term job security.

For students in Biological or Agricultural Sciences, finding interesting work was especially important (68.6%), as was working in their field of study (54.1%). Compared with other students, salary was less of a draw, ranking third among important job factors (50.2%). Relative to others, contributing to the betterment of society ranked highly with these students (25.7%).

Those studying Mathematics and Physical Sciences indicated that interesting work (69.5%) was of prime importance in finding future work, with equal weighting given to both competitive wages (53.3%) and work related to field of study (51.4%). Relative to others, these students accorded great importance to achieving a balance of work and personal life (44.8%) but were less interested in long-term job security (16.2%).

Interesting work (68.0%) and salary (59.1%) appealed to students in Engineering and Applied Sciences. Comparatively, these students were less concerned with long-term job security (14.6%) and a job that allowed flexibility to move throughout the organisation (1.8%). Not surprisingly, students in this field expressed more interest in using state-of-the-art technology (12.4%) than most other groups.

Computer/IT students are drawn to competitive salaries (63.3%), more so than interesting work (55.8%) and work in field of study (40.5%). Compared to other respondents, more of these students placed importance on using state-of-the-art technology (13.9%). However, students in this field were among those who were least interested in the more social aspects

of a job, such as the betterment of society (4.3%) and a workplace that respects diversity (5.9%).

Although Public Administration students preferred interesting work (57.6%) and competitive wages (50.6%), they were less likely than others to choose work in one's field of study (34.1%) and a balance of work and personal life (25.9%) as important job factors. Relative to students in other disciplines, Public Administration students were inclined to favour opportunities for promotion (29.4%), flexibility to move throughout the organisation (11.8%), and working for an organisation with a good reputation (7.1%).

Commerce, Management or Business Administration students are attracted to interesting work (59.0%), competitive wages (57.9%), and opportunities for promotion (36.2%) and much less drawn to finding work related to their field of study (36.4%) and a work-life balance (27.1%). Compared to other students, they were much less drawn to more socially conscious job factors such as the betterment of society (6.7%).

Education students tended to downplay the importance of work related to field of study (38.9%), competitive wages (36.4%) and opportunities for promotion (9.1%), in favour of long-term job security (33.6%), and the more social aspects of a future job such as the betterment of society (30.1%) and a workplace that respects differences among people (14.0%).

The Humanities students were less attracted to competitive wages (41.4%), but were much more inclined to place great importance on interesting work (72.4%). Students of the Humanities tended to downgrade long-term job security (15.8%) and accord importance to work that contributes to the betterment of society (30.5%) and a workplace that respects differences (11.3%).

Students in Health professions valued salary (62.1%) above interesting work and work related to field of study. However, these students also appreciated the social career factors, such as finding work that contributes to the betterment of society (24.1%), and a workplace that respects differences among people (12.9%). Perhaps given the lack of hierarchy in their future careers, opportunities for promotion was considered important by relatively few students in the field of Health (9.5%).

Social Science students were distinguished from others by the higher rank given to the betterment of society (28.5%) than finding a balance between work and personal life (23.1%).

Summary

While most of the students responding to the survey are at least a couple of years away from the job search for a full-time career position, they expressed clear preferences toward what they are looking for in a career. Position attributes, such as interesting work and ability to work in their field of study are more important than compensation for the overall population of students. However, certain sub-groups reverse this by giving competitive wages a higher rating. These include visible minorities, computer/IT students and those in health professions.

Strictly on the basis of these results, it would be tempting to design recruitment and marketing activities emphasising position attributes, compensation and corporate culture: the calibre and dynamism of the work, the pay and the broad opportunities available for new entrants to work in their field of study, and the potential to balance work and personal life are all key factors in students' employment decisions.

While all of these are interests of students, with some notable deviations, the ultimate success of 'pitching' these attributes of Public Service work depends on two things:

- whether students believe these to be the attributes of the area in which they are likely to work, and
- whether the reality of the experience matches that which they believe or are told they can expect.

The next section addresses the first point by examining what students expect to find in Public Service jobs.

4.3 WHAT THE PUBLIC SERVICE CAN OFFER IN A CAREER

While most students have a relatively limited exposure to the federal Public Service, as an employer, their critical first impressions are likely to shape their future decisions to apply for and accept a Public Service job.⁵³ If there is a strong fit between their interest and their expectations of federal Public Service jobs, we could expect many of these students to apply for jobs, and to accept a job offer in the federal Public Service.

In order to examine student's expectations of what the Public Service can offer in a career, they were asked to rate the likelihood of finding each of the factors, previously ranked with respect to selecting a future career.⁵⁴

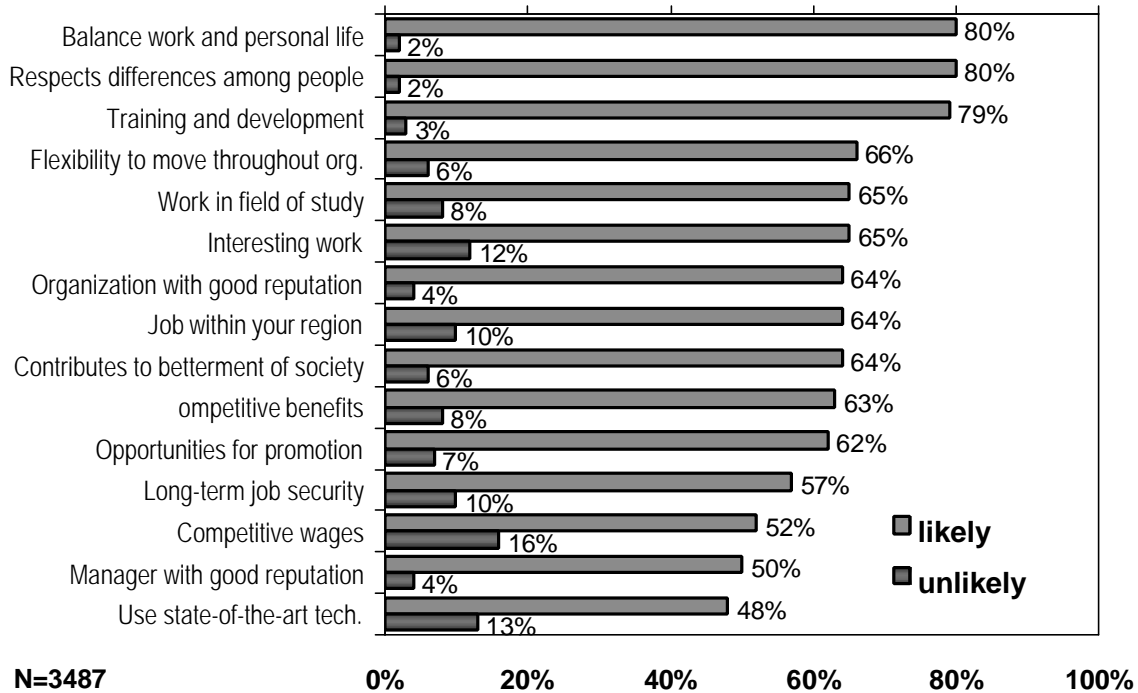
Overall Results

- *students looked at a career in government as offering work life balance, respecting the differences among people and providing opportunities for training and development.*
- *some of the more important factors in students' career choice such as competitive wages and long-term job security were seen as less likely to be offered by a career in the Public Service.*

Four in five students indicated that employment in the federal Public Service is most likely to offer them:

- an ability to balance work and personal life (80.2%),
- workplace which respects differences among people (80.2%), and
- opportunities for training and development (78.8%).

Chart 4.3 Likelihood of Finding Career Factors in Public Service



In order to fully understand the importance of these items in positioning the Public Service in the labour market, one must examine not only what the government work was likely to offer in a career but also how important each factor is to students. It is noteworthy that only one of the students' career priorities is seen as highly likely to be found in the Public Service: the balance of work and personal life. The other factors rated as likely to be found, a workplace that respects differences and opportunities for training and development, were ranked as important in choosing a future job by only 13.0% and 7.9% respectively.

Some other factors considered by students to be important in job selection were given less positive responses. Among the four remaining variables considered most important by respondents: interesting work (64.7%), competitive wages (52.2%), the opportunity to work in their field of study (65.4%) and long-term job security (57.0%), students indicated they were less likely to find these in the federal Public Service than other factors. (See Chart 4.3) The implication is that there is a disconnect between what students want and on what they believe the Public Service is likely to deliver.

Workplace which Respects Differences

A strong majority of students believed the Public Service could offer a workplace which respects differences. This is very positive in the sense that students perceive the Public Service work environment to be generally supportive of diversity. From a recruitment perspective, however, less than one in ten students felt that this was a highly important factor in their decision to take a future job. While a work environment which lacked respect for differences would have negative repercussions, the fact that students expect to find this offers the Public Service a competitive advantage, for a small segment of students. Even among employment equity groups, although there was a stronger preference for a workplace that is respectful of differences, this would be a key factor for less than 20.0% of equity group members.

Competitive Wages

The impression that the Public Service offers competitive salaries is strongly associated with geography. This regional differentiation can be attributed in part to the strength of local labour markets. For students in the Atlantic Provinces, where labour markets have been historically weaker, Public Service wages were seen as competitive (e.g. PEI 78.4% or NFLD 74.4%). In the National Capital Region, for example, where local labour markets have been extremely robust through the recent economic boom, students were less likely to view the Public Service as competitive, (40.3%).

Interesting Work and Work in Field of Study

The ability to offer students work in their field of study is a critical element in their overall job satisfaction. (Among students working in their field of study almost 81.8% said their work was interesting vs. 51.4% who were not working in their field of study.) Similarly, of the students employed in their field of study 81.0% felt the Public Service could offer a career in their field of study vs. 45.6% for those who were engaged in work outside their field. In addition, 72.1% of those employed in their field of study felt the Public Service would offer interesting work in a career. What these findings indicate is that managers and departments have the ability to positively influence students perceptions of the Public Service by ensuring a good skills – job match in the student assignment.

Factors Unlikely to be found in the Public Service

Although 'unlikely' responses were low, students rated competitive wages (16.3%) as the most unlikely factor to be found in the Public Service, followed by opportunities to use state of the art technology (12.6%) and the opportunity to work in one's field of study (11.8%). It should be noted that two of these factors, competitive wages and long-term job security were among the most important job factors for students when considering a career.

Demographic Differences

Different subsets of students tended to have different perceptions of the federal Public Service as an employer. Given the importance of the match between students' desires and expectations in positioning the Public Service as an employer, distinct differences between sub groups could necessitate more targeted approaches to recruitment. Keeping in mind the top factors valued by each group in selecting a career (see Section 4.2), it becomes critical to examine the alignment of the perceived likelihood of finding these top job factors.

Women: A majority of women felt that a career in the federal Public Service would offer them competitive wages (56.6%), as compared to only 44.9% of men. This finding may indicate that women's expectations with respect to salary are lower than those of men. Additionally, more women than men believed that a career with the federal Public Service would offer them interesting work (67.7% vs. 59.8%). This bodes well for recruiting women from the student population, as there is a strong correspondence between what women want and what they expect to find in a career with the federal Public Service.

Visible Minorities: The relatively negative opinions of visible minority students with respect to what the Public Service can offer in a career represents a recruitment challenge. Only 41.0% of visible minority students felt that competitive salary levels would be likely with the federal Public Service, as compared to 53.7% of all other students. Further, relatively fewer visible minority students' thought that interesting work would be a feature of future federal Public Servant work (58.6% for Visible Minorities vs. 65.6% for non-Visible Minorities).

Aboriginal Peoples: Students of Aboriginal origin viewed the federal Public Service more favourably than did non-Aboriginal students. Aboriginal students were more likely to cite interesting work (72.2% as opposed to 64.2% of non-Aboriginal students) and competitive wages (63.2% versus 51.5% of other students) as factors to be found in the federal Public Service.

Age: An analysis of age groups revealed that older students were more likely to feel that desirable job factors would be offered in a career with the federal Public Service. Younger students aged 20 years old and under, felt that competitive wages would be likely in the Public Service (56.9%). Students' aged 21 to 22 believed that long-term job security (60.8%) would be found in the federal Public Service. However, older students aged 23 and over, tended to believe a balance of work and personal life (82.8%), work in their field of study (70.3%), and interesting work (68.0%) would all be probable characteristics of a future job with the Public Service. However, as noted earlier, for most students, the importance of interesting work diminishes with age in favour of competitive wages.

Region: In general, fewer students in British Columbia and Ontario had positive opinions of federal employment, while students in the Prairie Provinces were more positive about what the Public Service could provide them.

In most regions students felt they would find interesting work in the federal Public Service, this was particularly true in New Brunswick (80.2%). The key exceptions were in the National Capital Region (NCR) (53.5%) and British Columbia (63.2%) where fewer students felt the federal government could offer interesting work.

The expectation of finding competitive wages clearly demonstrates the differences among the regions: the least positive responses came from British Columbia (38.5%), Ontario (46.6%), and the NCR (40.3%). This contrasts with a relatively positive view from Saskatchewan (68.3%), Nova Scotia (68.5%), PEI (78.4%), and Newfoundland (74.4%). Arguably, this presents a discernible regional pattern: students in provinces with a stronger economic base and in a tighter labour market may have greater job choice and enjoy higher wages. The more choice students have, the less likely they are to view Public Service wages as competitive.

Field of Study: Analysis by field of study also produced some interesting variations. Computer/IT students were inclined to be positive about the likelihood of finding work in their field of study in a career with the federal Public Service (79.4%), whereas those in Education (41.0%), Health (47.4%), and Fine & Applied Arts (61.2%) tended to show less confidence. Only slightly over half of the students in Engineering and Applied Sciences (55.5%) believed they would find interesting work with the federal Public Service, as opposed to 75.0% in Health Professions and 73.6% in Education. However, when their perceptions are contrasted with the factors they find most important in a career, there is a clear disconnect. Compensation is the top factor for students in Engineering and Applied Sciences, and Computer/IT, yet, most do not see the possibility of finding competitive wages in the Public Service.

Summary

Students have a reasonably positive assessment of what a Public Service career would be like. In general, when students envision a future career with the federal Public Service, their expectations tended to focus more on socially oriented career factors and personal considerations than features of compensation. In their view, a career in the Public Service would mean a job that respected both the differences among people, and the opportunity to balance work and personal life and the opportunity to get additional training.

The analysis does reveal some points of concern. There is not a clear match between what students identify as priorities in a career and what they see the Public Service offering. Specifically students were much less likely to identify that the Public Service could offer critical career factors such as the opportunity to work in their field of study, interesting work and competitive wages.

The lack of correspondence between students' desires and expectations can be addressed in part by ensuring that the student work assignment is aligned with what they are looking for in a career. In this case that means not only looking at work life balance, but other factors. Ensuring there is a good match between the job and field of study can help to better position the Public Service as a career employer in the eyes of the student. Students who were employed in their field of study during their summer work term were much more likely to see their work as interesting, and much more likely to say they would find interesting work and work in their field of study in a career in the Public Service. This illustrates the importance of having the right fit between student and job, as poor fit produces much less positive consequences.

4.4 QUALITY OF WORKPLACE EXPERIENCES

As noted earlier, a recent Conference Board report cites student programs as the most important competitive advantage firms have in recruiting new talent.⁵⁵ Further, close to 20% of recent indeterminate hires to the Public Service had experience in Co-op or FSWEF programs.⁵⁶ The ultimate value of these programs and potential benefit to the employer may be determined by the students' workplace experience.

The students' experiences in the workplace shape their impressions of government and ultimately may determine recruitment outcomes. Ideally, an enriching workplace experience should modify negative expectations and reinforce positive perceptions of the Public Service as a future employer. As well, any negative impressions about the student job indicate areas for improving and enhancing the student work experience.

In order to measure student satisfaction with the placement experience students were asked to rate the job on a variety of factors. The results are presented as five themes:

- *structure and direction*, which reflects the preparedness of the organisation to provide a well-designed learning experience;
- *quality of work*, focussing on aspects of assigned work projects;
- *inclusion*, indicating the level of participation and association;
- *discrimination and harassment*, and
- the *relationship with management* from immediate supervisor to senior management.

For almost all survey items related to workplace experience, the majority of students expressed satisfaction. Further analysis was undertaken where students expressed any notable degree of dissatisfaction.

4.4.1 Structure and Direction

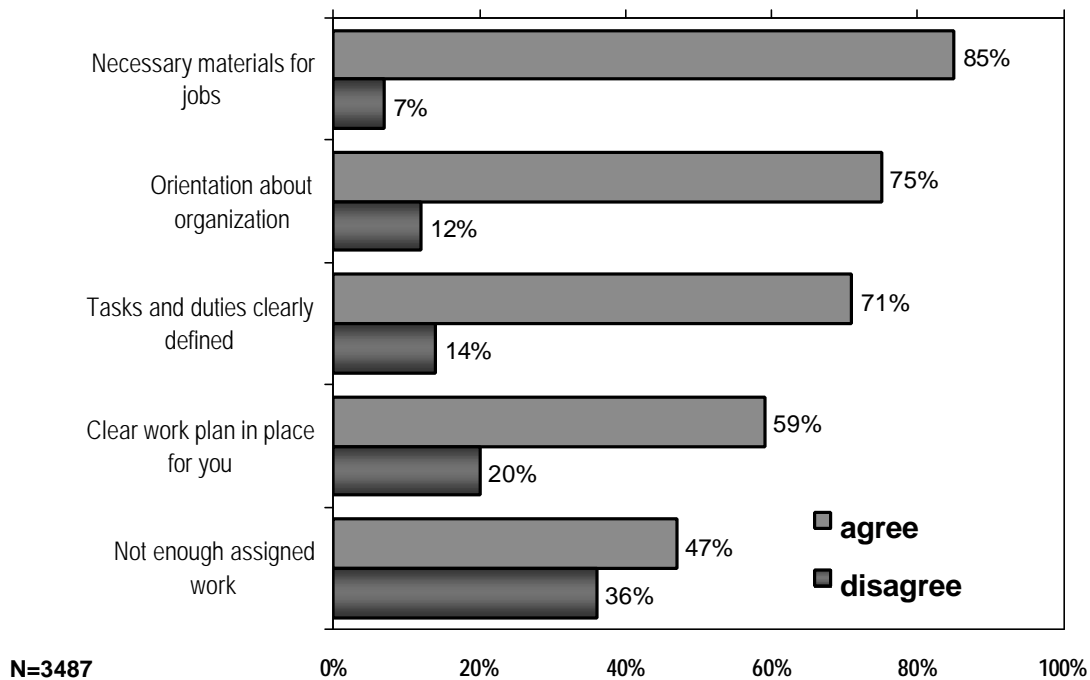
Overall Results

A fundamental element of the students' experience is the structure of the work experience and the ability of the organization to provide a well organised assignment. The level of readiness of the work unit to receive and guide the student is usually the students' first glimpse of the Public Service. Ideally the students initiation into the Public Service should enhance its image as a challenging, well-organised and energetic workplace.

In terms of workplace structure and student direction results were mixed. The survey responses suggest that students were supplied with adequate materials and orientation; however there were evident concerns relating to issues of direction and workload (see Chart 4.4.1). The vast majority of students felt:

- they had been provided with the necessary materials to do their job (85.3%),
- received some form of orientation (75.2%), and
- that their tasks had been well defined (71.1%).

Chart 4.4.1 Current Job Experience Structure



Less encouraging was the fact that only 59.4% agreed that there was a clear plan in place for them when they started their job and that 47.5% agreed that they did not have enough assigned work. As an introduction to the Public Service, the image of under-utilised staff can make a negative initial impression on a potential young recruit. Many new hires, join the federal Public Service because they felt that the institution will make full use of their knowledge, skills and abilities.⁵⁷

Feeling under-utilised in their work assignment can negatively affect students' overall impression of their experiences in the Public Service. It reduces their view of Public Services' ability to offer the key factors they seek in a career; and further reduces the students' interests in a career in the Public Service. Students who felt they did not have enough assigned work were less likely to:

- believe the Public Service could offer interesting jobs in a career (56.9% vs. 71.8% for other students),
- seek a career in the Public Service (44.1% vs. 56.1% for other students), and
- recommend a career in the Public Service to others (61.3% vs. 71.8% for other students).

These examples highlight the importance of a well-planned work assignment in marketing the Public Service to students directly as well as indirectly to their fellow students. A failure to deliver on these aspects of the work assignment reduces their regard for the Public Service as a future employer.

Demographic Differences

There are few differences between demographic groups in terms of structure and direction. However, some curious regional differences were found:

Region: Students in Saskatchewan were less likely to feel they have a structured work term than students in other locations. Only about half of students in Saskatchewan (55.8%) felt that their tasks were clearly defined (vs. 71.1% for students in other regions), and a further 50.8% felt they did not have enough assigned work at times. In contrast, only 39.0% of Nova Scotia students felt that they did not have enough assigned work and over three-fourths thought that their tasks were clearly defined.

Summary

Offering a structured work plan and an orientation session can help students gain a greater understanding of their function within their unit and their unit's place within the larger organization. Providing students with structured work assignments helps the federal Public Service with its long-term recruitment efforts. It ensures that students know what is expected of them and how they can best accomplish their tasks. It also increases the likelihood they will learn while on the job.

Where students have not had enough work assigned to them, they are more likely to develop a poor impression of what a career in the federal Public Service would involve. Each time this happens, it undermines the potential of the student programs to market the Public Service as a career to students.

4.4.2 Quality of Work

Overall Results

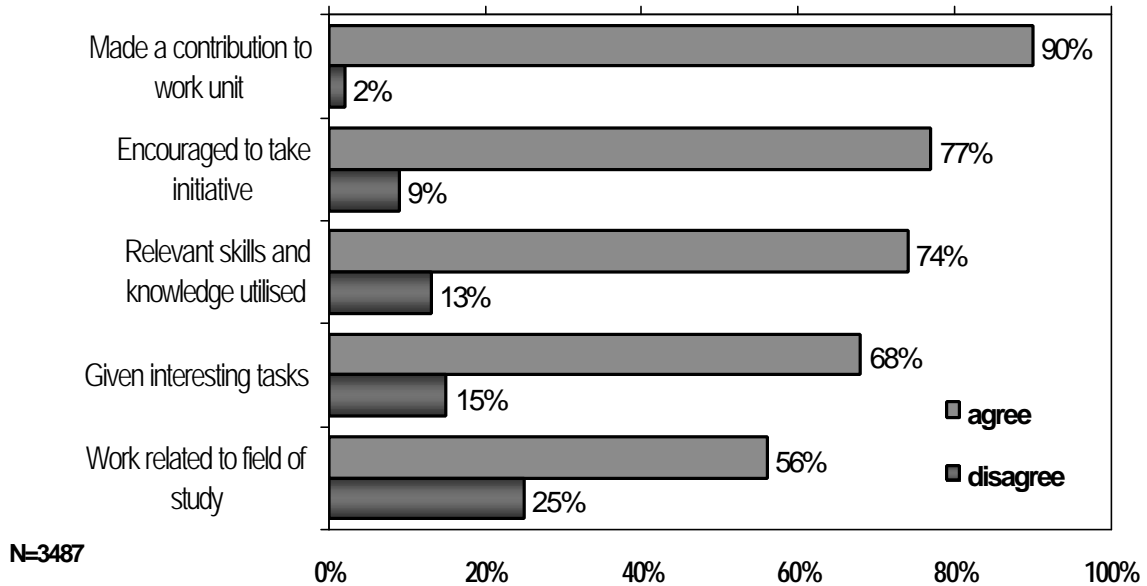
- *nine out of ten students felt they made a contribution to their work unit*
- *interesting work was assigned to only two-thirds of students*
- *one-quarter of students believed their work was not related to their field of study*

In findings presented earlier, students ranked interesting work as the most influential factor when considering their future career, and work related to their field of study as the third most important factor. Presumably, students may gauge the suitability of the Public Service as a future employer in relation to these important factors.

Given the importance that students' placed on working in their field of study and doing interesting work, these factors may be the most critical aspects of the students' overall assessment of the Public Service workplace. Students' overall evaluation of the quality of work factors was somewhat varied. Most students felt:

- that their work had made a contribution to their work unit (89.6%),
- they had been encouraged to take initiative (76.6%),
- their relevant skills and knowledge had been utilised (74.3%), and
- they had been given interesting tasks (68.4%).

**Chart 4.4.2 Current Job Experience
Quality of Work**



A sizeable number of the students felt empowered during their work term (e.g. encouraged to take initiative, genuinely contributed to their work unit, used their relevant skills and knowledge). Additionally, a majority of students also agreed that they would be likely to find interesting work in a career with the Public Service.

On a somewhat less positive note, a notable segment of students disagreed that they had been given interesting tasks (14.6%). Only 55.9% of students agreed that they had been given work related to their field of study and a sizeable minority (25.2%), disagreed that their work had been related to their studies. These latter two issues are very important in positioning our recruitment efforts because of the manner in which they relate to other areas of the employment experience.

Students generally agreed they received interesting tasks in their work assignments (68%). It is worth highlighting the impact that an interesting work assignment has on a range of other factors regarding student opinion. Students who agreed that their work was interesting were also likely to:

- expect the Public Service could offer a career in their field of study (71.0% vs. 41% for others),

- recommend their work unit as a place to work (90.6% vs. 54.9%),
- seek a career in the Public Service (57.4% vs. 35.3%), and
- recommend a career in the Public Service to others (74.2% vs. 50.8%).

The relationship of students' work to their field of study is a critical factor in the students' evaluation of their entire Public Service experience. Students who had worked in their field of study were much more inclined to

- expect to find work in their field of study in a career in the Public Service (81% vs. 45.6% for other students),
- believe they would find interesting work in a career in the Public Service (72.1% vs. 55.4% for other students),
- recommend their work unit (87.0% vs. 69.6% for other students), and
- seek a career in the Public Service (59.5% vs. 38.9% for other students).

Ensuring that students' work is closely aligned with their field of study can greatly enhance the students overall perception of the Public Service as a potential career employer.

The implication being that we need to view our student programs not just as a means to fill short-term labour requirements but also as sources for future recruits. As such, we should offer assignments that provide both interesting work and work related to field of study in order to maximise the recruitment potential of these programs. These factors are key elements students seek in a longer-term career and providing these in a student assignment may greatly impact upon their decision to pursue a career in the Public Service and recommend the Public Service to others.

Demographic Differences

There were few differences between the experiences of demographic groups with respect to how well the assignment was aligned with their own skills and abilities and interests.

Aboriginal Peoples: Fewer Aboriginal persons considered their work to be related to their field of study (45.0% versus 56.6% of all other students).

Region: Fewer students in the National Capital Region found their work to be interesting or useful. In the NCR, 71.9% of students felt they were encouraged to take initiative in their work (as compared to 85% of students in Saskatchewan). A further 68.9% of NCR students felt that they had utilised relevant skills (compared to 80.5% of students in Quebec). Finally, 61.2% of students in the NCR felt they were given interesting tasks (versus 77.7% of students in Quebec). These results are troubling, given that approximately one-third of our recruitment activity takes place within the NCR, yet this is where students are least satisfied with their quality of their work assignment.

Age: Student age was related to the degree to which work was seen as interesting. Younger students found their work term less interesting and relevant to their studies than older students. Among younger students - aged 20 and under – 63.7% felt that they had been assigned interesting tasks, compared to 68.2% of 21-22 year olds and 72.8% of those aged 23 and over. Further, 42.0% of younger students believed their work was related to

their field of study, compared to 58.1% of those aged 21-22 years and 65.6% of students aged 23 years and older. The age trend may be more reflective of the type of work performed by younger students who tended to work in general labour and outdoor work.

These differences with respect to age should not be a major concern. Students closer to entering the labour market are more likely to be provided with interesting work and work related to their field of study, thus putting the Public Service in a more positive light in the eyes of potential recruits.

Summary

If the war for talent continues in the coming years, these student programs will play an important role in future recruitment efforts. While the Public Service has generally provided a workplace experience that enabled students to make a contribution to the work unit, allowed them to take initiative and utilize relevant skills and knowledge, there remain areas for improvement.

The quality of work on the student assignment is an important element in better positioning the federal Public Service as a potential career employer. As stated previously, our ability to offer both interesting work and work which is related to field of study is key to the success of future recruitment efforts. It is this match that can help determine the students' choices with respect to a Public Service career. If the Public Service is to fully realize the potential of its student programs it must ensure the work experience conforms to students field of study.

4.4.3 Inclusion

For anyone recently hired into a new setting, an accepting atmosphere contributes to a sense of inclusion, which may promote positive perceptions of the work unit and organization. Even though the duration of the student placement is short, to feel included, as a member of a team is a meaningful component of the learning experience.

Overall Results

- majority of students felt like part of a team
- less than two-thirds attended regular meetings

For the most part, students reported that they were made to feel accepted by their work group. The bulk of students agreed that:

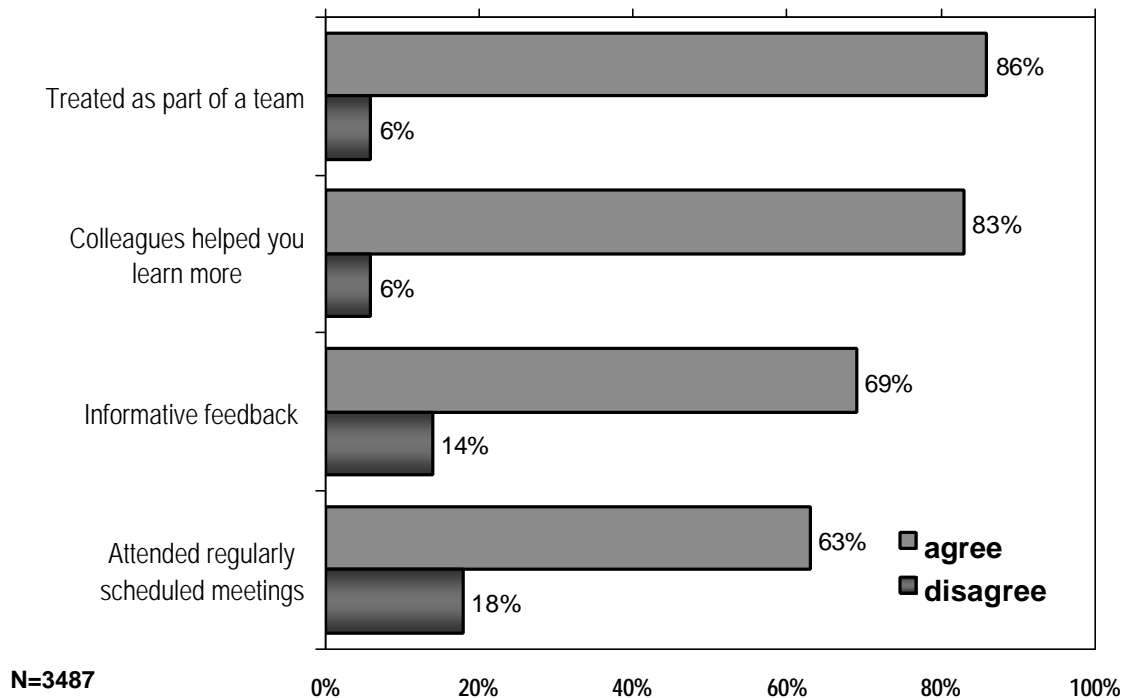
- they were generally treated as part of the team (86.1%) and
- that colleagues helped them learn more about the job (82.9%).

However, with more tangible aspects of the job, students were less inclined to be positive. While the majority of students felt they were provided with informative feedback about their work (68.9%), another 14.0% disagreed, indicating they were not given useful feedback.

Less than two-thirds of respondents claimed to have attended regularly scheduled staff meetings (62.6%), but almost one of every five students (18.4%) disagreed with this statement.

Integration and inclusion are essential aspects of the work experience, since students who felt they were not well integrated into their workplace, were less likely to be interested in a career in the Public Service. Among those who disagreed that they were part of a team in their work placement, only 33.3% indicated they would seek a career in the Public Service vs. 53.3% who responded positively. Likewise only 24.5% of those who did not attend regular meetings felt they would seek a career in government vs. 52.7% who had attended regular meetings. This would indicate that many students require more group contact and meaningful communication in their work assignments.

**Chart 4.4.3 Current Job Experience
Inclusion**



Demographic Differences

There were only minor demographic differences with respect to the students' sense of inclusion in the workplace. The absence of discernible differences between employment equity groups and the general student population on these questions is a positive sign. This could be seen as an indicator of progress towards an inclusive workplace.

Summary

The importance of an inclusive workplace in creating favourable impressions cannot be overstated, especially as students who did not feel that they were treated as part of a team were substantially less likely to say they would return to the Public Service for future employment. Recruiters must encourage managers to actively work towards fostering good relationships between their team members and student employees, thereby increasing the likelihood of that student's interest in returning to the federal Public Service.

4.4.4 Discrimination and Harassment

A related aspect to the sense of inclusion experienced by students would be a notion of exclusion in the workplace. One such issue emerging from the 1999 survey of employees in the Public Service was discrimination and harassment, with 18% of public servants experiencing discrimination and a further 20% experiencing harassment in their Public Service careers⁵⁸.

Overall Results

In order to examine these issues the questions were phrased in a similar manner to the questions pertaining to discrimination and harassment, which were asked in the Public Service Employee Survey⁵⁹. Respondents were asked if they had personally experienced either discrimination or harassment during their work term. A notable percentage of respondents said they felt they had been discriminated against in their work unit (6.9%), while slightly less said they had been personally harassed in their work unit (3.6%).

The existence of discrimination and harassment in the workplace seems to be associated with students' willingness to return to the federal Public Service for a career. Those who experienced discrimination were more likely to say they would not seek a Public Service career (27.7%) compared to those who did not experience discrimination (16.6%). Similarly, greater numbers of students who experienced harassment were also likely to indicate they would not seek a career in the Public Service (29.9%) than those who were not harassed (16.7%).

Demographic Differences

There were no notable differences in discrimination and harassment levels with respect to gender or age. The key demographic issue relates to discrimination levels reported by Aboriginal Peoples.

- 12.4% of Aboriginal students felt they had experienced discrimination during their work term, and
- In comparison, visible minorities reported discrimination at rates (8.7%) slightly higher than the overall average of 6.9%.

Summary

Given the negative impact that discrimination or harassment might have on students and their perceptions of the Public Service, any reports of such experiences should be taken seriously. While it would appear that students in the Public Service experienced relatively low levels of harassment and discrimination compared to all public servants, the phenomena still warrants attention. A key difference between these surveys is that the student population was generally commenting on about 2-4 months of accumulated experience where as the time frame in the Public Service survey was much longer. This experience in certain sub-populations is also a cause for concern. The higher levels of workplace discrimination experienced by Aboriginal students (more than 1 in 10) could undermine recruitment efforts among this group.

4.4.5 Relations with Managers

Overall Results

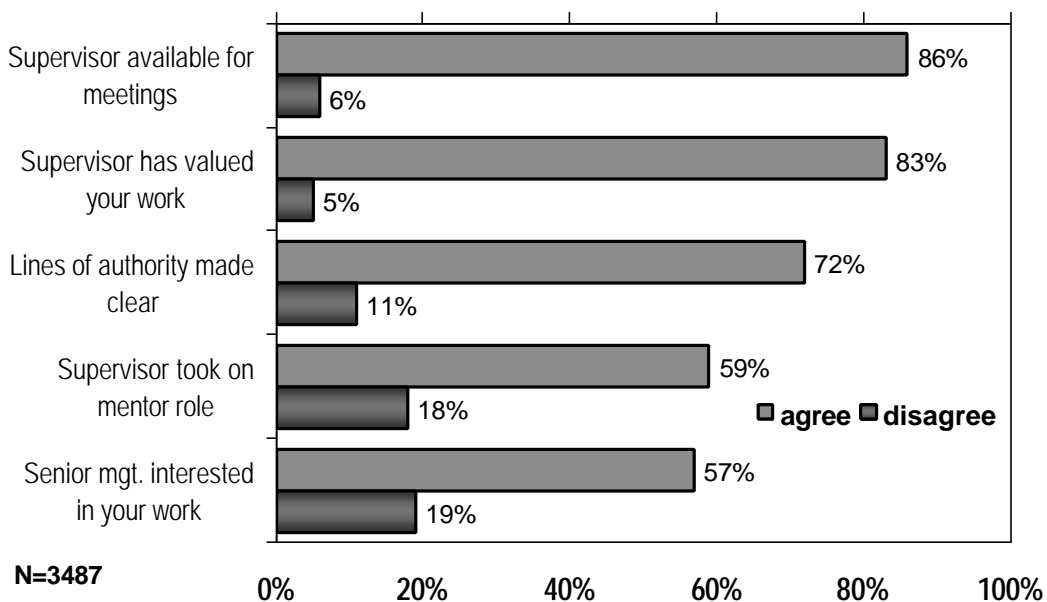
- *supervisors were accessible and made students feel valued*
- *mentoring practiced less often*

From the moment the student joins the work unit, the immediate supervisor is the main representative of management in the Public Service. The immediate supervisor can foster a positive image of leadership in the Public Service. Conversely, from a student's perspective, an absent or apathetic supervisor may stand for a poor symbol of Public Service management. The survey found that students were generally impressed with their immediate supervisors, but were less often positive about senior management.

According to most students:

- supervisors made themselves available for meetings or consultations (86.1%) and appeared to value the work of the student (82.9%).
- the hierarchy of the organization and lines of authority were made clear for almost three-quarters of respondents (71.6%).

**Chart 4.4.5 Current Job Experience
Relations with Supervisors and Management**



Interestingly, although supervisors seemed accessible and evoked a sense of value, fewer students noted that their supervisors adopted the role of mentor or coach (59.2%), with almost one in five disagreeing with this latter statement (18.3%). It would seem that mentoring encompasses much more to students than just making oneself available and expressing an appreciation for the students' work. Although a majority of students reported that senior management demonstrated an interest in their work (57.4%), another 18.6% were negative about senior management. For these latter students, it is unclear whether senior management was disinterested or simply has not been made aware of the student's work.

The degree to which students felt that their supervisor took on the role of mentor and the perception that senior management was interested in their work, was related to students' interest in pursuing Public Service employment. Among those who indicated that their supervisor took on the role of mentor, 56.2% indicated they would seek a career in the Public Service compared to only 39.4% among those who disagreed. Students who believed that senior management was interested in their work were more inclined to seek a career in the Public Service (57.5%) than those who did not find senior management interested in their work (37.5%). Again, this demonstrates the direct impact managers can have in maximising the recruitment value of the student programs.

Demographic Differences

Further analysis revealed some interesting demographic differences with respect to the students relations with their manager:

Women: With regard to their perceptions of management, gender differences among respondents tended to be relatively small but consistent. Slightly more men (88.0%) than women (84.9%) thought that their supervisor was available for meetings or consultations, whereas more women tended to believe that their supervisor took on the role of a coach or mentor (60.8% for women vs. 56.5% for men).

Region: The major regional difference was that more than two-thirds of students in the Atlantic Provinces (66.5%) were inclined to agree that senior management was interested in their work vs. an overall average of 57.4%. On the same issue, only 53.3% of students in B.C. and 51.8% of students in the NCR felt management was interested in their work.

Field of study: Fewer students in Engineering and Applied Sciences and Law/Criminal Justice felt appreciated by either their supervisors or senior management: 79.5% of Engineering students and 74.6% of law students thought that their supervisors valued their work, compared to 86.5% of students in Biological or Agricultural studies and 86.6% of those in Computer/IT. These results may be a function of an ambiguous hierarchy structure; notably fewer engineering students (64.3%) and law students (65.5%) felt that the lines of authority in their workplace were made clear, as compared to 71.4% overall. For students in Engineering and Applied Sciences and Law/Criminal Justice, the roles of supervisors tended to be less transparent. Perhaps these students were less certain about their own responsibilities and tasks, which in turn, affected their overall perceptions of how they would fit into the Public Service as an employee.

Summary

Although the majority of respondents regarded management quite favourably, managers can enhance the student experience by improving areas such as their mentorship efforts. Increased contact with senior management can be beneficial to both supervisors and students; not only does sustained contact with senior management expand and enrich the students' experience, it also provides management with greater insight into what the next generation of recruits wants and needs from their workplaces.

4.5 PERCEPTIONS OF THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE

Societal influences, such as the media, opinions of family members and friends, and the related work experience of others, all contribute to the impressions students have of the federal Public Service, both as an employer and a place or work. The perceptions of students who participated in this survey were also shaped by their personal experience while employed in federal Public Service.⁶⁰ Understanding these perceptions and experiences may assist us in developing more effective student recruitment strategies.

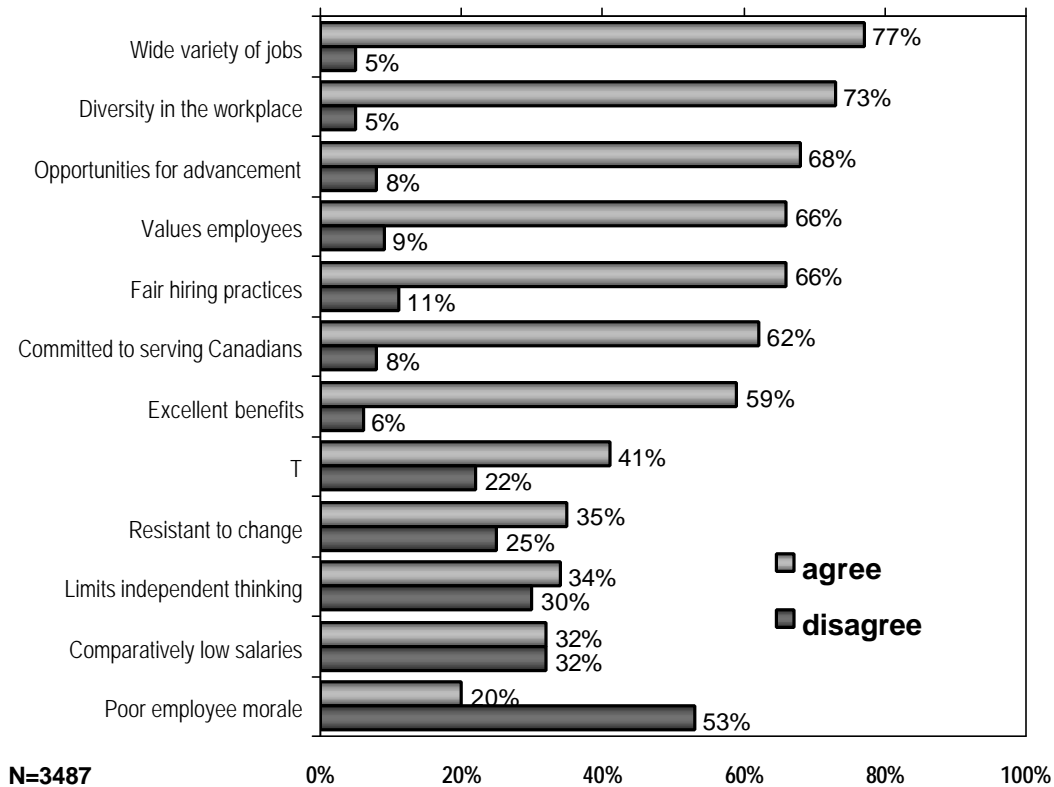
Most students express mixed opinions about the federal Public Service as an organization. On the one hand, they appreciated things like the excellent benefits and the opportunities for promotion, while disliking the salary levels, and the amount of red tape involved in government processes. To explore students' perceptions of the federal Public Service in detail, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with a series of both positive and negative descriptive statements.⁶¹

Overall Results

- *two-thirds believed the federal Public Service provides opportunities for promotion, but one-third foresee comparatively low salaries,*
- *excellent benefits recognised by majority of students,*
- *over one-third of students portrayed the Public Service as rules conscious*
- *two-thirds maintained the Public Service values its employees, but poor employee morale was judged by one in five.*

The majority of students tended to respond favourably to positive descriptive statements concerning the federal Public Service. Over three-quarters of participants (77.4%) agreed that the Public Service offers a wide variety of career jobs. A majority of students also supported the notion that the federal Public Service is committed to diversity in the workplace (73.0%) and provides opportunities for advancement (67.6%). Approximately two-thirds of respondents agreed that the federal Public Service values its employees (66.3%) and participates in fair hiring practices (65.5%). Roughly three out of five students concurred that the Public Service has employees that are committed to serving Canadians (61.9%), while 58.7% further agreed that it extends excellent benefits.

Chart 4.5 Perceptions of the Public Service



Despite that generally favourable appraisal of the federal Public Service, a sizeable proportion of students agreed with the negative descriptive statements. Specifically, 41.0% assessed it as too rules and process oriented, while over one in three respondents indicated it was resistant to change (35.4%) and limits independent decision-making (33.9%). Interestingly, a like number of respondents agreed (31.5%) and disagreed (32.5%) that the federal Public Service has low salaries compared to other sectors. One in five students (19.6%) accepted the contention that the Public Service has poor employee morale. Unfortunately, we cannot be certain whether these negative views were shaped more by the students work experience or by popular opinion.

Generally, FSWEF and Co-op students viewed the Public Service much more favourably than did Canadian University students responding to similarly worded statements from a survey conducted three years ago⁶². Compared to surveyed university students, almost twice the proportion of federally employed students agreed that the Public Service values its employees, is committed to serving Canadians, has fair hiring practices and disagreed that it limits independent decision-making and has poor employee morale. These contrasts in opinions of the Public Service may be partly due to already formed perceptions that led them to pursue a federal government student job in the first place. As well, their views of the Public Service may have been shaped by their student workplace experiences. Regardless, these students act as marketing agents for the Public Service and enhancing

these perceptions can only serve to strengthen the ability of the Public Service to attract these and other students to future employment.

Demographic Differences

Although perceptions of the Public Service are coloured primarily by differences in the individual experiences of students, demographic factors are also important. Indeed, a number of demographic sub-groups within the student population differ sufficiently from the other students to make specially targeted recruitment campaigns something worth considering.

Among the most important demographic influences on perceptions about the federal Public Service were the following:

Women: Women were inclined to regard the Public Service more positively than men. While only 25% of women agreed that the federal Public Service offers comparably low salaries 42.2% of men agreed with this statement.

Aboriginal peoples: Aboriginal students in the survey had consistently high opinions of the federal Public Service as an employer. For example, less than a quarter of Aboriginal students (22.5%) agreed that the federal Public Service offers low salaries, as opposed to about one third of non-Aboriginal students (32.1%).

Visible Minorities: Visible minority students were twice as likely as others to disagree with the idea that the federal Public Service offers opportunities for advancement (13.7% vs. 7.6%). Additionally almost half of visible minority respondents (45.1%) felt the Public Service offered comparably low salaries as opposed to 29.7% of other students.

Field of Study: Field of study was strongly associated with student perceptions about the federal Public Service. In particular, many students in the Scientific, Public Administration and Computing/IT communities have a negative impression of the federal Public Service as an employer. For example 53.1% of the respondents studying Computer or Information Sciences felt that the federal Public Service offers comparatively low salaries, as did 46.6% of the students in Engineering and Applied Science. Students in those disciplines ranked competitive wages as the key factor in choosing a future career. The large gap between their perception of the Public Service and what they want for their futures in many fields of study highlights a marketing problem which must be addressed if we are to succeed in attracting top talent.

Another area of particular concern with respect to field of studies stems from the views of Public Administration students – a group of students who are studying public sector and public policy issues and who therefore may be better informed than others about the Public Service. These are also students whose studies would naturally fit with a career in Public Service. A large proportion of them agreed with negative statements about the federal Public Service. For example, 45.9% of Public Administration students (versus 36.2% of others) agreed that the organization is resistant to change, while 49.4% of them agreed it limits independent decision-making (opposed to 34.2% of others).

Region: The most significant regional difference in perceptions about the federal Public Service is associated with salary levels. In some of the regions with stronger economies (i.e., British Columbia, the National Capital Region and Ontario) a larger proportion of respondents 'agreed' that the federal Public Service offers low salaries compared to other sectors (40.1%, 42.8% and 35.4% respectively). Accordingly, recruitment campaigns in those areas may want to market the other beneficial aspects of a career in the federal Public Service (i.e. interesting work, working for the benefit of society, diversity in the workplace, etc.). Generally, respondents from the Atlantic Provinces regarded the Public Service more favourably, tending to agree with positive statements and disagree when presented with negative views of the Public Service.

Summary

The student survey cannot tell us whether the negative views that some students have about the federal Public Service owe more to their recent work experience in the Public Service or to prior opinions. We can say, however, that for some students, their experience in the FSWEP and Co-op programs has failed to convince them of the value of a career in the federal Public Service. For this reason it is difficult to say whether or how these views could be reversed. However, managers and departments should try to ensure that any negative views students may have coming into those student programs are not reinforced by their work experience.

4.6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND INTENTIONS TO WORK IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

With over 10,000 students being hired yearly through the Public Service student programs it is imperative to gauge the quality of the student work experiences. Depending on the quality of the experience of the student, these programs have the potential to be either a great asset or an incredible detriment to our recruitment efforts.

The placement experience offers students the opportunity to evaluate their work environment, as well as develop an interest in a potential career in the federal Public Service. This introduction to the Public Service could very well solidify their view of the organization as a future employer. Furthermore, these students also influence others with their endorsement or criticism of the Public Service as a place to work.

To assess what conclusions students drew from their experience working in the federal Public Service, they were asked about their desire to work in the Public Service and whether they would recommend the Public Service to fellow students.

Overall Findings

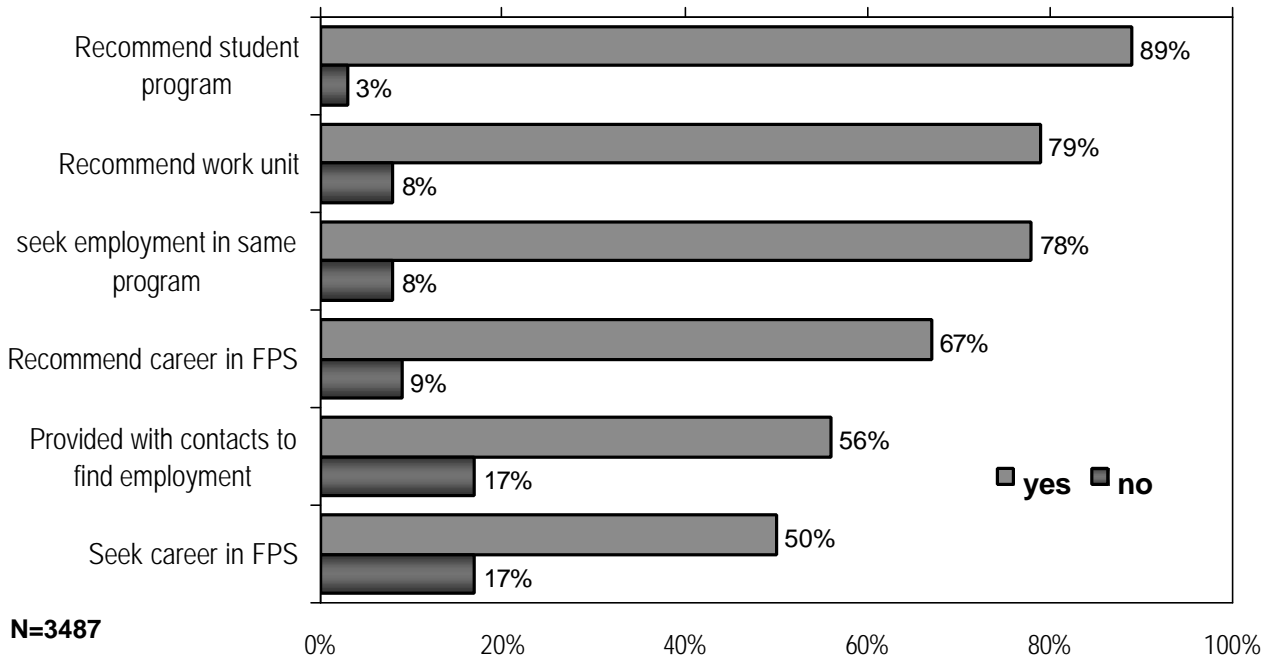
- students were more likely to recommend than pursue further Public Service employment.
- one-third of students were sitting on the fence about a Public Service career.

The student programs were endorsed by a large majority of students, 89.0% would recommend their student program to another student, 78.4% would seek student employment in the same program and 79.3% would recommend their work unit to fellow students.

Over half of students felt that their student job provided contacts and networks to find future employment (55.9%). However, 10% of students who accepted student placements in order to make contacts did not believe their student job experience had provided such contacts. The Public Service may be missing opportunities to give these students what they sought from their employment experience.

Although two-thirds of respondents would recommend a Public Service career to a fellow student, only half would pursue a Public Service career (See Chart 4.6). Just under one-third were undecided about a future career in the Public Service while 17.3% said they would not seek a career in the Public Service.

Chart 4.6 Recommendations and Intentions to Work in the federal Public Service



Important Job Factors

Those interested in a Public Service career could be distinguished in a number of ways. Not only did they believe that the Public Service would meet their career interests, they were also less concerned with interesting work (56.5% versus 71.5% for those who would not seek a career), competitive wages (48.5% vs. 58.7%), and the ability to balance work and personal life (32.3% versus 26.7%). Long-term job security, however, was more important to students interested in the Public Service (27.8% in contrast to 13.6%).

Those who would not seek a Public Service career were much more pessimistic about finding: interesting work (34.3% compared to 80.4%), competitive wages (32.5% versus 64.8%), and work in field of study (43.1% versus 77.3%).

Workplace Experiences

The student work experience was strongly associated with their decision to pursue a Public Service career. Every aspect of the workplace experience was more positive for those seeking a career with the Public Service as opposed to those who planned not to return. Conversely, students who would not consider a Public Service career were less positive about their student work experience. They were less likely to have had a clear work plan (43.6% compared to 68.3% of those who would seek a Public Service career) and they did not have enough assigned work (61.5% versus 41.5%). They were also less inclined to say their work related to their field of study (38.8% compared to 66.0%), or was interesting (48.3% versus 77.9%). They were less likely to say that, senior management was interested in their work (41.5% compared to 65.5%) and that their supervisor took on the role of mentor (45.1% versus 65.9%). Clearly, the quality of the student work experience is greatly related to their view of the Public Service as a future employer. Enhancing the student experience is a first and critical step in marketing the Public Service as an employer of choice.

Perceptions of the Public Service

Students who were considering a Public Service career were overwhelmingly positive about their potential employer. Students with a Public Service career in mind provided more favourable views regarding compensation factors, such as excellent benefits (67.3% versus 45.4%), opportunities for advancement (77.2% compared to 48.3%), and were less likely to agree with the statement that the Public Service offers comparatively low salaries (24.7% versus 44.9%). These findings are in keeping with the previously reported greater confidence in the Public Service to deliver on important career factors found among students who might seek a future with the Public Service, particularly regarding competitive wages.

Demographic Differences

In examining the differences between demographic groups, it is obvious not all students were equally convinced of the merits of Public Service employment:

Women: Women were more likely to be drawn to Public Service employment than were men. This is consistent with the greater confidence women expressed in finding valued job factors in the federal Public Service. Comparably more women than men would recommend a Public Service career to others (71.6% versus 58.9%), and would seek a career in the federal Public Service (53.4% versus 45.4%). Women were also more satisfied than men with their student placements, as more women than men indicated that they would seek employment in the same student program (81.2% versus 73.9%).

Visible Minorities: Visible minority students were less enthusiastic about Public Service employment than non-visible minority respondents. The differences were more apparent when examining university respondents: visible minority university students were somewhat less inclined to seek employment in the same student program (70.3% compared to 78.9%) and pursue a career in the Public Service (41.5% versus 49.4%). The differences were noticeably larger for students in particular fields of study such as Biological or Agricultural Sciences, Commerce, Management and Business Administration, and Law/Criminal Justice.

Aboriginal Peoples: A future career with the Public Service appealed to Aboriginal students: they were much more inclined to recommend a career in the Public Service to another student (76.1%) and seek a Public Service career (62.1%) than non-Aboriginal students. As presented previously in the report, Aboriginal students were more likely to believe that the federal Public Service could deliver on important career factors, particularly, interesting work and competitive wages.

Region: Generally, students from British Columbia and the NCR were less positive about employment with the Public Service than those situated in the Atlantic Provinces. Seeking a career with the Public Service was less attractive to students in British Columbia (43.4%) and the NCR (44.0%), but more highly supported by students in the Atlantic provinces, (ranging from 59.5% to 65.8%) and Saskatchewan (68.3%).

Similar regional patterns were witnessed for other response items. Fewer students in British Columbia (58.2%) and the NCR (57.1%) would recommend a Public Service career to fellow students than those from the Atlantic region (77.0% to 84.1%), Saskatchewan (80.8%) and Manitoba (82.2%). There was also less support in British Columbia (69.2%) and the NCR (72.0%) for seeking employment in the same program than from students in the Atlantic region (83.6% to 90.5%).

These regional differences may be somewhat explained by the fact that both NCR and BC students were not as satisfied with their workplace experiences, particularly with regard to their quality of work, as noted earlier. On the other hand, those in the Atlantic Provinces reported a more inclusive workplace, consistent with findings of greater portions reporting to have been provided contacts for their future career.

Age: The older one gets, the more attractive the Public Service becomes as a future career. Seeking a career with the Public Service was contemplated by fewer students aged 21 and younger (45.8%), than those over 22 years old (57.5%). Almost two-thirds of students aged 25 to 29 years would consider a future with the Public Service (65.8%), rising to 75.6% of those aged 30 or more. As noted earlier, older students were more inclined to favour competitive wages and downgrade interesting work as important job factors. It

appears that: older students, aged 30 years or more, were more inclined to believe they could find competitive wages in the Public Service (62.5%).

Education: Students from college/CEGEP and technical schools are more likely to seek a future career with the federal Public Service than students in other educational levels. Among college/CEGEP and technical students 61.2% intended to seek a career in the Public Service (contrasted with 48.4% of those in university and 43.5% from high schools) and 73.7% would recommend a Public Service career (compared to 64.8% of university and 68.3% of high school students).

Although university students and college/CEGEP technical students accorded relatively equal importance to future work related to field of study, the latter group were more convinced that the federal Public Service would offer this in a career (75.8%) than university students (64.3%). University students are not as confident about finding work in the Public Service related to their field of study, despite the quality of their student workplace. This indicates that the Public Service is a more attractive employer for students in more focussed and specialised schooling.

Field of Study: Students in Public Administration were the most positive about future work in the Public Service, with 67.1% reporting that they had been provided with contacts for future employment. Those studying Health were more inclined than those in other fields to recommend than seek further employment: 85.3% would recommend their work unit, 73.3% would recommend a career in the Public Service, but only 37.9% would pursue a Public Service career.

Engineering and Applied Sciences students provided the most negative responses: less than half would recommend a Public Service career to fellow students (47.3%) and only 35.3% would seek a career for themselves. These students were less often provided with contacts for a future career (46.3%). Indeed, for all students across all fields of study, those given opportunities to establish future contacts tended to be more positive about pursuing a Public Service career. Further to this, greater proportions of those provided with contacts were also made aware of the various ways to gain entry into the Public Service. This relationship underscores the importance of providing to students an understanding of the recruitment process.

Summary

Overall, students were very positive in their assessment of the student programs and their work unit. This would indicate that the employment experience is generally positive among most summer students and they are carrying a relatively positive picture of working in the federal Public Service back to their colleagues and peers at college and university.

Despite an overall positive reading, this section highlights several important recruitment challenges for the Public Service. There are many findings that are troublesome for recruiting specific groups including:

- uneven affinities for Public Service work across employment equity groups specifically for visible minorities.

- students from harder to recruit fields of study, such as engineering and applied sciences, were much less attracted to Public Service work.
- university students were much less likely to be attracted to Public Service careers than college or technical school students.

This latter point is of particular concern in an environment where “knowledge work” is increasingly important. Given that the federal Public Service demand for recruits with a university education is likely to increase, while the need for those with a College/CEGEP diploma will diminish, student programs need to be tailored more towards the specific interests and skill sets associated with university education. That might encourage university students to see the federal Public Service as a more natural ‘fit’ for them.

5.0 CONCLUSION

This portrait of students from the summer of 2000 provides valuable information for those who want to attract and retain recent graduates. The study provides a good indication of what students want and think they will find in Public Service work. It offers insights for the general marketing of Public Service jobs to graduates, for those hiring individual students, for those planning to hire students in subsequent summers and for those who develop policies and programs for student employment.

When we look at the wide array of results from this study and consider the present and future labour market issues facing the Public Service, we are drawn to several major conclusions.

1. The single most important strategic investment that could be made to positively market the Public Service to students is to improve the quality of student assignments.

The survey indicates some very strong associations between the quality of the student assignment and the students desire to pursue a career in the Public Service. Enhancing the student experience while on the job is a critical step in enabling the PSC to market the federal government as an employer of choice for recent graduates. This entails ensuring that the work assignments

- match the work to students' interests and fields of study
- include an orientation to both the work unit and the larger organization
- are structured, well-planned and ensure that students are fully occupied
- include regular access to supervisors and co-workers and frequent feedback
- provide occasions for the interested attention of senior management, and
- include the student in meetings and other team activities.

The greater presence of these factors was associated with a positive regard of Public Service employment and their absence was associated with negative views. Given that student opinion may be conveyed to other students, the consequences of creating a good work assignment go well beyond the individual. This is a diffused responsibility as each hiring manager has in his or her power to create a positive or a negative image of the Public Service for this important pool of future recruits.

Our early findings from a survey of recently hired public servants indicate that many of them first worked as student employees. A number of the students in our survey were approached about further work for the unit in their organizations. All of these findings suggest that the summer job is not just a way of building a positive image of Public Service employment, it is an important trial for both students and managers to see if there is a good fit for future employment. The PSC has in place a mechanism for managers to hire students into full-time employment, giving strategic value to the student job as a means to find good employees.

2. The “disconnects” present challenges to the marketing of Public Service jobs.

There is not a high degree of congruence among what students want in future employment, what they think the Public Service will offer, and in some instances the evidence on what realities they are likely to face.

In the following areas, what students believe the Public Service can offer is often incongruent with student’s expectations:

- When we compare the top five-desired job factors with the top five expected working conditions, only work-personal life balance is found on both lists. Yet, the reality of heavy workloads was one of the top issues that need addressing in the Public Service, according to the COSO subcommittee on Workplace Well-Being.
- The Public Service was seen as highly likely to provide a climate that is respectful of diversity. While this could be marketed, it was highly important to only a small percentage of students. Although diversity is relatively more important to most employment equity groups, it is still among the top needs of only a small portion of employment equity group students.
- Competitive salary was among the top five important job factors of students. Many students, however, do not expect to find competitive salaries in the federal Public Service. The ‘disconnects’ are greatest in regions with strong economies, among students in certain high demand fields of study (e.g. IT and engineering) and for visible minority students, particularly those in certain fields of study. By contrast certain other groups are more likely to see the Public Service as offering competitive wages: women, Aboriginal peoples and those in regions with historically weaker labour markets.

3. The variable response patterns found among different demographic groups would enable niche marketing.

Although there are fairly consistent responses across most demographic groups, there is sufficient variability in interests and expectations to support targeted marketing of Public Service employment. For jobs that require special educational and skill requirements, it may be helpful to draw on the relationship between field of study and student perceptions. For jobs in particular regions or for efforts targeted at employment equity groups, there is information from this study that would help shape specific appeals to sub-populations of students.

Marketing strategies

It goes beyond the mandate of this research team to suggest specifically how the marketing should be done. In simple terms, however, a variety of strategies are possible:

- education and information programs could inform students about what the Public Service offers particularly where the realities are more positive than experienced by students
- marketing that emphasises the features that students value and expect particularly in areas where there is greater congruence
- efforts to change the “product”-- in this case, features of the work assignment -- so that marketing efforts can either feature improvements that have been undertaken in the assignments, or indicates certain features are now part of what students can expect in a job assignment in the federal Public Service.

At present we have a perplexing set of labour market issues. We have long-term projections of labour shortages in the economy that could increase non-retirement turnover, and long-term projections for retirements among the 'baby boom' cohort. We are hearing from various departmental recruitment champions that there are shortages now in some areas. The longer-term projections are that these shortages will grow and deepen over the next decade. At the same time, we now have instances of job postings where departments are overwhelmed by several dozen to several hundred applications, suggesting there is little immediate cause for alarm in most areas.

We see this research as an investment in the future. It provides a diagnostic of student opinion relative to the federal Public Service and it comes sufficiently early that we do have time to position the Public Service for the recruitment challenges that lie ahead. This study is one part of our program of studies and research that is trying to unravel the views and interests of both our current and potential employees. The emerging picture is helping us better anticipate recruitment issues and plan for the future.

NEXT STEPS

In order to maximise the value of the survey results, more detailed analysis will be undertaken to better understand the response patterns of the following:

- visible minorities - to better target recruitment efforts aimed at this community
- fields of study - to allow us to understand shortage areas
- regions - to allow our regional offices to adapt strategies that may be appropriate to their areas
- departments - to provide federal Public Service organizations with strategic insights into the operation of their student programs.

These response profiles will be made available through a series of short papers to be posted on the PSC Research Directorate website (<http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/research/>).

Finally, the information distilled from this survey needs to be turned over to marketing specialists, to be woven into a more targeted recruitment strategy to better position the Public Service in what will continue to be a competitive labour market.

APPENDIX 1: PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

Fourteen departments and agencies did not hire any students during the 2000 summer term and were therefore unable to participate in the survey. Eight other departments and agencies either had student programs other than those that were targeted and did not participate or were unable to participate due to security issues.

Department or Agency	# Invitations Sent	# Invitations Received			Response		Missing Region
		Total	Email	Hard Copy	Total	Rate	
Agriculture and Agri-food	264	247	177	70	99	40.1%	BC & ON
Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	24	23	23	0	19	82.6%	
Atomic Energy Control Board	13	12	12	0	8	66.7%	
Auditor General of Canada	42	42	42	0	31	73.8%	
Canada Customs and Revenue Agency	1326	1170	271	899	385	32.9%	
Canada Information Office	7	7	7	0	6	85.7%	
Canadian Centre for Management Development	2	2	2	0	1	50.0%	
Canadian Dairy Commission	1	1	1	0	0	0.0%	
Canadian Economic Development	21	19	19	0	16	84.2%	
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency	6	6	6	0	6	100.0%	
Canadian Food Inspection Agency	75	72	62	10	43	59.7%	
Canadian Forces Grievances Board	1	1	1	0	1	100.0%	
Canadian Grain Commission	3	3	3	0	2	66.7%	
Canadian Heritage	43	41	41	0	28	68.3%	
Canadian Human Rights Commission	8	7	7	0	5	71.4%	
Canadian Industrial Relations Board	2	1	1	0	0	0.0%	
Canadian International Development Agency	48	48	48	0	33	68.8%	
Canadian International Trade Tribunal	1	1	1	0	1	100.0%	
Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission	5	5	5	0	5	100.0%	
Canadian Space Agency	72	69	69	0	50	72.5%	
Chief Electoral Office (Elections Canada)	2	2	2	0	0	0.0%	
Citizenship and Immigration	129	116	106	10	85	73.3%	
Correctional Service of Canada	163	141	50	91	65	46.1%	
Environment	190	175	175	0	142	81.1%	
Finance	34	32	32	0	27	84.4%	
Fisheries and Oceans	347	249	40	209	78	31.3%	QB
Foreign Affairs and International Trade	55	48	48	0	23	47.9%	
Governor General's Secretary	44	44	9	35	15	34.1%	
Health Canada	82	64	55	9	40	62.5%	
House of Commons	1	1	1	0	1	100.0%	
Human Resources Development Canada	783	600	600	0	401	66.8%	NS & NB
Immigration and Refugee Board	20	18	18	0	18	100.0%	
Indian Affairs and Northern Development	180	141	137	4	78	55.3%	
Industry Canada	147	140	140	0	84	60.0%	
International Joint Commission	2	2	2	0	2	100.0%	
Justice	248	246	47	199	140	56.9%	
NAFTA Secretariat	1	1	1	0	1	100.0%	
National Archives of Canada	26	26	26	0	12	46.2%	
National Defense	806	581	0	581	214	36.8%	QB
National Energy Board	6	6	6	0	4	66.7%	
National Library of Canada	20	16	16	0	11	68.8%	
National Research Council of Canada	167	147	147	0	91	61.9%	
National Transportation Agency	10	7	7	0	4	57.1%	
Natural Resources	161	155	155	0	68	43.9%	
Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council & SSHRC	20	16	16	0	11	68.8%	
Parks Canada	1352	1282	0	1282	512	39.9%	
Passport Office	2	2	2	0	2	100.0%	
Privy Council Office	39	33	33	0	15	45.5%	
Public Service Commission	42	36	36	0	33	91.7%	
Public Works and Government Services Canada	251	202	202	0	134	66.3%	QB
Registry of Federal Court	27	27	27	0	15	55.6%	
Royal Canadian Mounted Police	92	86	44	42	30	34.9%	
Solicitor General	21	20	20	0	16	80.0%	
Statistics Canada	204	204	0	204	123	60.3%	
Status of Women	4	4	4	0	3	75.0%	
Supreme Court of Canada	9	9	9	0	4	44.4%	
Tax Court of Canada	2	2	2	0	2	100.0%	
Transport	104	102	102	0	72	70.6%	
Transportation Safety Board	4	4	4	0	4	100.0%	
Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat	42	35	35	0	30	85.7%	
Veterans Affairs	120	118	118	0	85	72.0%	
Western Economic Diversification Office	33	30	30	0	25	83.3%	
Unspecified	4	3	3	0	28		
Total	7960	6950	3305	3645	3487	50.2%	

ENDNOTES

¹¹ Jennifer Smith and Susan Snider, *Facing the Challenge: Recruiting the Next Generation of University Graduates to the Public Service*, Public Policy Forum and the Public Service Commission of Canada, 1998. p.82.

² David Foote, *Boom, Bust, Echo*, 1997.

³ Public Service Commission of Canada, Centre for Demographic Studies, *Forecasts of Aggregate Departures from the Public Service*, February 21, 2001.

⁴ Graham Lowe, *The challenges of becoming the Employer of Choice for young worker*. Presentation to the IPAC Conference on The Future of Work in the Public Sector Victoria, March 27, 2000. p.5.

⁵ Canadian Labour and Business Centre. *CLBC Leadership Survey: Viewpoints 2000*.

⁶ Lowe, op cit. p.5.

⁷ Strategic Research Branch, Human Resources Development Canada *Profile of Canadian Youth in the Labour Market*, Second Annual Report to the Forum of Labour Market Ministries, 2000. p. 5.

⁸ Jennifer Reingold, *Business Week* , "For the Class of 2000, The Sellers Market Intensifies".p54.

⁹ Jennifer Reingold, op cit, p.54.

¹⁰ Graham Lowe, *The Quality of Work: A People Centred Agenda*, 2000, pp105-110.

¹¹ Conference Board of Canada, *Managing Scarce Skills: Recruitment and Retention*, 2000.

¹² CLBC op cit,

¹³ See: Jacques Taillon, and Mike Paju, *The Class of 95: Report of the (1997) National Survey of 1995 Graduates*, HRDC, 1999 and The Conference Board of Canada *Managing Scarce Skills: Recruitment and Retention*, 2000. Applied Research Branch HRDC, *Youth in Transition Survey*, September, 2000.

¹⁴ Wetfeet.com, *Student Recruitment Report 2000*, March 2000, p.3.

¹⁵ Robert Barnard, Dave Cosgrave and Jennifer Welsh, *Chips and Pop: Decoding the Nexus Generation*, dcode, 1998.

¹⁶ Generation X also called the Nexus generation refers to a demographic cohort born between the early 1960's and the late 1970's.

¹⁷ Carole Jurkiewicz, "Generation X and the Public Employee" *Public Personnel Management*, Volume 29, No. 1. Spring 2000. p.55

¹⁸ Graham S. Lowe, "The Challenges of Becoming the Employer of Choice for Young Worker", op cit, p.5.

¹⁹ See: HRDC, The National Graduate Survey,1995. Warren Clark, *The Search for Success: Finding Work After Graduation: Canadian Social Trends*, Summer 1999 pp.10-15. Jeff Bowlby, "The School to Work Transition@, *Perspectives* pp.43-48. Applied Research Branch, HRDC *Profile of Canadian Youth in the Labour Market: Second Annual Report to the Forum of Labour Market Ministers*, HRDC, 2000. Ali Béjaoui, *Recruitment and Retention Challenges Facing Canadian Public Services: Results From the National Graduates Survey* 2001. Public Service Commission. (forthcoming).

²⁰ Warren Clark, op cit, 1999 p.10.

²¹ Applied Research Branch, op cit p.5.

²² Taillon and Paju, *The Class of 95: Report of the 1997 National Survey of 1995 Graduates*, op. cit, p.1.

²³ At the time of the survey, discussions of a slow down of the economy and lay offs in the high tech sector had not yet occurred.

²⁴ Applied Research Branch, op cit p. 5.

²⁵ Dr. John Sullivan, *If You are in a War for Talent: This is how Warriors Recruit and Retain*, Presentation to the Public Service Commission, Nov 2000.

²⁶ Robert Grossman, "Robbing the Cradle?" *HR Magazine September 2000*, Vol.45, No.9 pp1-9 at: <http://www.shrm.org/hrmagazine/articles/0900cov.htm>

²⁷ Jennifer Smith and Susan Snider, *Facing the Challenge: Recruiting the Next Generation of University Graduates to the Public Service*, Public Policy Forum and the Public Service Commission of Canada, 1998. (available from the PSC at http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/research/docuemnts_e.htm#Labour)

²⁸ Smith and Snider, op cit, p.66.

²⁹ COSO is the most senior Human Resources Committee in the federal Public Service. It is led by the Clerk of the Privy Council and is composed of Deputy-Ministers from 12 Departments and Agencies.

³⁰ In total 7960 invitations were actually sent out and 6950 received by students. There are several reasons for the discrepancy in the number of letters sent and the number received. Undeliverable email messages accounted for 445 students. Another 558 of the hard copy letters were not distributed to the students because the HR contact overestimated the number of students at that location, some of the students had completed their work term before the letters arrived, or because there were delays in the mailing or distribution of the letters. Seven of the hard copy letters, mailed directly to students, were returned to the mailing house.

³¹ In understanding the students' workplace experience we should distinguish the various mechanisms (i.e COOP, FSWEF) through which students were brought into government. These mechanisms were designed to serve a variety of objectives. The COOP program was developed to provide students with practical work experience to fulfil their educational requirements, but has been marketed to managers as a cost-effective way of filling short-term needs fast. Similarly the FSWEF Program was also marketed to managers as a way to fill short-term needs with bright eager talent, with the potential of bridging students into the Public Service for permanent jobs though the program. The FSWEF program was seen as an opportunity for students to try the Public Service on for size and to enhance their skills through a valuable and challenging work experience. Regardless of which program the students joined or what the ultimate purpose of these programs serve, the programs themselves are an important tool in attracting new talent into the federal Public Service.

³² Source: PSC Information Management Directorate: Public Service Appointment File, op cit.

³³ Source: PSC Information Management Directorate: Public Service Appointment File, op cit.

³⁴ Source: PSC Information Management Directorate: Public Service Appointment File, May to August 1999. COOP and FSWEF students recruited to PS, Parks Canada and CCRA excluded.

³⁵ Conference Board of Canada, op cit.

³⁶ Graham Lowe, *The challenges of becoming the Employer of Choice for young worker*. Presentation to the IPAC Conference on The Future of Work in the Public Sector Victoria, March 27, 2000. P. 6.

³⁷ Clark , op cit p. 11

³⁸ In order to simplify reporting of results, responses of 'very important' and 'somewhat important' are presented at an aggregate level, unless otherwise noted.

³⁹ Lowe Graham, *The Quality of Work: A People Centred Agenda*, Oxford University Press, 2000. P. 109

⁴⁰ Clark, op cit p.13.

⁴¹ Lowe, op. cit., page 7.

⁴² Smith and Snider, op cit pp.80-81.

⁴³ Graham S. Lowe, *Employer of Choice? Workplace Innovation in Government*, Canadian Policy Research Network (CPRN), 2001. p.33.

⁴⁴ Wetfeet.com, op cit pp.25-26.

⁴⁵ Smith and Snider, op cit pp.35-37.

⁴⁶ Statistics Canada, "Student Debt", The Daily, July 30, 1999. p.1.

⁴⁷ Taillon and Paju, op cit p. 14.

⁴⁸ Kimberley Bachmann, *Work-Family-Life: Issues, Challenges, Solutions*, Presentation to the Human Resource Development Center, Conference Board of Canada, February 13, 2001. P.2.

⁴⁹ Wetfeet.com, Student Recruitment Report 2000, May 2000.

⁵⁰ Wetfeet.com op cit, p.25 and Smith and Snider, op cit p. 39.

⁵¹ Smith and snider op cit p.38

⁵² Smith and Snider, op cit p.38

⁵³ Brian McDougall, Micheline Nehmé and Rolina van Gaalen, 18% of respondents in the New Hires Survey indicated they had been previously employed in the Public Service through either in FSWEF or COOP programs. *Joining the Core Workforce: A Survey of Newly Hired Employees into the Federal Public Service: Preliminary Report*, Research Directorate, PSC, March 2001. p.16. http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/research/surveys/newhires_e.htm

⁵⁴ Each factor was rated on a three-point scale with responses of 'likely', 'neither likely nor unlikely' and 'unlikely'.

⁵⁵ Steven A. Murphy, *What to do Before the Well Runs Dry: Managing Scarce Skills*, Conference Board of Canada, March 2000.

⁵⁶ McDougall, Nehmé and van Gaalen, *Joining the Core Workforce: A Survey of Newly Hired Employees into the Federal Public Service: Preliminary Report*, op cit p.16.

⁵⁷ McDougall, Nehmé and van Gaalen, op cit, p. 20.

⁵⁸ Statistics Canada, Public Service Employees Survey, June 1999.

There was considerable debate as to how to interpret the results for these questions. Given the simplicity of the question it was unclear as to the exact nature of the discrimination and harassment. Specifically, it was impossible to identify what type of discrimination or harassment was experienced, to what level it was experienced and who the actual perpetrator was (i.e colleagues, supervisor, client). Unfortunately in replicating this question on the student survey we were left with much the same issue.

⁵⁹ Statistics Canada, op cit, June 1999.

⁶⁰ This survey does not allow us to untangle which kinds of information and experience have contributed the most to the views that respondents held at the time they participated in this study. We can assume their opinions are – at least in part – influenced by their experience during their FSWEF or COOP placements. But we do not know what views they held prior to their work experience in the federal Public Service.

⁶¹ For reporting purposes, the responses of 'strongly agree' and 'agree' were summed to provide an overall estimate of agreement.

⁶² Smith and Snider, op cit. Appendix III pp 83-85.