

Facing the Challenge

Recruiting the
Next Generation of
University Graduates
to the Public Service

Jennifer L. Smith
Susan Snider



Public
Management
Research Centre

Centre de
recherche sur la
gestion publique



Public Service Commission
of Canada

Commission de la fonction publique
du Canada

Canada

**©1998 The Public Policy Forum/
The Public Service Commission of Canada**

Additional copies are available from the
Public Service Commission of Canada:

PSC Distribution Centre

300 Laurier Ave. West
West Tower, Room P-140
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0M7
Phone: (613) 995-2855
Fax: (613) 996-0518

This document is also available on the Internet at
<http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca>.

All rights reserved. This publication is a product
of the staff of the Public Policy Forum, and the
statements made herein do not necessarily reflect
the views of its Board of Directors.

Design and artwork:
Smith Advertising and Design, Ottawa
French translation: François Boutin,
Maryse Pigeon, Traductions Vinci, enr.

ISBN: 0-662-63675-9
Catalogue: SC3-88/1998



Facing the Challenge

Recruiting the
Next Generation of
University Graduates
to the Public Service

Jennifer L. Smith
Susan Snider



Public
Management
Research Centre

Centre de
recherche sur la
gestion publique



Public Service Commission
of Canada

Commission de la fonction publique
du Canada

Canada

FOREWORD

The approaching millennium presents many challenges and opportunities to employers. While the baby boomers have dominated the labour market for a number of years, they are now moving towards retirement. As this occurs, the demographic make-up of the labour market is more balanced, making it critical that managers in all sectors of society gain a clearer understanding of the preferences unique to each age cohort. Recognizing the unique characteristics of each cohort will allow organizations to more specifically tailor recruitment programs to the needs and expectations of individuals. This skill is particularly essential to public sector managers, as downsizing and restructuring come to an end, and their focus turns to renewing and rejuvenating the federal Public Service.

This publication is part of a series of studies the Public Management Research Centre, the research division of the Public Policy Forum, has undertaken in examining the renewal of the federal Public Service. The Public Policy Forum is a national, non-profit organization which seeks input from all sectors in society to work towards a more informed development of public policy, and the attainment of a shared vision of public sector management.

The quality of the individuals being attracted to the Public Service is of fundamental importance to any country's competitiveness. And Canada is no exception. After years of downsizing, restricted recruitment, frozen salaries, and increasing competition from other sectors in society, the federal Public Service needs to develop new ways to attract employees to its workforce.

In our view, this report contains the results of a groundbreaking study. It is unique in that it is the first effort to examine recruitment issues with university students *prior* to their graduating. It thereby allows readers to understand what university students will be seeking in terms of employment and career-related opportunities before they actually graduate. While the recommendations are specifically tailored to the federal government, the majority of the findings apply equally across the broader public and private sectors.

Changing workplace expectations, and the requirements of the information age have led to new demands in terms of the work environment, incentives, and career mobility. It is important for employers to understand the different interests and factors which attract individuals to their workforce. In the Public Service this is particularly important as it seeks to renew its ranks.

In this report we address a number of questions regarding the next generation of university graduates. For instance, are tomorrow's university graduates looking for employment security or have they truly embraced the notion of a highly mobile career through a number of different organizations and sectors? What factors will attract them to a particular job? Are they really driven only by financial compensation or does the nature of the work and/or an ability to contribute to a broader social good still resonate as important career-related factors? Do tomorrow's graduates

feel secure about their ability to find employment upon graduation or do they perceive limited opportunities in tomorrow's labour market? In primarily what sector will students be seeking employment and what are their attitudes towards the federal government?

It is recognized that the federal Public Service faces a number of recruitment challenges which are unique to its sector. In recent years, there has been a growing concern that the Public Service is not attracting individuals with the skills required to address future challenges. Traditional public stereotypes continue to erode the professional pride of public servants, and the media continually highlight negative stories about public servants rather than their many positive contributions. These factors do little to attract new recruits to the Public Service.

In our view, a strong federal Public Service is essential to our country's long-term success. For those who have traveled extensively, it is clear that Canada has a Public Service that ranks among the best in the world. Our challenge is to ensure that we maintain this quality. We hope that this publication will contribute to a better understanding of the changing nature of work, and how it affects the desire of university graduates to work in the public interest by choosing a career in the federal Public Service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Zussman', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

David Zussman
President
Public Policy Forum

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We, the authors, gratefully acknowledge the assistance we received in developing this publication. First, we would like to recognize the contribution of the study's Advisory Committee members: Collette Nault (Public Service Commission – PSC), Susan Bowser (PSC), Danielle Levasseur (PSC), Sally Luce (PSC), Margaret Amaroso (Privy Council Office), Paul Mercier (Treasury Board Secretariat) and Gordon Betchermen (Canadian Policy Research Networks) who assisted in developing the survey instrument used in this study. The group also helped to guide the study with the objective of helping to identify information, issues, and concerns relevant to the study.

Second, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of Johanne Bernier (PSC), David Holmes (PSC), Paul Engel (PSC), Cathy Molizia (PSC), Marc Dubé (PSC), and Doug Booker (PSC) whose feedback and support helped to shape the final report. We are especially grateful to Sheila Protti, whose editing of our work is much needed and always appreciated.

Many thanks are given to Kevin Kowalchuk and Peter Smith for their assistance in developing selected chapters of the report; and to Eva Kmiecić, Anita Mayer and John Szekula for helpful comments, suggestions, and feedback. Finally, particular thanks are extended to David Zussman, whose leadership, expertise and guidance was indispensable throughout the life of this project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	2
Highlights	5
Background	10
Methodology	11
Introduction	16
Putting the Public Service into Perspective	17
The Labour Market: Students’ Reflections	21
Career-Related Decisions	32
Reflections on the Public Service	42
Conducting the Job Search	45
Implications and Recommendations	54
APPENDIX – I:	
Open-ended Comments	63
APPENDIX – II:	
Socio-demographic Student Profile	70
APPENDIX – III:	
Survey Instrument and Results	74
SECTION A: Your Perspective on the Future	74
SECTION B: Making Choices	82
SECTION C: Personal Career Characteristics	86
SECTION D: Previous Work Experience	89
SECTION E: Socio-demographics	93
Profile of Sponsor Organizations	97

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October 1997, 2,537 Canadian university students completed a survey about their career aspirations, and their perceptions and attitudes regarding the job market they were about to enter. The exercise was part of a study undertaken by the Public Management Research Centre, a division of the Public Policy Forum, on behalf of the Public Service Commission of Canada.

The study had three objectives:

1. To gather data that would measure and examine career choices of tomorrow's university graduates and the factors driving these choices.
2. To identify the implications of these factors for Public Service recruitment.
3. To make recommendations for recruitment campaigns to attract high calibre university graduates to the federal Public Service.

This report discusses the background, methodology, and findings of the survey. It then evaluates the findings and their implications for Public Service recruitment and recommends how the Public Service Commission might modify its recruitment initiatives in light of the findings.

The report points out how the recent federal downsizing has brought the need for rejuvenation of the Public Service. As an organizational resource, today's youth can bring a high level of education, technological experience, and potentially innovative and competitive advantages to the Public Service. Understanding the attitudes, concerns, and expectations of this generation is essential to building a recruitment strategy and a workplace that will be challenging, rewarding, and attractive.

The survey probed for the students' thoughts about their futures after graduation. The majority (60%) intended to begin a job search, 67% wanted full time employment, with 73% believing that it was likely or very likely that within six months their searches would end in success. The survey findings were analyzed according to gender, age, language, level of study, visible minority status, academic achievement, and preference to work for the federal government. The analysis by age combined with confidence levels shows that the students' confidence in finding a job within six months of graduation rose with age until the age of 28, and then at 29 and over confidence levels dropped.

The students anticipated quite different career paths from those of their parents which often entailed one career in one organization. Only 14% of the students anticipated a career in one organization while 44% foresaw careers in two to three organizations, and 21% anticipated working in four to five organizations. However, the students' preferences did not reflect their anticipations, with 30% preferring a career in one organization. Similarly, concerning job security, the respondents' anticipations and preferences differed. Slightly more than 20% expected that their first job would last over two years, whereas just over 50% preferred their first job to last more than two years.

Where did the students believe the most job opportunities existed? Over 70% thought the private sector, while just under 20% said the federal government. It is interesting to note, however, that twice as many students expressed a preference to work for the federal government than actually expected to work there.

In terms of their preferences and expectations of sector of employment, the findings show differences based on language and age variables. Of the French-speaking respondents, 25% said they would prefer to work for the federal government, while only 15% of the English-speaking students gave that same response. In contrast, 68% of the English-speaking respondents, and 61% of the French, expressed a preference to work in the private sector. Of the students 25 years of age and older, 71% expected to find the most employment opportunities in the private sector with 57% preferring to work there. As well, only 9% of the older respondents expected the most opportunities to be with the federal government, however 22% indicated a preference to work there. For the students under age 25, a greater number would prefer to work for the federal government (16%) than those who expected to find work there (8%). The majority of younger students (81%) expected to find more opportunities in the private sector, and 71% said they preferred to work there.

The survey also asked why the students chose to attend university. Recognizing that they could respond to more than one category, over 70% of the students attended for “personal development,” more than 60% went in order to get a job, and 51% thought a university education would bring them a higher salary.

While many of the students had not yet embarked on full-time careers, they had developed attitudes about the importance of job-related factors to consider in their job searches. Out of 33 factors from which they were asked to rate the importance on a five-point scale, almost all the students (98%) felt that finding interesting work was important or very important, and 90% said the ability to use one’s skills and expertise and the opportunity to work in one’s field of study were important or very important. Based on the same factors, the students ranked the three most and least important factors driving their career choices. Interesting work and a competitive salary/compensation were the two top choices; the two least important factors were a job located within one’s region, and the opportunity to learn another language.

When asked about previous work experience, the students were specifically questioned about co-op programs. There were 20% who had co-op experience; 49% of the placements were with the private sector and 22% in the federal government. Of the co-op students, 83% felt that the experience had better equipped them to find employment in the labour market. However, 40% said they did not plan to seek employment in the organization for which they had worked during their most recent placement, while 33% did plan to work for that organization.

The students responded to specific questions about the Public Service showing varying levels of understanding about its employment environment. Some of the responses were: 60% of the students believed that the federal Public Service has an aging workforce, who are employed in a 9-to-5 jobs (70%) with excellent

benefits (76%) and a wide variety of career opportunities (53%), along with opportunities for advancement (52%). Only 29% of the respondents believed that public servants are committed to serving Canadians and 31% felt that the federal workforce is disconnected from the average citizen.

Finally, the students also answered questions on conducting their job searches. A number of students begin to look for work in the fall term (35%) and others in the January to March period (33%). The two most favoured methods of searching for employment were the Internet (74%) and campus career centres (74%). One of the least desired job-search avenues was the government employment centre as only 43% of the respondents would probably visit one. Only 24% of the students were aware of the Public Service's annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign (41% of Francophones versus 20% of Anglophones).

The Public Management Research Centre offers the Public Service Commission a number of recommendations which essentially fall under two broad themes:

- The PSC should make itself more aware of the needs and desires of today's university students and gear its recruitment programs accordingly.
- The PSC needs to project itself and the Public Service more clearly, aggressively, and thoroughly to students.

In closing, the PMRC suggests two steps for further research:

- In light of the divergence between the students' expected and preferred career paths, track students' perceptions to determine if it is indeed a trend that students would prefer to work for more than two years with one organization.
- Given the younger students' lack of interest in working for the federal government, track students over the next five years to see if this is part of a broader trend whereby government is becoming less and less relevant to young Canadians.

HIGHLIGHTS

In addition to analyzing the general results of the survey, the report examines the findings according to the various demographic groups within the student sample. What follows is a short profile of each of those groups emphasizing areas where the groups differ from the general student sample. The highlights also include salient findings of the students' responses to specific questions about the federal Public Service.

LANGUAGE

- In total, 64% of the students who responded to the survey indicated that their first language was English, with another 18% reporting French.
- When asked about the likelihood of their being able to find the type of employment they wanted following graduation, English students had slightly higher levels of confidence, with 74% responding likely or highly likely, compared to 70% of the French students.
- More English students had higher minimum salary expectations compared to their French counterparts.
- More French (25%) than English (15%) students said they would prefer to work in the federal government.
- English and French students both indicated a job located within their region as the least important factor driving their career choices. The next choices, however, differ significantly. As second and third choices, English students chose the opportunity to learn another language and the ability to work in their choice of French or English. These 'language' options did not show up with the French students. The only job-related factor chosen as the least important by a relatively high number of French students was a culturally diverse workplace.
- When analyzing all of the different means students can use to look for jobs, the only observable difference between French and English students was a higher tendency for French students to use government employment centres, 61% compared to 37% for Anglophone respondents.
- As well, more Francophones were aware of the National Graduate Registrar, 34% compared to 22% of English students. Furthermore, 41% of French students had heard of the federal government's annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign, compared to only 20% of English students.
- Continuing with this trend, it may not be surprising to note that while 38% of the Anglophone students indicated they knew where to find information regarding employment opportunities within the federal government, 60% of the Francophone respondents indicated they knew where to find this information.
- When looking at the interview process and the subsequent time before a job offer is made, the attitudes of French and English students divide. Francophone students seem to place higher importance on the timeliness of job offers, with

63% stating it is either important or very important, compared to 53% of their English counterparts.

- At the time of the survey in October 1997, 47% of the Francophone students had already begun their job search, compared to 32% of the English students.

AGE

- Perhaps one of the most interesting findings of the survey is the confidence levels of younger and older students. When looking at students' attitudes towards finding employment following graduation, initially, there do not seem to be any differences between students under 25 years of age and those 25 and older. Seventy-two percent of younger students felt it likely or highly likely they would be able to find the type of work they sought following graduation, with 74% of the older students indicating the same sentiment. Delving deeper, however, interesting nuances appear. This confidence seems to peak with those individuals 25 to 28 years of age, and then falls for students over 28 years. Those individuals over the age of 32 appear to have the least confidence in finding employment within six months of graduation. Realizing that 82% of the respondents over the age of 32 were enrolled in graduate level studies, and that traditional market trends dictate that higher levels of education are associated with lower incidences of unemployment, this finding comes as a surprise.
- Looking at minimum salary expectations, the older age cohort responded with higher requirements.
- Interestingly, students 25 years of age and older expressed a distinctly stronger preference to work for the federal government than their younger counterparts. Specifically, 22% of older students said they would prefer to work for the federal government, with 57% preferring the private sector. Students under 25 years of age expressed a much stronger preference for the private sector, 71% compared to 16% who preferred the federal government.
- Recognizing these preferences, it is surprising to realize that only 20% of students 25 years of age and older thought it would be easy to find out about federal employment opportunities, compared to 26% of those under 25 years of age.
- Unique attitudes also emerge when studying the factors which motivate students to obtain university degrees. From highest to lowest motivators, students 25 years of age and older indicated personal development, the potential to earn a higher salary, to be able to get a job, to change jobs or careers, promotions restricted without a degree, and, finally, to change sector of employment. Compare this to students under 25 years of age who were primarily motivated to obtain a university degree to get a job, followed by personal development, a higher salary, a change in jobs or careers, because promotions are restricted without a degree, and a change in sector of employment.
- When focusing on searching for employment, the data indicate that older students were less likely to rely on campus career centres and government centres (66% and 38% respectively), compared to 79% of students under 25 who indicated a likelihood of

using campus career centres and 47% who would use government employment centres. Instead, older students were more likely to rely on professors or deans as a job search method, 58% compared to 45% of younger students.

- When analyzing actual job search activity, a greater number of older students had already begun their job searches, 40% compared to 33% of younger students.

GENDER

- In total, 54% of the students who responded to the survey were female and 45% were male (1% did not indicate their gender).
- More than twice as many females as males reported that they would be looking for part-time work. In fact, recognizing that students could choose multiple responses, more women than men indicated a willingness to accept employment in all categories (full time, contract or term, or part time) except self-employment, in which case 55% of respondents were male.
- Perhaps tying into the above findings are the data regarding minimum salary expectations. Recognizing that more women than men indicated a willingness to accept contract, term and part-time employment, it may not be surprising to learn that more women than men expressed lower salary expectations.
- While the large majority of students believed that the most opportunities for employment following graduation would be found in the private sector, 70% of the student sample had at one time considered employment in the public sector. Within this group of students, male and female preferences emerged as quite distinct. The federal government seems to have more of an attraction for male students, with 74% of the men in this group choosing to work for the federal government, followed by 17% who would choose provincial, and 6% the municipal level. Compare this with the female students who had considered employment in the public sector, with 63% looking at the federal level of government, 25% choosing the provincial level, followed by 8% preferring work with a municipal government.
- Looking at the least important factors, both demographic groups indicated that a job located within their region was least important when looking for a job following graduation. As the second and third least important factors, men chose the opportunity to learn another language and a culturally diverse work environment. Female students selected power and influence as the second least important work-related factor.
- It appears that the women sampled in this survey accessed the Internet at a lower rate on a daily basis (48%), than their male counterparts (64%).

VISIBLE MINORITIES

- On the whole, the attitudes and opinions expressed by those students who self-identified as visible minorities did not vary greatly from the remainder of the student sample.

- Of the 71% of these students who would be job hunting following graduation, 67% believed it likely or highly likely that they would be able to find the type of work they sought, compared to 73% of the entire sample.
- Looking at the characteristics of work, the visible minority students indicated that a competitive salary or compensation was the most important work-related factor, followed by interesting work, and the opportunity to work in their field of study. Conversely, the least important factors chosen by this group were a job located within their region, the opportunity to learn another language, and power and influence.
- In their job searches, the visible minority students differed from the rest of the student body only to the extent that they had a higher desire to use school newspapers, campus career centres, job fairs, and government employment centres. As well, 29% of these students were aware of the Public Service Commission's Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign, a somewhat higher proportion than the rest of the student body.

LEVEL OF STUDY

- Students enrolled in graduate degree programs tended to have a slightly higher level of confidence in their ability to find work within six months of graduation, 77% compared to 70% of students enrolled in undergraduate programs.
- Undergraduates in general expressed lower minimum annual income expectations than students enrolled in graduate programs.
- Both undergraduate and graduate students ranked a competitive salary or compensation as the most important work-related factor, followed by interesting work, and then the ability to work in their field of study.
- As the least important factor, both undergraduate and graduate students chose a job located within their region. Graduate students then followed with the opportunity to learn another language. The undergraduate students indicated a culturally diverse workplace and the opportunity to learn another language as their second and third least important work-related factors.

PREFERENCE TO WORK FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

- Approximately 18% of the students sampled said they would prefer to work for the federal government, with 65% preferring the private sector, followed by 7% who indicated provincial government, 4% a not-for-profit organization, and 2% municipal government.
- Not surprisingly, perhaps, students who preferred to work for the federal government had more positive impressions of the federal Public Service compared to the remainder of the student sample. Most notably, students with a preference for the federal government were more inclined to agree that the Public Service is committed to the betterment of Canada, and that public servants are committed to serving Canadians. As well, they were less inclined to believe that the federal Public Service is disconnected from the average citizen.

- Of those students preferring to work for the federal government, only 28% indicated that they accessed the Internet at least once a day, compared to 56% of the general student sample.
- A higher proportion of this demographic group than the remainder of the student sample reported an awareness of the annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign organized by the Public Service Commission.
- Only 26% of these students indicated that it would be easy or very easy to find out about federal employment opportunities, compared to 42% who thought it would be hard or very hard.

BACKGROUND

In January 1997, the Public Management Research Centre, a division of the Public Policy Forum, was contracted by the Public Service Commission (PSC) to examine the career aspirations of Canadian university students – tomorrow’s university graduates. The primary mechanism for data collection would be a national survey of students enrolled in a limited number of programs at selected Canadian universities. Timing of the survey release was of utmost importance in order to ensure the highest possible response rate. The survey was distributed during the third week of September 1997 to correspond with students’ availability to complete the questionnaire.

The survey instrument was designed by the Public Management Research Centre with the assistance of an Advisory Committee which provided feedback in the development of the survey. Committee representatives were drawn from the Public Service Commission, the Treasury Board Secretariat, the Privy Council Office, the Canadian Policy Research Networks, and the Public Management Research Centre.

The survey was designed to examine issues particularly relevant to the PSC’s mandate as the agency responsible for federal Public Service recruitment. These issues included the thoughts and perceptions of university students on the public sector with particular emphasis on the federal government, sectoral preferences for employment, knowledge of Public Service recruitment campaigns, and future employment plans. In addition, the survey also examined a number of social policy issues related to expectations about employment, employment security, and the changing nature of work.

The study had three objectives:

1. To gather data which would measure and examine the career choices of tomorrow’s university graduates and the factors driving these choices.
2. To identify the implications of these factors for Public Service recruitment.
3. To provide suggestions and recommendations on promotional ideas and publicity materials for recruitment campaigns to attract high calibre university graduates to the federal Public Service.

What follows is the final report of the Public Management Research Centre based on the data collected from this national survey of Canadian university students. The main body of the report is broken into two sections: (1) an examination of the data; and (2) the implications of the results for Public Service recruitment and recommendations or suggestions for ways to make the current federal Public Service Post-Secondary Recruitment Program more effective.

METHODOLOGY

In total, 17 universities from across the country were targeted for this study. These particular universities were chosen either because the Public Service Commission (PSC) intended to increase its recruitment targets of graduates from these institutions or because of a recent decline in applications from graduates of these institutions. Of these 17 universities, the 13 listed below agreed to participate in this study.

1. University of Ottawa
2. University of Toronto
3. Queen's University
4. University of Western Ontario
5. McGill University
6. Carleton University
7. University of Saskatchewan
8. University of Manitoba
9. University of Alberta
10. University of British Columbia
11. Université de Moncton
12. Université de Montréal
13. Université du Québec à Montréal

Laval, Concordia, Waterloo, and Dalhousie universities were unable to participate due to organizational constraints which restricted their ability to use the financial or human resources required for the survey's distribution.

Given the targeted approach, the university sample was not intended to be regionally representative. However, an attempt was made to ensure that a sufficient number of Francophone or bilingual universities participated in this study. While there was limited success in reaching specific universities in Quebec, the study did achieve a relatively high response rate from Francophone students, 18%, a percentage slightly lower than the Francophone population in Canada (approximately 24%).

In most cases, the universities' corporate policy prohibited the release to an external organization of the names and addresses of currently enrolled students. As a result, each university was provided with approximately 800 surveys in sealed envelopes. Participating universities were then asked to randomly select a total sample of 800 students based on the following criteria:

- 50% undergraduate studies (third- and fourth-year students only)
- 50% graduate studies (Masters and Ph.D. level)

- 50% female
- 50% male

In addition, each university was asked to select only an even distribution of students from the following possible areas of study:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • Computer science | • Public administration |
| • Management information systems | • Business administration |
| • Economics | • Statistics |
| • Accounting | • Mathematics |
| • Finance | • Journalism |
| • International development | • Communications |
| • Engineering | • Applied sciences |

During August 1997, the Public Management Research Centre pre-tested the survey instrument with 76 students enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate courses at the University of Ottawa and Carleton University. Twenty-four of the surveys were completed in French by students enrolled in two French language undergraduate courses, and 52 English language surveys were completed by students enrolled in both undergraduate and graduate level courses.

During the third week of September 1997, the universities received the surveys. They were then responsible for applying labels and mailing the envelopes. The deadline for completion of the survey was October 31, 1997. However, the Public Management Research Centre accepted receipt of envelopes until December 1, 1997, mainly as a result of the postal strike in November 1997.

In order to encourage a higher response rate, the Public Management Research Centre gave students the opportunity to enter a draw for one of three prizes. The first prize winner was awarded \$500, second prize was \$200 and the third prize was \$100. All students who voluntarily completed the entry form were included in the draw and the winners were randomly chosen in the first week of December 1997.

Given that the participating universities had different capabilities and offered different programs, and that each school was responsible for drawing its own sample, the same sampling technique was not implemented across all universities. The level of study was stratified in order to capture a diverse sample of students in both undergraduate and graduate programs. The disciplines of study were selected based on the future needs for the PSC to attract candidates from these particular disciplines. Students enrolled in arts and other related social science programs were not selected for participation as, currently, the PSC is satisfied with the number of applications it receives from graduates of these faculties. However, in some instances, people enrolled in arts or social science programs were captured in certain samples and they are reflected in the “Arts” category.

As a result of varying sampling techniques, each university was asked to provide feedback regarding the specifications of the sample drawn from their particular student population. While recognizing that these factors prohibited the ability to ensure representative proportions of gender, degree program, and field of study within and across universities, the overall sample was expected to provide a reasonable cross-section of post-secondary students. Although efforts were made to obtain a gender breakdown that is representative of society, the data contain a minor gender bias with a slightly higher percentage of women than men responding to this survey. Below, the details pertaining to each university's sample are presented.¹

University of Toronto

A sample of 416 graduate and 413 undergraduate students was randomly selected, with equal representation as to gender. The graduate student sample included students from all targeted disciplines for this study, with the exception of International Development, Public Administration, Journalism, Communications, and Management Information Systems. The sample of undergraduate students included students from all disciplines, with the exception of International Development, Public Administration, Journalism, Communications, and Management Information Systems.

Queen's University

The sample consisted of 392 undergraduate and 387 graduate students, with equal representation based on gender. The sample included students from the disciplines of Computer Science, Economics, Public Administration, Business Administration, Statistics, Mathematics, and Engineering.

University of Western Ontario

The sample drawn satisfied criteria of both equal representation based on gender and on level of study. It included students from the disciplines of Computer Science, Economics, Public Administration, Business Administration, Statistics, Mathematics, Journalism, Communications, and Engineering.

McGill University

The sample satisfied both criteria of equal representation based on gender and level of study. All specified disciplines were included in the sample, with the exception of Journalism and International Development.

University of Saskatchewan

The sample drawn satisfied both criteria of equal representation based on gender and level of study. The sample included students from the disciplines of Computer Science, Economics, Accounting, Finance, Statistics, and Mathematics.

University of Manitoba

The sample drawn included 396 undergraduate and 394 graduate students, with equal representation based on gender. All specified disciplines were included in the sample, with the exception of Journalism and Communications.

University of Alberta

The sample included 783 students, and consisted of equal representation based on gender, and across all academic disciplines.

University of British Columbia, the University of Ottawa, and Carleton University

The samples drawn by each of the above universities satisfied all of the criteria requested, including equal representation by gender, level of study, and all the specified academic disciplines.

Université de Moncton

The student sample satisfied all criteria in that the surveys were distributed evenly to male and female students, with half of the students enrolled each in graduate and undergraduate programs. Using this baseline, a random selection of students was drawn from the faculties designated by the Public Service Commission.

Université de Montréal

The sample included 132 undergraduate and 118 graduate students. Both groups had slight gender biases in favour of males, given the small number of females enrolled in the specified disciplines. The total sample, however, was much smaller than those drawn by the other participating universities because only those students enrolled in either the B.Sc. or M.Sc. programs were selected. In addition to 45 students from the discipline of Political Science, the sample included all specified disciplines with the exception of Economics, Accounting, Finance, and Engineering. The Université de Montréal also attempted to reach students on separate university campuses. Specifically, Université de Montréal requested that the campus employment centres at the École des Hautes Études Commerciales and the École Polytechnique de Montréal distribute additional surveys by hand. Response rates were estimated according to the total number of surveys distributed both by mail and by hand (460 surveys in total).

University du Québec à Montreal (UQAM)

For this university, corporate policy prohibited the distribution of external surveys to students by mail. Rather, a limited number of surveys were distributed through the university student employment centres to students enrolled in the targeted disciplines of study. As a result, the response rate from UQAM was estimated according to the approximate number of surveys distributed. While UQAM and the two separate campuses of Université de Montréal made an effort to ensure equal

distribution according to the requested sampling criteria, the sampling methods inhibited any rigorous control.

The statistical methods utilized for this report include frequencies and tabular analyses. As a result of the varying sampling techniques implemented by the participating universities, weighting of the data could not be a means of managing the complex stratification. However, the Public Management Research Centre is confident that the data are representative of the total population from which the sample was drawn. With a total sample size of 2,537 individuals, the results presented in this report are accurate within ± 2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Confidence levels, however, diminish for those analyses which examine particular sub-groups within the sample.

The overall response rate to this survey was 27%, with the highest response rate (34%) from the University of Ottawa and the lowest response rate (20%) from the Université de Moncton and the Université de Montréal. In general, the response rate from the Francophone universities was lower than from the Anglophone universities. This is attributed both to the distribution methods and also to the fact that the surveys from the Université de Moncton were distributed late, and so restricting the time for students to complete and return the surveys.

INTRODUCTION

The survey data have been analyzed and recommendations made based on a number of perspectives. In a number of instances, the general data results, as presented in this report, are accompanied by more specific observations based on targeted portions of the student population. In all cases, the data have been further segmented according to the following factors of analysis:

- level of study – undergraduate and graduate enrollment
- academic achievement – an academic average below 80%, and above 80%
- language – French and English
- gender – male and female
- employment equity classification – visible minority²
- age – 25 years of age and older, and under 25 years of age
- preference to work for the federal government

The reader will notice that at times there is an analysis based on field of study. Such an analysis was only performed when we felt the results should be highlighted. However, because of the small number of students in many subjects and disciplines, no significance can be drawn. Analysis by area of study merely provides a glimpse of the thoughts and attitudes of a small proportion of the larger Canadian student body and is not meant to apply to the larger university population across Canada. However, all other factors of analysis are valid and relevant.

Where possible, we have referenced statistics from other studies and publications to provide a broader perspective on the data. We believe the findings of the study are critical for those decision makers in the federal Public Service who need to attract and retain the best calibre students from Canadian universities. Following the data analysis, a number of key recommendations have been presented to more closely align the recruitment strategies of the Public Service Commission with needs of students.

PUTTING THE PUBLIC SERVICE INTO PERSPECTIVE

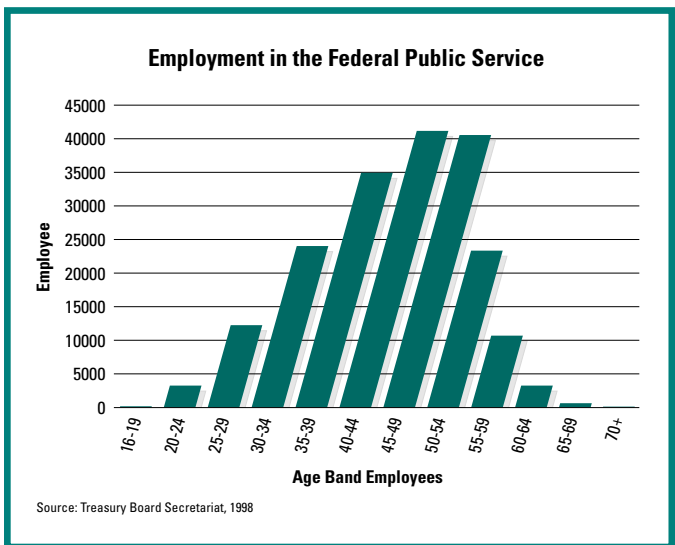
The shift from the Industrial Age to the Information Age has generated very significant transformations in the nature of work in our society. In response to technological innovation and the globalization of the marketplace, both public and private sector organizations have been forced to change how they operate. Words such as ‘downsizing,’ ‘right-sizing’ and ‘reorganizing’ are now commonplace terms. In recent years, the federal government has undergone a far-reaching and very public downsizing initiative which has significant implications as to its ability to attract and retain the best and brightest candidates to its labour force.

Beginning in the late 1980s, the Conservative government implemented the first of a series of policies and initiatives designed to reduce the size of the federal Public Service. However, it was not until the Liberals came to office in 1993, and the subsequent unveiling of *Program Review*, that government restructuring became a political priority. To date, significant personnel reductions have been realized. From a high of 242,958 employees in 1992 to a low of 194,396 as of March 1997, the Public Service has been cut by approximately 20% in five years.³ In addition, salaries at all levels of the organization have been frozen, recruitment from outside the Public Service has been negligible, and the demographic profile of the Public Service has severely restricted professional development and mobility opportunities.

With downsizing slowly coming to an end, however, Public Service leaders now see recruitment as a necessary and important focus. As Figure 1 shows below, the federal Public Service currently employs very few individuals under 30 years of age.

As of March 1997, a mere 8.1% of indeterminate (full time) federal government employees were under the age of 30, with 12.4% in the 30-to-34 age band. In sharp comparison, 17.6% of employees were aged 35 to 39, 21.2% were 40 to 44 years old, and 20.9% were in the 45-to-49 age band. This should not be surprising considering that the average age of newly appointed regular employees in the federal

FIGURE 1



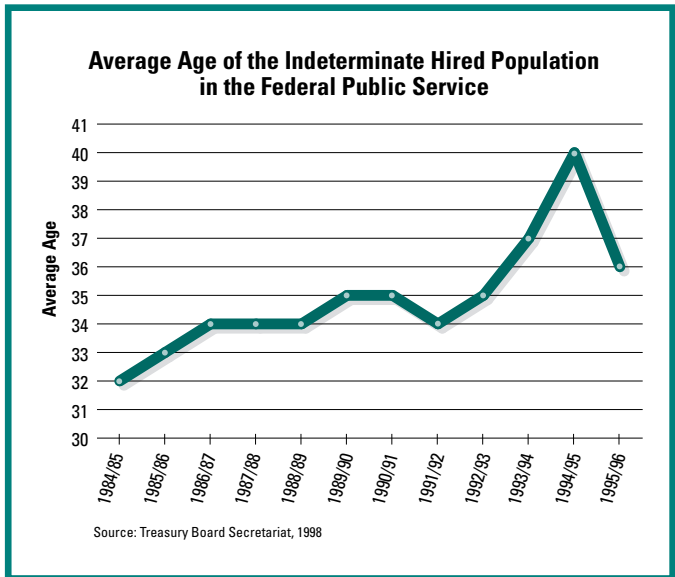
government has been increasing over the past decade, peaking in 1994/95 at 40 years of age (see Figure 2).

In both private and public sector organizations, youth are seen as the building blocks of the future and many leaders believe that the organization that can effectively attract and harness the energy of Canadian youth will experience the greatest success in the future.

It is recognized that the downsizing initiative currently coming to an end in the federal government has had a substantial impact on the ability to hire new recruits, whether young or old. However, increasing the number of young people in the Public Service is not just a matter of deciding to start re-hiring again. Decision makers need to be aware of a number of broad societal trends that will affect their ability to attract the best and brightest university graduates into the Public Service.

Public attitudes towards government have a tangible impact on the Public Service's ability to attract new recruits. Canada, as well as a number of other industrialized countries, all have experienced a discernible decline in the level of trust associated with public institutions. Public opinion polls indicate that negative attitudes can be attributed to mistrust in government, a sense of declining ethics in today's leaders, an overall lack of focus on the public

FIGURE 2



interest, and a conviction that governments are no longer effective or efficient. In addition, many of the respondents in a 1997 survey conducted by Ekos Research Associates Inc. believed that government is out of touch with the average Canadian.⁴

The lack of faith and trust that the public bestows upon its politicians and public institutions indicates that the current system has been unable to adapt and respond positively to the changing needs and interests of its citizens. When citizens express confidence in their government they are acknowledging its legitimacy as a valid institutional representative of the people and a valid vehicle for collective action. When governments fail to maintain reasonably high levels of confidence,

the trust and esteem people have for their government institutions such as their political parties, parliament, and the public service begin to decline.⁵

Within this environment of declining trust and confidence, how does one attract a young person to work for an institution that is continually criticized by Canadian society? Again, polling data indicate that public servants are more trusted than their political leaders, but they are still granted less public trust than teachers, nurses, medical doctors, pollsters, and people working for non-governmental organizations.⁶

Another trend affecting public service recruitment is the widening gap between public and private sector compensation. The salary freeze of 1991, which continued for six consecutive years, has had a negative impact on the earnings of employees at all levels of the Public Service – most notably in comparison to their private sector counterparts. Now that the salary freeze has been lifted and collective bargaining has been reinstated, debate is heated as to the level of salary increases that will be awarded.

Recognizing that the federal government is one of the largest employers in Canada, it is not surprising that the media are closely monitoring the unions' struggle to recoup the financial losses their members have sustained over the past six years. At the executive level, headlines have shouted that senior bureaucrats and leaders have been leaving the Public Service in droves, attracted by higher paying jobs in the private sector. The media's influence on the beliefs and perceptions of society is well documented, and any student conversant with current events will know that compensation – or lack of it – has become a major issue at all levels of the federal Public Service. While it is generally understood and accepted that the majority of private sector organizations offer higher compensation packages than their public sector counterparts, the salary freeze, and perhaps more importantly the media attention it has received, has no doubt contributed to the perception that the federal government no longer offers competitive compensation packages. The question now remains as to how important compensation will be in order to attract the best calibre students graduating from universities.

It should also be recognized that the current cadre of young people are arguably the most educated generation. By 1996, 60% of youths⁷ were attending school, compared to 52% in 1989 and 43% in 1976. This trend has been fueled mainly by the attendance rate of youths in the 20-to-24 year age range. School attendance among this cohort increased by over nine percentage points between 1989 and 1996, currently reaching 37%.⁸ However, for this age group during the 1990s, unemployment averaging 16% as well as a trend towards underemployment have prevailed. It is not surprising that, in a recent poll of individuals aged 18 to 34, unemployment was cited as the biggest concern about the future.⁹

These trends provide a broader framework for studying the recent federal Public Service downsizing initiatives. The ranks of the bureaucracy have been

thinned, and now, more than ever, new workers are needed to revive and rejuvenate an organization that is just beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel. As an organizational resource, today's youth can bring a high level of education, technological experience, and potentially innovative and competitive advantages to the federal Public Service. Understanding the attitudes, concerns, and expectations of this generation is essential to building a recruitment strategy and a workplace that will be challenging, rewarding, and attractive.

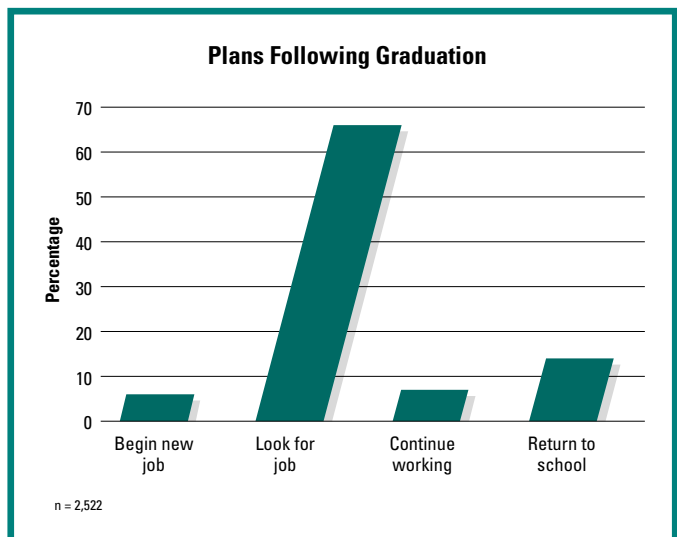
THE LABOUR MARKET: STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS

Today's students are challenged by the economic realities of the 1990s. In recent years we have seen a rise in the educational requirements for most jobs; for younger cohorts, the emergence of "leaner and meaner" organizations has meant "last hired, first fired"; and the demographic picture has led to competition among younger cohorts for scarce and limited job opportunities. Although today's youth are more educated than their parents' generation, they have fewer opportunities and, are quite likely the first generation in recent years to be worse off than their parents. As today's university students approach the end of their studies and march into the labour market, this unstable economic environment has had an impact on their outlook, their feelings, and perspectives regarding labour market opportunities and career paths. This section endeavours to analyze the expectations and preferences of tomorrow's university graduates in terms of jobs, sector of employment, and employment security.

The survey of university students began with a series of questions designed to provide a glimpse of students' perspectives regarding their futures. As noted in Figure 3, the majority of respondents (66%) indicated that their plans following graduation were to begin a job search. Approximately 14% of respondents indicated that they intended to pursue further studies, while a relatively small percentage either had already found employment or planned to continue working for their present employer. Of the approximately 4% of students who indicated 'other', their two primary selections were to travel and then look for work, or to consider options.

Older respondents were more likely to already have a job, with 13% of students 25 years of age and older intending to continue working for their present employer, compared to 2% under the age of 25. This is probably attributed to the fact that younger students would be more likely to look for their first career job following their studies, while the older students were already working in their chosen areas.

FIGURE 3

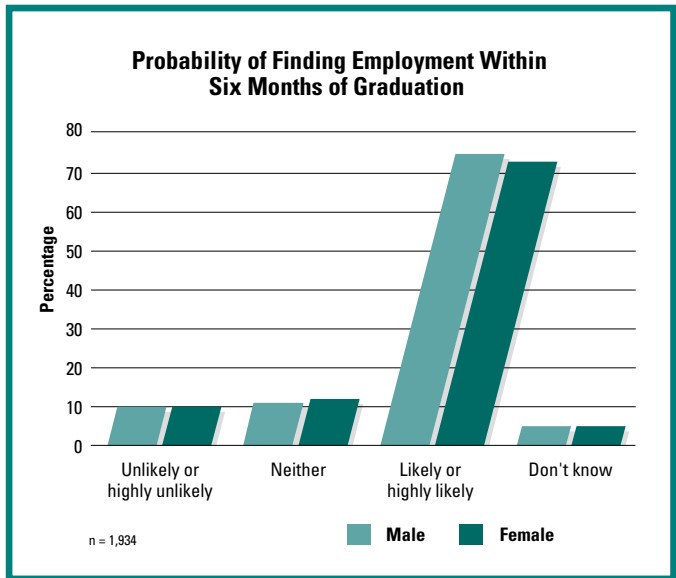


Of those students who responded that they fit into the visible minority employment equity classification, a slightly higher percentage (71%) than the average indicated they were planning to look for a job upon graduation. Approximately 13% of this sub-group reported that they would return to school for further studies, while 6% had already arranged for a job, and 5% indicated they would continue to work for their present employer following graduation.

In terms of the type of employment, 67% of students would be pursuing permanent full-time employment upon graduation, followed by 20% who indicated they would be looking for either contract or term employment. While respondents were given the option to provide multiple responses, it is interesting to note that more than two times as many women than men indicated that they would be looking for part-time work. In fact, more women than men indicated a willingness to accept employment in all categories, except self-employed, in which case, 55% of respondents who reported that they would be looking for self-employment opportunities were male.

In total, 73% of the respondents said that it was either likely or highly likely that they would find the type of employment they were looking for within six months of graduation. On the other hand, 27% of tomorrow's university graduates were either unsure or not very confident that they would find employment opportunities. As shown in Figure 4, these findings are fairly consistent across gender lines, with male students only slightly more confident than their female counterparts about finding employment within six months of graduation.

FIGURE 4



This finding seems consistent with the challenges youths face in obtaining employment in today's labour market. Unemployment rates among Canada's youth have been on the rise, and this trend does not preclude those with post-secondary education. For example, the unemployment rate among university graduates was 2% in 1976, but in 1994 it had more than doubled to approximately 5%.¹⁰ While it is recognized that individuals with higher levels of education tend to experience significantly lower levels of unemployment, the fact remains that unemployment levels among university graduates have more than doubled over the past 20 years. Furthermore, in the survey, the open-ended responses provided by the students

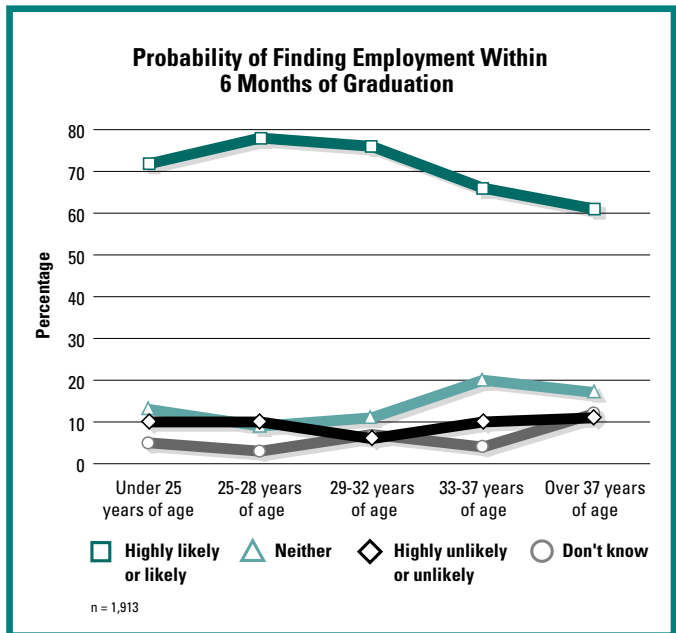
demonstrate their high levels of uncertainty and fear when contemplating the labour market (see Appendix 1). Therefore, even though unemployment rates are lower for university graduates than their less educated peers, the transition from school to work is still not perceived as easy by some.

Continuing to focus on the likelihood of finding employment within six months of graduation, there were relatively small differences based on language, level of study, academic achievement, gender, or association with a visible minority group. Students who indicated that their first language was English tended to have a slightly higher level of confidence in their ability to find work within six months of graduation (74% compared to 71% of students whose first language was French). Greater confidence levels for ability to find work were also expressed by students enrolled in graduate (77%) compared to undergraduate (70%) programs, students averaging 80% or above (75%) and less than 80% (70%), and male (75%) versus female (72%) students. Relatively lower levels of confidence, compared to the balance of the student sample, were found in visible minorities, with 67% indicating it likely or highly likely they would be able to find work within six months of graduation.

When the student sample is broken down into age groups, initially, there do not seem to be any notable differences. Seventy-two percent of students under 25 years of age felt it likely or highly likely they would find employment six months after graduation, with 74% of those students 25 years of age and older indicating the same sentiment. However, when the data are examined in further detail, an interesting trend appears. As noted in Figure 5, confidence among students appears initially to rise with age, peaking for those individuals 25 to 28 years of age, and thereafter continues to decline for students over 29 years of age to levels below their younger cohorts. Those individuals who are over the age of 32 appear to have the least amount of confidence in finding employment within six months of graduation.

This is interesting given that 82% of the respondents over age 32 were enrolled in graduate level studies. This would tend to indicate that individuals who are

FIGURE 5

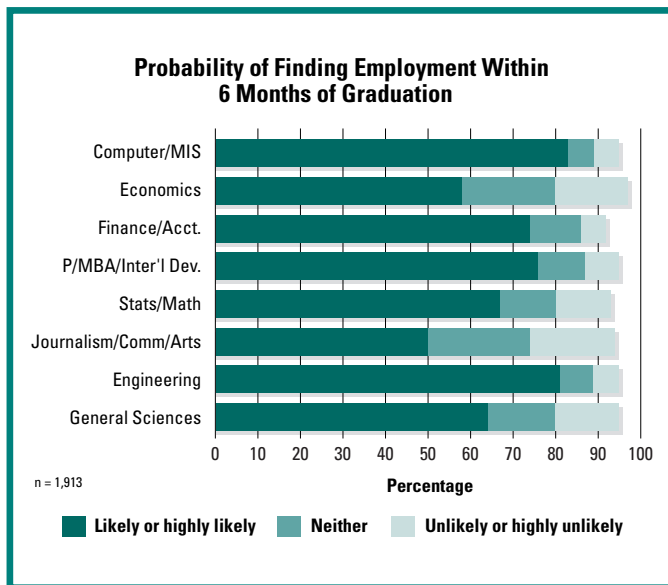


striving to obtain a more advanced education and who have likely returned to school to upgrade their skills feel that their opportunities will be limited. This finding may also be attributed to current demographics in which members of the thirtysome or Generation X cohort are constrained by the bulge of the aging workforce which restricts the labour mobility of the younger cohorts following in their footsteps.

Predictably, students in particular fields of study that are in high demand generally have a greater sense of confidence in finding the type of employment

they are searching for within six months of graduation.¹¹ Specifically, individuals studying computer science/management information systems and engineering constitute the highest percentage of respondents who indicated it likely or highly likely (83% and 81% respectively) that they would find employment within six months of graduation, compared to 50% of students enrolled in the more arts related programs, such as journalism and communications (see Figure 6).

FIGURE 6



Although confidence levels are fairly high, it is apparent that many students still felt insecure about their future labour market prospects. The relatively high level of insecurity these Canadian university students were feeling is indicative of a broader trend in which Canadians have declining confidence levels in their overall security, especially job security. The 1990s have seen unprecedented organizational downsizing and restructuring throughout all industry sectors in the name of cost constraints and global competition. No one has been immune to the impact of these changes and the era of leaner and meaner organizations has led to widespread job insecurity. However, younger cohorts have been disproportionately affected by labour market trends – they are the first to be laid off and are the most affected by hiring freezes instituted in many sectors.

According to Statistics Canada, the recession of the early 1990s contributed to a dramatic rise in unemployment rates among younger cohorts 15-24 years of age. This, coupled with the “last hired, first fired” employment environment that characterizes the work experience of many youths, has resulted in a growing pool of

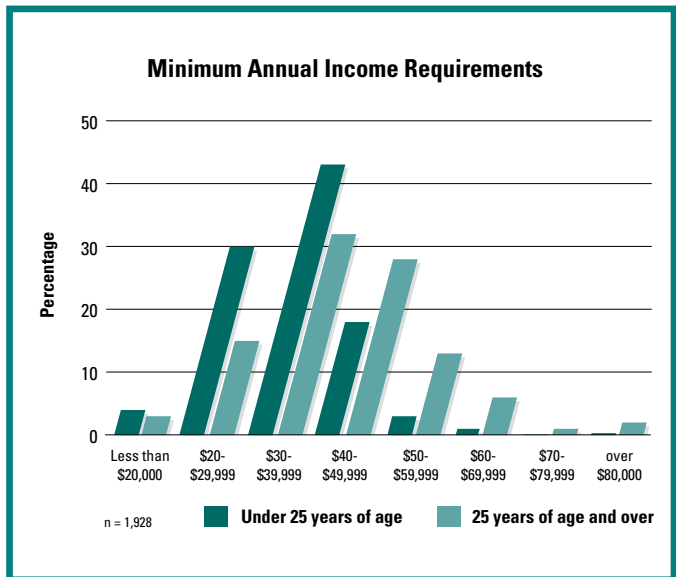
young people who lack the employment experience required to successfully compete in the labour market, further exacerbating the dilemma faced by today's youth.¹² Today's employers are searching for experience, but research shows that only 39% of full-time university students in Canada have the opportunity and the ability to work during their studies.¹³ Consequently, new university graduates must compete with older graduates, who generally have more labour market experience. But, because of the realities of the current labour market, older graduates with more advanced education are at times being forced to accept jobs at lower levels than their capabilities and education would normally dictate. Interestingly, as noted earlier, those individuals who are over 29 years of age appear to feel more insecure in terms of employment opportunities than their younger counterparts.

MINIMUM SALARY EXPECTATIONS

Given the volatility of today's labour market, the survey asked whether students were aware of the income their skills and education might command in the labour market. The respondents were asked to indicate their minimum annual income requirements. Older students tended to have higher demands in terms of income. Realizing that these individuals were more likely to be married and have one or more dependent family members, this finding does not come as a surprise.

As shown below in Figure 7, over 31% of students 25 years of age and over had minimum income expectations falling somewhere between \$30,000 and \$39,999, while 28% and 13% of this same age group had minimum salary expectations in the \$40,000 to \$49,999 and the \$50,000 to \$59,999 ranges respectively. On the other hand, students under 25 years of age had expectations skewed slightly downward. Thirty percent required a minimum income falling between \$20,000 and \$29,999, and 43% and 18% respectively with minimum income expectations in the \$30,000 to \$39,999 and the \$40,000 to \$49,999 ranges. A similar finding is noted upon examining level of study. Undergraduates in general had lower minimum annual income expectations than their counterparts in graduate programs.

FIGURE 7



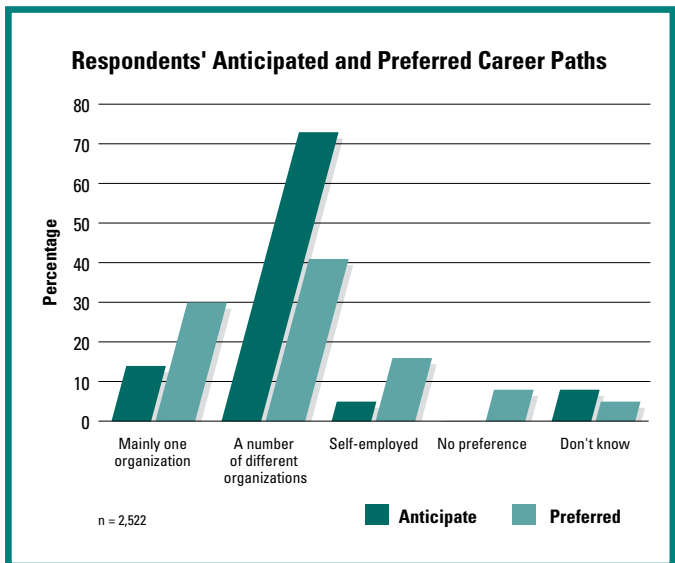
Similar variations appear as the student sample is analyzed by different characteristics. Dividing students as to their academic achievements, it becomes apparent that a larger proportion of students with average grades of 80% and above had higher salary expectations, compared to those with average grades below 80%. The largest group of students in each sub-group selected the \$30,000 to \$39,999 salary range. However, a greater proportion of students with higher grades chose the \$40,000 and above salary ranges, while those students with an academic average below 80% had a greater tendency (in comparison to their academic counterparts) to choose the \$20,000 to \$29,999 range. The same trend is evident when examining English versus French students, and men versus women. The gender difference, in particular, is interesting and may coincide with earlier findings demonstrating that more women than men indicated a willingness to accept part-time, contract, and term employment, all of which are generally associated with lower compensation.

CHOOSING A CAREER PATH

Overall, students anticipated that, throughout their career paths, a series of steps would take them through a number of different organizations. The findings of this study indicate that, generally, young people no longer anticipate following a traditional career path as did their parents, who were employed throughout their careers predominantly by one organization. As many labour theorists and economists have noted, today’s labour market, driven primarily by the global, knowledge-based economy, requires workers to have higher levels of education and adopt a continuous learning framework in order to keep abreast of technology changes, and to ensure flexibility and mobility. The students’ anticipations echo today’s workplace requirements. However, the survey responses show that the students’ preferences are somewhat different to their anticipations.

This trend towards several career changes is clear with only 14% of respondents anticipating a career in one organization, compared to 44% feeling their life-long career path will travel through two to three organizations, and 21% indicating four to five organizations. However,

FIGURE 8



when these responses are compared with actual preferences, it is evident that a number of today's students are trying to adapt to the realities of the labour market rather than make a conscious choice to pursue a transient career path. As noted in Figure 8, 30% of the student sample indicated a preference for a career in one organization, compared to the 14% cited earlier who anticipated a career in one organization. Furthermore, although 16% of respondents would prefer a career path of self-employment, only 5% actually anticipated pursuing this type of career.

While it is clear that the majority of students have adjusted to the demands of today's labour market, it is also evident that a large number would prefer to pursue a career through one organization rather than move among many different organizations. Upon examining the data in further detail, we see that there are relatively few differences based on gender, age, language, academic achievement, or students in the visible minority classification.

It would appear that students from some fields of study have a greater desire to follow a career path in one organization. Of the 230 students enrolled in finance and accounting programs, 32% indicated a preference to work in one organization, although only 11% said they anticipated having a career in one organization. Similarly, of the 459 students enrolled in either public/business administration, or international development, 26% hoped to have a career in one organization, compared to 10% who anticipated actually having a career in one organization. Interestingly, in areas of science, statistics, and maths there was the greatest anticipation of a career path within one organization (24% and 19% respectively), and even higher levels of preference for a career limited to one organization (37% and 47%).

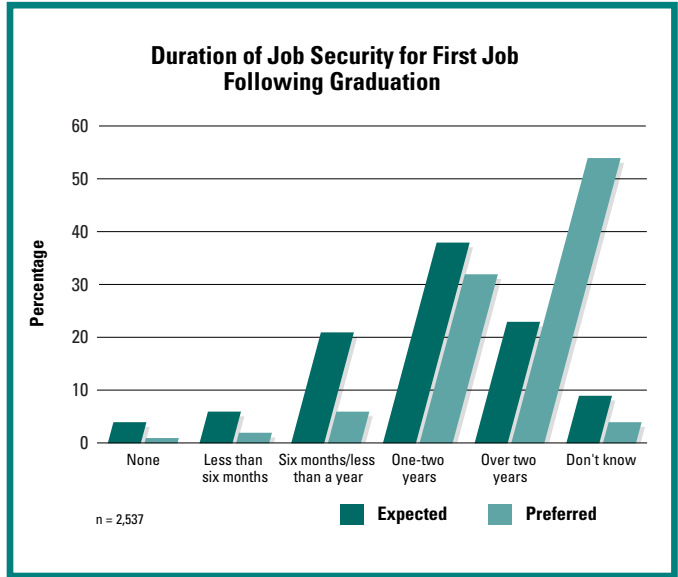
As one would expect, the majority of students expressed a preference for a career path involving lateral, as well as vertical promotion, either within a single organization or between organizations. As well, the majority of students sampled intended to pursue a career path which would develop more generalist skills rather than specialized skills. This is a positive finding, in that it indicates that students today recognize the need to develop a broad range of skills that can be applied across different areas of work as career paths increasingly become more transitory in nature.

THE SEARCH FOR EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

Upon examining issues related to job security, it is again apparent that a real gap exists between the expectations and actual preferences of students. As Figure 9 shows, while a number of students anticipated only six months to two years of job security, it is clear that the majority of respondents would prefer a secure job for longer than two years. These findings hold true regardless of gender, age, level of study, or visible minority status.

It is clear from all economic indicators that unemployment among individuals under the age of 25 is a very serious problem in Canada. In many cases, the sheer percentage of individuals underemployed in this age cohort presents some daunting challenges for tomorrow's graduates. It is understandable, therefore, that the study's findings indicate that, during a fairly unstable transition period (i.e., entering the labour market for likely the first time), students have little expectation of finding employment with long-term security.

FIGURE 9

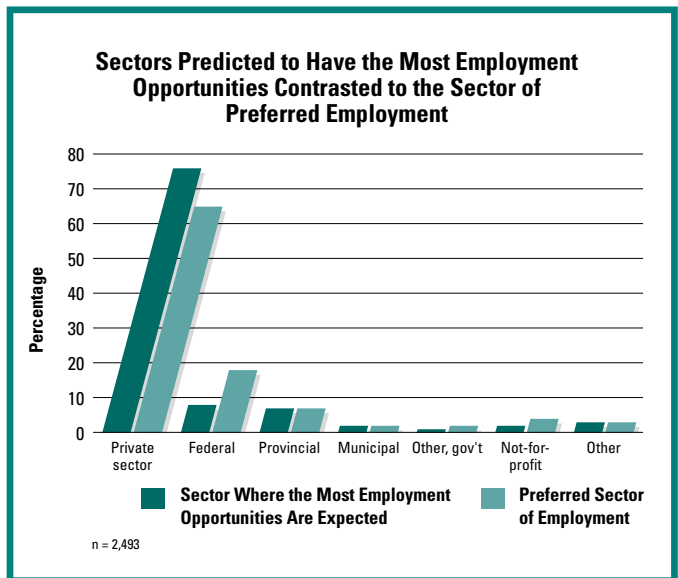


IN SEARCH OF OPPORTUNITIES

The majority of students indicated a belief that the most opportunities for employment following graduation would be found in the private sector. This is not surprising given that the private sector employs approximately 70% of the total Canadian labour force.

Figure 10, makes it evident that the large majority of tomorrow's graduates view the private sector as the engine driving future job creation. Interestingly, a number of individuals who will be looking for employment in the private sector would actually prefer to work for the federal government. In fact, twice as many of the student respondents would prefer to work for the federal government than actually

FIGURE 10



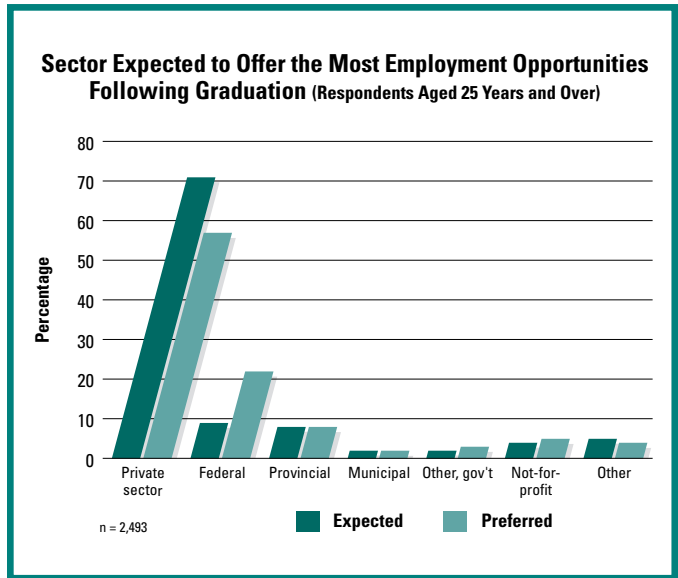
expect to find employment there. Of those who indicated ‘other,’ the responses predominantly focused on employment either in universities, international or multinational organizations, or self-employment.

While this finding is relatively consistent across all selected variables, there do seem to be differences based on language and age variables. Those students who indicated French as their mother tongue expressed a stronger preference to work for the federal government than their English-speaking counterparts. Specifically, 25% of the French-speaking students would prefer to work for the federal government, compared to 15% of the English-speaking students. In contrast, 68% of the English-speaking students expressed a preference to work in the private sector, compared to 61% of the French-speaking students.

When various age cohorts are examined, we see that mature students are much more likely to both anticipate and prefer to work in the public sector. As noted in Figure 11, while approximately 71% of students 25 years of age and over expected to find the most employment opportunities in the private sector, only 57% percent said they would actually prefer to work there. On the other hand, while only 9% of students in this age category expected the most opportunities to be available with the federal government, 22% would actually prefer working there.

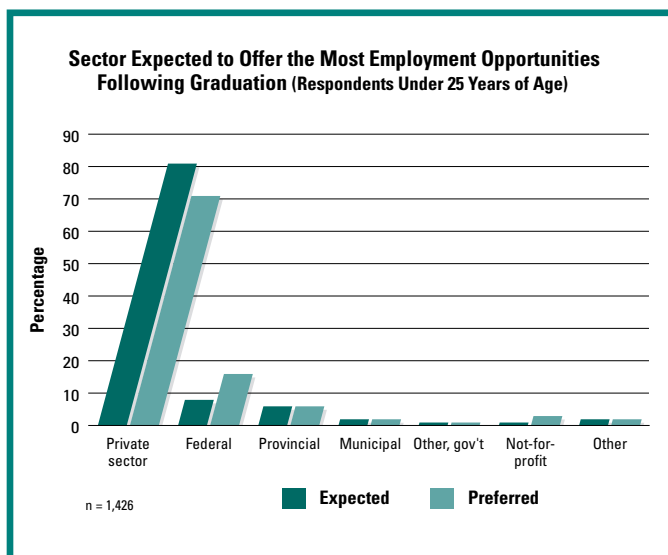
While a greater number of students under the age of 25 years said they would also prefer to work for the federal government than actually expected to find employment there, students in this age cohort appeared to be more attracted to employment opportunities in the private sector. For example as noted in Figure 12, 81% of students under the age of 25 expected to find the most employment opportunities in the private sector, and 71% indicated that was also their preference. However, of the students under the age of 25 years, approximately two times as many said they would prefer to work for the federal government (16%) than actually expected to find work there (8%). For the other public sector categories, expectations and preferences are more clearly matched.

FIGURE 11



It has previously been noted that a number of students indicated a preference to work in the public sector, and it is interesting to learn that 70% of students have, at one time, considered employment in this sector. Of the latter, 68% had considered the federal government, with 22% and 7% looking towards the provincial and municipal levels respectively, and 3% choosing other government. These proportions are relatively stable when analyzed across level of study, age, language, and identification as a visible minority. Small differences emerge when analyzing students based on their academic achievements and gender. Those students with an average of 80% or higher seem more inclined toward the federal government. Specifically, 75% of high achievers who have considered public sector employment would prefer to work at the federal level, compared to 66% of students averaging less than 80%. As well, the federal government seems to hold a greater attraction for male students than for female students. Of those students who had considered public sector employment, 74% of male students preferred the federal government, followed by 17% preferring the provincial level, and 6% the municipal level. Conversely, 63% of female respondents would prefer the federal government, and 25% the provincial government, followed by 8% preferring the municipal level.

FIGURE 12



Realizing that contacts within an organization are often a means of influencing decisions and finding employment opportunities, students were asked if they had any family members or friends working for any level of government. The majority of students (58%) reported that this was the case, with 42% indicating a family member or friend who worked at the federal level, 37% with a connection at the provincial level, 18% at the municipal level, and 3% in 'other government' positions. While one might think that these contacts would encourage young people to choose certain options, this does not seem to be the case for the majority of the student respondents. Sixty-nine percent of students with family members or friends employed within a level of the public sector indicated that they were neither encouraged nor discouraged to seek employment there, with 12% being discouraged or strongly discouraged, and 19% encouraged or strongly encouraged. Looking specifically to those individuals with family or friends working for the

federal government, the results are slightly different, with 65% neither being encouraging or discouraging, 12% discouraging or strongly discouraging, and 23% encouraging or strongly encouraging.

Finally, students were asked the extent to which knowing someone would make it easier to find a job in different sectors. A fivepoint scale was used ranging from 'a very little extent' to 'a very great extent.' According to the student sample, having a contact was perceived to have the greatest impact in private sector organizations, with 77% of the respondents indicating 'a great extent' or 'a very great extent.' Another 16% felt that knowing someone would make it easier to find a job to 'some extent' in the private sector. Fewer students responded in the same manner when referring to the public and non-profit sectors. Half of the respondents felt that knowing someone would to a great or very great extent make it easier to find a job in the public sector, with another 26% believing it would impact to some extent. In looking to non-profit organizations, only 40% choose 'a great extent' or 'a very great extent,' followed by 21% who believed it would make it easier to find a job to some extent.

CAREER-RELATED DECISIONS

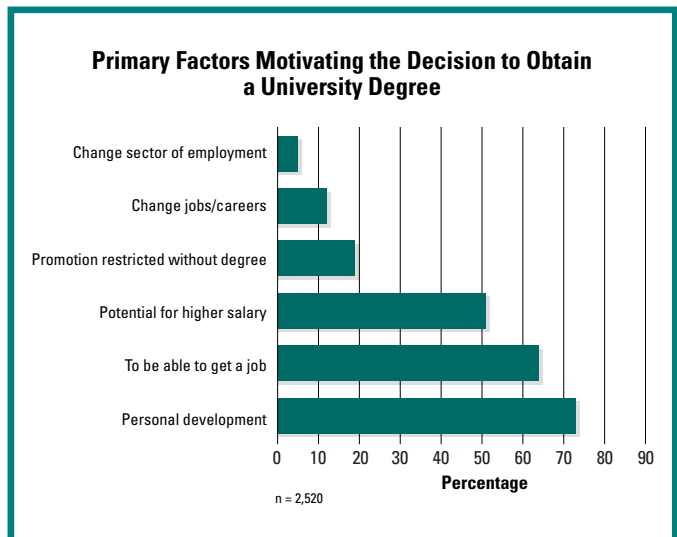
WHY STUDENTS CHOOSE TO ATTEND UNIVERSITY

A significant number of young Canadians today are deciding to stay in, or return to school. In 1996, 60% of the youth population¹⁴ in Canada attended school, a sharp increase from the 43% who attended 20 years earlier in 1976. Furthermore, much of this growth has occurred since 1989 when the school attendance rate was 52%. Of particular relevance to the target sample of this survey, the attendance rate among 20-to-24 year-olds has soared since the 1981 – 1982 recession, reaching 37% in 1996.¹⁵ Why are so many more young people deciding to continue their education beyond secondary school?

Students were given the opportunity to choose a number of options to indicate their motivations for obtaining a university degree. Recognizing that this question allowed individuals to choose more than one response, we can distinguish three main reasons why students decide to pursue post-secondary education. As illustrated below, almost three-quarters of the students sampled (73%) indicated personal development as one of the primary factors in their decision to obtain a university degree. This was followed by 64% who said they were attending university in order to get a job. This finding in particular seems to demonstrate that, increasingly, students are becoming aware that higher levels of education generally are associated with higher levels of employment. The third most popular reason given for obtaining a university degree was the potential for a higher salary, chosen by 51% of students.

Of the remaining options, there are two factors, to change jobs/careers and to change the sector of employment, that both implicitly assume that the respondent was previously employed. In saying this, it should be noted that just under one-third (29%) of the students who responded to the survey indicated having had a full-time job or career before deciding to return to school. This small sub-sample of students generally explains why these two factors have registered a lower number of responses. Not surprisingly, therefore, we found that three-quarters of the students who

FIGURE 13



were motivated to obtain a university degree in order to change jobs/ careers or to change the sector of employment came from the group who indicated having had a full-time job or career before deciding to return to school.

Again recognizing that multiple responses were allowed, it is interesting to note that when the total sample is broken down by age group, different dynamics emerge. Similar to the total student sample, the highest proportion of students 25 years of age and older (74%) indicated personal development as the primary factor motivating their decision to obtain a university degree (see Figure 14). This is followed by 47% who were motivated by the potential for a higher salary, 44% who wanted to be able to get a job, 23% who wanted to change jobs or careers, 18% who felt that promotion was restricted without a degree, and 8% who wanted to change their sector of employment. It is interesting to compare these findings with those for the students under 25 years of age. In the younger group 78% were motivated to obtain a university degree to be able to get a job, followed by 72% who were motivated by personal development, 54% who saw the potential to receive a higher salary, 19% who felt promotions might be restricted without a degree, 4% who desired to change jobs or careers, and 2% who wanted to change their sector of employment.

In understanding the motivations driving individuals to pursue a

FIGURE 14

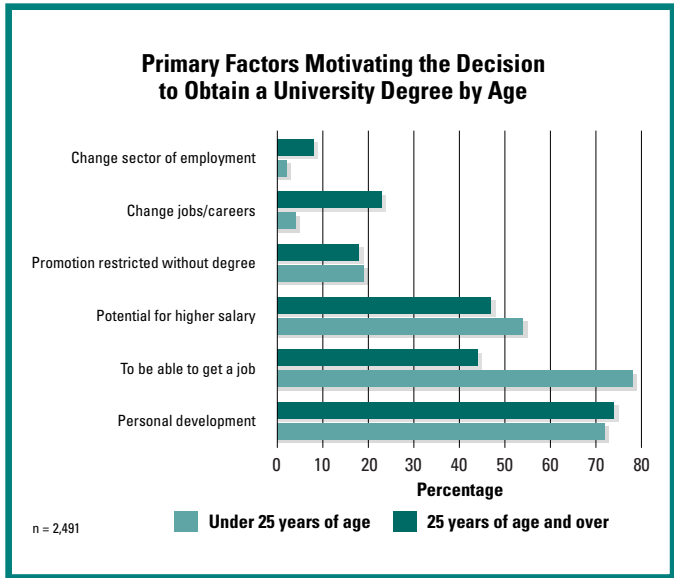
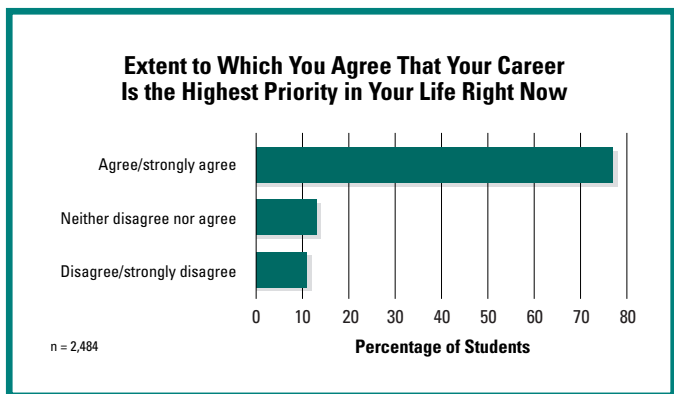


FIGURE 15



post-secondary education, it should not be surprising that 77% of students indicated their career to be the highest priority in their lives at present (see Figure 15). This sentiment is consistent across all demographic groups, with only visible minorities deviating to a significant degree whereby 86% agreed or strongly agreed. Once graduated from university, the world of work will encompass a significant amount of an individual's daily activities and it plays a fundamental role in defining who one is within society. Based on the motivations highlighted above, it is clear that university education is increasingly equated with developing the skills and expertise needed to make the transition from school to work. In addition, the recent surge in student enrollment has been attributed to the lack of alternatives currently available in the labour market, as well as the recognition among younger cohorts of the need for more advanced education in order to compete in a global, information-based society.

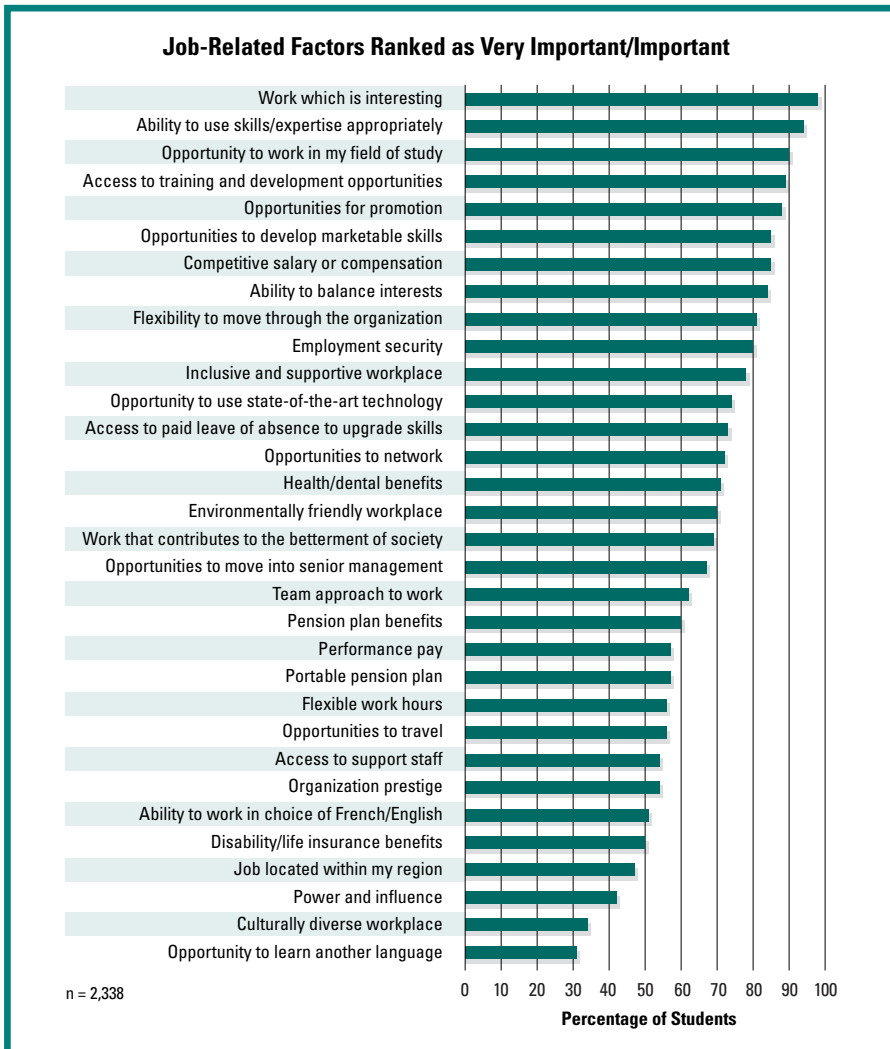
IMPORTANT JOB-RELATED FACTORS

While many of the students responding to the survey had not yet embarked on a full-time career, they had already developed clear attitudes toward the importance of various job-related factors which they would be evaluating on beginning their job searches following graduation. Issues such as compensation, employment security, and access to training and development opportunities are only some of the 33 characteristics students were asked to rate on a five-point scale ranging from very unimportant to very important. Some of these factors, such as compensation, pension plans, and other benefits, are usually explicitly stated in an employment contract, and can be openly negotiated between an employer and a potential employee. There are other factors, however, such as the ability to balance work with other interests, employment security, and the opportunity to learn another language, that may be less visible, but nevertheless play an important role in one's decision to work for a particular organization.

As demonstrated below by Figure 16, most of the factors were ranked as important or very important by the majority of students. Almost all students (98%) felt that finding interesting work was very important or important when looking for the first job following graduation from university. The ability to use one's skills and expertise as well as the opportunity to work in one's field of study were ranked as important or very important by at least 90% of the respondents.

Of these various job-related factors, a number have received a significant amount of attention in recent years. The advancement of information and communication technologies and the globalization of economies around the world have had a tremendous impact on the nature of work in our society. To many, it seems that the rules of employment have changed dramatically. Downsizing, rightsizing, re-engineering, and outsourcing have all become commonplace terms to Canadians. In relation to this landscape, the attitudes and opinions of this generation of future workers becomes increasingly important. The ability of an organization to attract the highest calibre of graduates will hinge on its capability to meet and address their needs, expectations, and aspirations.

FIGURE 16



EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

Employment security has been much discussed during the 1990s, with the media frequently headlining news of labour force cutbacks and layoffs. In the past, organizations placed a high value on stability, and in the majority of cases, offered workers life-time employment in return for loyalty and hard work. Essentially, the security needs of employees coincided with the stability needs of employers. In the 1990s, however, the key to success lies less in organizational stability and more on an organization’s ability to be flexible and responsive to the constantly changing environment. Many companies are moving to adopt smaller core workforces, supplemented by contract and temporary workers as dictated by the demands of the

marketplace. Because of these changes, many people feel that the unwritten employment contract between employers and employees has been broken. As a result, the new breed of workers are predicted to be motivated more by their own personal needs than by the goals and values of any organization. Fulfilling these needs, therefore, supersedes any long-term loyalty or commitment to the employer.

Within this context, it is interesting to note that 80% of the university students still viewed employment security as an important or very important factor of employment. To put this in perspective, more students indicated that employment security was important or very important than those who similarly ranked other factors such as the ability to use state-of-the-art technology (74%), an opportunity to work for the betterment of society (69%), performance pay (57%), and flexible work arrangements (56%). With the rhetoric boasting that the days of job security are over, it seems that these students still place a high degree of importance on the security that accompanies a job. This also supports other findings of this study which indicate that although expectations for long-term job security are low, a much higher percentage of students would prefer job security extending to two years or more.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF SOCIETY

Traditionally, federal Public Service recruitment programs have been targeted at those students who are motivated to work towards the betterment of society. And rightly so, since the role of the public sector, and specifically the federal Public Service, is to further the public interest. However, within the larger context, it should be recognized that over the past 10 years, Canadians, like citizens in other developed and undeveloped countries, have been losing respect for and trust in their government, its public institutions, and its leaders. At the same time, there has been a growth in non-profit/non-governmental organizations which offer an alternative outlet to individuals wishing to pursue work that contributes to the betterment of society. It is widely recognized that governments no longer have a monopoly in offering work that contributes to the public interest.

These trends are converging and students who are searching for employment opportunities which contribute to the public interest, and who are brought up in a society that is increasingly distrustful of government, can look to other, perhaps more respected organizations to pursue such work. In saying this, 69% of the students indicated that work which contributes to the betterment of society or social good was important or very important. Breaking this sample down further, it is perhaps not surprising to note that a lower percentage of students who expressed a preference to work in the private sector (62%) ranked this factor as important or very important. Furthermore, 77% of students who preferred to work in the federal public sector, 84% who preferred to work in the provincial or municipal public sectors, and 93% who preferred to work for not-for-profit or non-governmental organizations indicated that work which contributes to the betterment of society was either important or very important.

Without comparative data, it is impossible to analyze whether individuals who wish to work for the good of society are moving away from federal government organizations. However, it is obvious that a higher percentage of those sampled who are interested in contributing to the betterment of society are looking to work for provincial, municipal, not-for-profit, and non-governmental organizations rather than the federal government. This raises the question: With the federal government's increasing penchant to devolve responsibility for, or eliminate, traditional social programs, and with the emergence of the city-state, are other levels of government now viewed as being more relevant than the federal government?

COMPENSATION

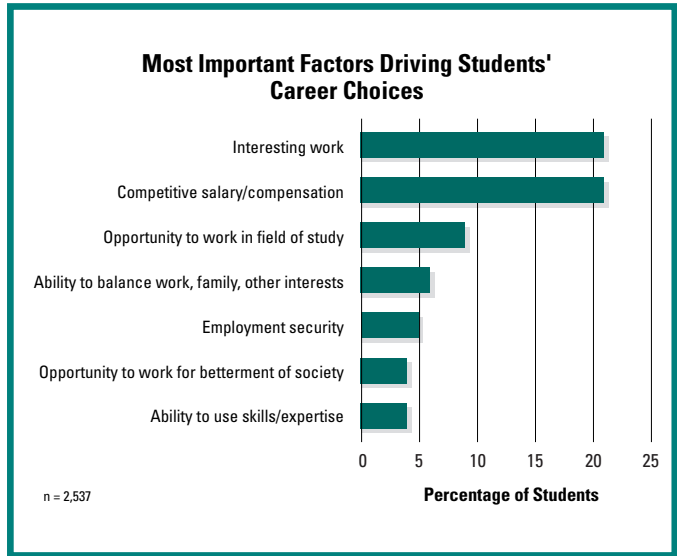
Compensation is another significant factor which contributes to an organization's ability to attract new recruits. In fact, it is often the most high profile component of the employment contract. Accordingly, 85% of the students indicated that a competitive salary/compensation is important or very important when looking for their first job following graduation. While this clearly indicates a consensus as to the importance of compensation, there are a number of factors that received higher levels of support from the student sample. As shown in Figure 16, a competitive salary/compensation is actually placed seventh out of the top ten factors. It is interesting to note, however, that when the students were later asked to rank the different factors against each other, compensation emerged as one of the top two factors driving students' career choices (Figure 17). Only one other factor – interesting work – received similar support from the respondents. It has become clear that compensation is one of the most important factors of the employment contract, regardless of gender, preferred language, area of study, for visible minorities, or for students in graduate or undergraduate programs.

MOST IMPORTANT RANKINGS IN MAKING CAREER CHOICES

Based on the list of work-related factors, students were asked to indicate the three most and least important factors driving their career choices. As Figure 17 shows, interesting work and a competitive salary/compensation emerged as the top two choices. Each factor received support from 22% of the student population. The factor ranked as the third most important – opportunity to work in my field of study – received 9% of the student vote, followed by an ability to balance work, family, and other interests (6%), and employment security (5%).¹⁶ These findings seem to be consistent with an earlier study undertaken by the Public Service Commission in which a number of focus groups were conducted with students enrolled in science and technology fields of study.¹⁷ In that study, the top six criteria that were identified as the most important in attracting students to an employer were challenging work, good work environment/organizational culture, competitive compensation, mobility opportunities, job security, and training and development opportunities.

The survey findings concerning the influences in career choices were relatively stable even when the student sample was broken into more distinct groups. A competitive salary/compensation was ranked as the most important factor by 25% of male students, followed by interesting work (21%). From the females' perspective, interesting work was ranked as the top factor driving their career choices and was supported

FIGURE 17



by 22% of the female students. A competitive salary/compensation (18%) and the ability to work in their field of study (11%) were ranked second and third respectively by female respondents. Students who identified themselves as visible minorities chose a competitive salary/compensation (28%) as the most important factor, followed by interesting work (16%), and the opportunity to work in their field of study (9%).

Breaking the student sample down based on the respondents' first official language of choice again shows that interesting work and competitive salary/compensation were the top two choices, regardless of language preference. Students indicating English as their first language then chose opportunity to work in their field of study (10.8%) as their third choice, with French language students choosing the ability to use skills/expertise appropriately (11.5%).

Students enrolled in computer science, management information systems, economics, finance, accounting, public or business administration, and international studies all indicated competitive salary/compensation as the number one factor driving their career choices, followed by interesting work. Journalism, communications, engineering, sciences, mathematics, and statistics students all selected interesting work as their top choice. With the exception of journalism and communications students, the second choice was competitive salary/compensation. Students working toward degrees in journalism or communications indicated ability to work in their field of study as the second most important factor driving their career choices.

Finally, students enrolled in undergraduate programs provided similar responses as those working in graduate programs. A competitive salary/compensation was ranked the highest, followed by interesting work, and the ability to work in their

field of study. As well, students with an academic average 80% or above chose interesting work (23%) and a competitive salary/compensation (21%) as their two most important factors. Those students averaging less than 80% chose a competitive salary (22%) followed by interesting work (18%) as the most important factors. Both groups of these students indicated that the ability to work in their field of study was the third most important work-related factor.

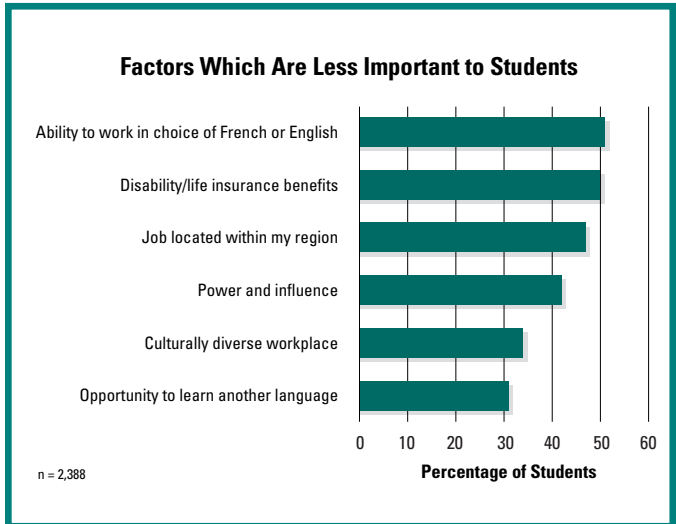
WHAT JOB-RELATED FACTORS ARE LESS IMPORTANT?

The majority of job-related factors that students were asked to rank received a large number of important/very important responses. In fact, over 50% of the students felt that 28 out of the 32 factors were either important or very important. However, a number of factors only received marginal support and it is these factors which have been identified as less important to students when looking for a job following graduation. As shown in Figure 18, only 51% of respondents indicated the ability to work in their choice of French or English was important or very important; 50% indicated that disability or life insurance benefits were important/very important; 47% supported a job located within one’s region; 42% selected power and influence as an important or very important factor; 34% similarly ranked a culturally diverse workplace; and only 31% felt that it was important or very important to be given the opportunity to learn another language.

To provide a more in-depth understanding of the preferences and opinions of students, respondents were asked to choose the three factors which were the least important in driving their career choices. Consensus emerged around five factors indicating that a job located within one’s region (15%), the opportunity to learn another language (11%), a culturally diverse workplace (11%), the ability to work in one’s choice of French or English (9%), and power and influence (9%) were the least important job-related factors influencing the employment decisions of students.

Again, breaking down the total student population into distinct groups, we find slight variations from the general findings. Respondents who indicated English as their first language chose a job located within their region as the least important factor

FIGURE 18



driving their career choices (15%). This was followed by the opportunity to learn another language (12%) and the ability to work in their choice of English or French (10%). The least important factor for students indicating French as their language of choice was also a job located within their region (17%). However, the only other factor that received support from more than 10% of the French students was a culturally diverse workplace (13%).

We also broke down the findings according to the respondents' gender. Both male (16%) and female (14%) respondents indicated that a job located within their region was the least important factor driving their career choice. As second and third choices, male students indicated the opportunity to learn another language (13%) and a culturally diverse workplace (12%) as least important. From the female students, the power and influence category was chosen by 10% of the group as the second least important job factor. Students who indicated they fell under the visible minority employment equity classification chose a local job (16%), the opportunity to learn another language (12%), and power and influence (8%) as the least important factors driving their career choice.

When profiling the student body by age, level of study, and their area of study, the same trends already discussed have emerged. While the ordering is unique to each group, the same five factors appear over and over as the least important to students. The least important factors are: a culturally diverse workplace, the opportunity to learn another language, the ability to work in one's choice of French or English, power and influence, and a job located within one's region.

Fifteen percent of graduate and 14% of undergraduate students chose a job located within their region as the least important factor. Graduate students then followed with the opportunity to learn another language (12%). Undergraduates selected a culturally diverse workplace (12%) and the opportunity to learn another language (10%) as the second and third least important work-related factors respectively.

PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE WITH THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE

A number of students indicated that they had worked in a career-oriented job in the public, private, or other sectors. Consistent with the other findings in this report, the majority of respondents (75%) had worked in the private sector, followed by 23% in the federal government, 18% with a provincial government, 12% with a non-profit or non-governmental organization, and 10% in both municipal and other governments. Perhaps more importantly, those students who had work experience in the federal government were asked to indicate in which department or agency they had been employed and their overall satisfaction with the position. In total, 22 different government bodies were identified, with the highest concentration of students having worked in the Department of National Defence, Public Works and Government Services Canada, and Human Resources Development Canada. However, because of the diverse number of options, no more than 7% of the sample had worked in any one section of government. Therefore, the levels of

satisfaction were combined to give an overall indicator of satisfaction from this group of students. In total, 70% of those students who had work experiences with the federal government were satisfied or very satisfied with their positions. Another 17% were neither dissatisfied nor satisfied, followed by 14% who indicated they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their experiences.

CO-OP PROGRAMS

Given the labour market difficulties faced today by Canadian youth, the availability of co-op programs in conjunction with academic studies has become a very popular and sought after method of gaining valuable labour market experience while working towards a university degree. A total of 20% of respondents indicated they had experience working in co-op placements over the course of their education. Almost half of these opportunities (49%) were with private sector companies, followed by 22% of jobs with the federal government, 11% with a provincial government, 4% with municipal governments, and 3% in not-for-profit or non-governmental organizations.

Interestingly, public sector organizations, and specifically the federal government, are employing a significantly higher concentration of co-op students relative to the percentage of workers which they employ in the Canadian labour market. Statistics Canada research indicates that the private sector employs approximately 70% of the labour force, with another 15% employed in each of the public and self-employed sectors.¹⁸ Of this 15% employed in the public sector, the federal government employs 21% of the workers. In essence, the federal government employs 4% of the total labour market, and yet provided 22% of the total co-op opportunities offered to students who answered the survey.

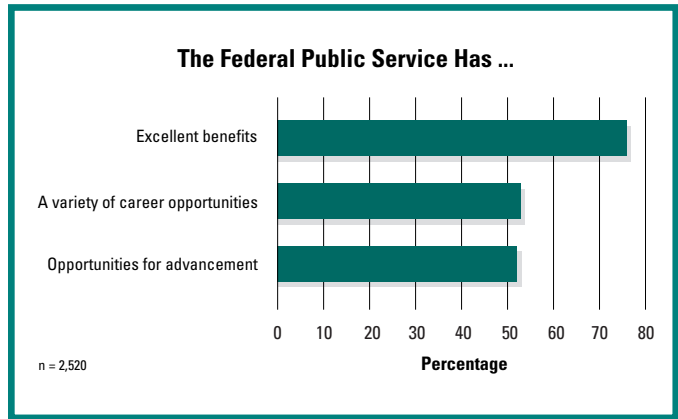
In addition, it is encouraging to discover that 83% of students enrolled in co-op programs felt that the experience had better equipped them to find employment in today's labour market. Another 11% indicated that they did not yet know, with 6% feeling that their co-op experience had not better equipped them. Interestingly, 40% of co-op students stated that they did not plan to look for employment in the same organization for which they had worked during their most recent placement. However, 33% did plan to look for work in the same organization, while 27% were undecided.

When specifically looking at those students who indicated that they had co-op experience with the federal government, 86% of the students felt that the work experience had better equipped them to find employment in today's labour market. However, 51% of these students said they did not plan to return to the same organization upon graduation, followed by 32% who did, and 16% who were undecided.

REFLECTIONS ON THE PUBLIC SERVICE

It is clear that students have developed clear opinions and attitudes concerning certain aspects of the federal Public Service. The majority of students (70%) believed that employment in the Public Service translates into basically a 9-to-5 job and 76% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it offers excellent benefits. Interestingly, 60% of

FIGURE 19



students also perceived that the Public Service has an aging workforce which may contribute to the fact that 53% of the sample believed there are a wide variety of career opportunities available, along with opportunities for advancement (52%). Additionally, a slim majority of students (51%) thought that the federal Public Service is committed to diversity in the workplace, with 47% thinking it is constantly downsizing, and 42% believing it has salaries comparable to other sectors.

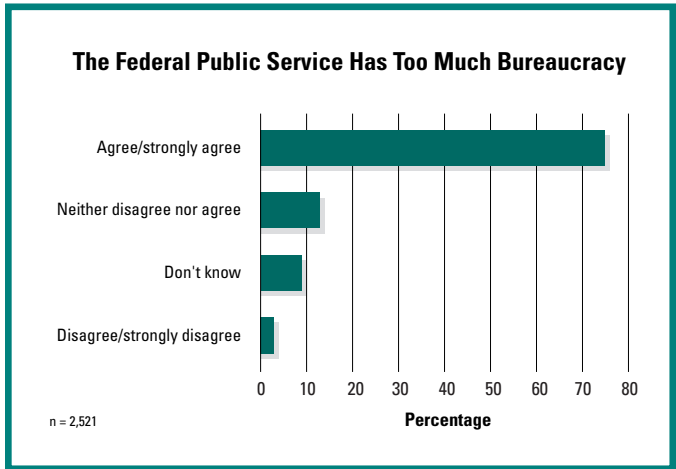
A number of students (47%) agreed that the Public Service is committed to the betterment of Canada. However, only 29% of students believed that it employs public servants who are committed to serving Canadians. Furthermore, another 31% felt that the federal Public Service is disconnected from the average citizen. This seems to indicate that while the commitment of the Public Service as an institution is recognized, the service to Canadians is not as clearly supported or observed. These findings parallel evidence collected through public polling, which states that only 46% of the general public think that the federal government is doing an excellent job of serving the public.¹⁹

These attitudes may also be anchored in the growing student movement protesting the increasing cost of post-secondary education. When given the opportunity to provide comments at the end of the survey, a number of students protested about the rising cost of university tuition (see Appendix 1). It could be that through the student lens, cuts to university funding are equated with lower levels of service.

In addition, as noted in Figure 20, three-quarters of respondents agreed that the Public Service has too much bureaucracy (75%), with over half believing it is too rules and process oriented (58%), is too political (58%), is resistant to change (56%), and limits independent decision-making (50%).

Perhaps one of the most significant findings is how many students just did not know, or had no opinion on the situation within the federal Public Service. In looking at the survey responses, it is difficult to determine a consensus regarding a number of factors. For example, although 40% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the federal Public Service has fair hiring practices,

FIGURE 20



a total of 41% either did not know, or neither agreed nor disagreed. When asked the extent to which students agreed that the federal Public Service is concerned with empire building, 33% did not know and another 30% neither agreed nor disagreed. Similar results emerged when student’s were asked to agree or disagree with the following statements: the federal Public Service offers the latest in technological developments; promotes innovation; inhibits risk taking; is changing for the better; promotes teamwork; values its employees; has poor employee morale; and promotes personal growth and development.²⁰

STUDENTS WHO PREFERRED TO WORK FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

As perhaps expected, students who indicated a preference to work for the federal government seemed to have different impressions of the federal Public Service compared to the remainder of the student sample. A higher proportion of students who indicated a preference to work for the federal government agreed or strongly agreed that it has: excellent benefits (85%), a wide variety of career opportunities (71%), opportunities for advancement (65%), an aging workforce (64%), comparable salaries (57%), a commitment to diversity in the workplace (56%), fair hiring practices (49%), the latest in technological developments (49%), and promotes teamwork (49%).

Conversely, a lower proportion of students indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that the federal Public Service has too much bureaucracy (58%), is resistant to change (41%), is too rules and process oriented (46%), limits independent decision making (40%), and offers a 9-to-5 job (64%). Only six factors emerged for which the majority of students who preferred employment in the federal government indicated ‘don’t know’ or ‘neither agree nor disagree.’ They are: the federal Public Service is changing for the better; inhibits risk taking; promotes innovation; promotes personal growth and development; has poor employee morale; and is concerned with empire building.

Interestingly, this sub-group of students held significantly different opinions about the level of service the Public Service provides to Canadians. Specifically, 64% of the students with a preference to work for the federal government agreed or strongly agreed that the Public Service is committed to the betterment of Canada, compared to 43% of the remainder of the student sample. Furthermore, 45% felt the federal Public Service employs public servants who are committed to serving Canadians, again compared to 25% of the balance of the student sample. Finally, while 24% of this subsample believed the federal Public Service is disconnected from the average citizen, 31% strongly disagreed with this sentiment.

CONDUCTING THE JOB SEARCH

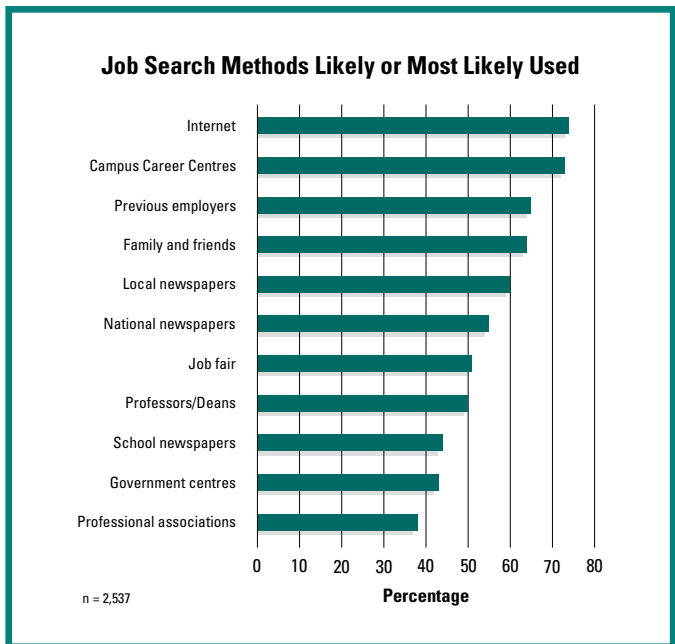
Competition for jobs has become intense as more and more students graduate from post-secondary institutions, while at the same time more organizations are cutting back their complement of full-time, permanent staff. With this competition for jobs, effective job search techniques are essential. No longer are the local newspapers and Canada Employment Centres the only methods to find employment opportunities. In fact, students are using a wide variety of methods to assist them in their job searches. This is evident by observing that 8 out of the 11 methods listed in the survey were being used or would likely be used by 50% or more of the students. Topping the list of the most likely ways to look for a job is the Internet. Seventy-four percent of the respondents would likely or very likely use the Internet versus only 13% who would be unlikely or very unlikely to use this method. The high likelihood of using the Internet is conceivably increased by the ease of access to this technology. Nearly 97% of respondents had access to the Internet, of which 76% of this sub-sample said they would likely use it as a job search tool.

In addition to the Internet, many students indicated a high likelihood of using campus career centres to pursue a job upon graduation. Over 73% of the students said they would be likely or very likely to use campus centres as part of their job search methods.

As demonstrated in Figure 21, one of the least desirable job search avenues (ranked 10 of 11) was the use of government employment centres. Overall, only 43% of the respondents stated that they would likely or very likely use government centres to look for a job, compared with 33% who said they would be unlikely or very unlikely to visit a government employment centre.

With respect to the various job search methods identified, individuals who indicated being part of a

FIGURE 21



visible minority group differed from the remainder of the sample only to the extent that they had a higher desire to use school newspapers (53%), campus career centres (79%), job fairs (61%), and government employment centres (52%) as job search methods. Women, on the other hand, indicated a greater likelihood to use local newspapers (65%), school newspapers (47%), and government employment centres (48%) as job search methods. In terms of language, the only observable difference was a higher tendency for Francophone students to use government employment centres, 61% compared to 37% for Anglophone respondents. This might be attributed to the higher preference of Francophone respondents to work for the federal Public Service.

Interestingly, students 25 years of age and over were less likely to rely on campus career centres and government centres (66% and 38% respectively), compared to 79% of students under 25 years of age who indicated a likelihood of using campus career centre and 47% for government employment centres. Instead, the data indicate that older students are more likely to rely on professors or deans as a means of finding a job, 58% compared to 45% of those students under 25 years of age.

The data show there is a discernible difference when academic achievement is examined. For example, those students who had average grades of 80% or more indicated a greater likelihood of using referrals from professors or deans as a job search method, 57% compared to 41% of students whose grades were less than 80%. On the other hand, individuals with average grades of less than 80% indicated a greater likelihood of using local newspapers (65%) and government employment centres (52%), compared to 54% and 36% respectively for students with grades averaging 80% or higher.

The students were also given an opportunity to provide other responses to this question with a resulting 257 'other' responses. The two most common other responses for this question were job matching agencies and cold calling.

THE INTERNET

The proliferation of new information technology (IT) has been extensive in recent years driven by the widespread acceptance of the Internet. In Canada, the number of households who have an Internet account has been estimated to be between 19 and 28%.²¹ In the workplace, Internet usage has been estimated at approximately 25% of Canadian workers.²² Canadian universities have kept up with this trend with many integrating IT into their programs to help students adapt to the rapidly changing environment and learn how IT can be used as a tool in their studies. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Internet is the place to which this cohort is most connected.

As mentioned earlier, nearly 97% of the respondents had access to the Internet. Forty-five percent of these students accessed the Internet at home, followed by 45% at school, 8% in their offices, and 1% at public libraries. In general, there were no discernible differences in terms of access to the Internet based on gender, language, academic achievement, or those individuals designated as visible minorities. However, of those students 25 years of age and over, 15% accessed the Internet from the office while 41% accessed it from the university campus. Of those respondents under 25 years of age, 4% accessed the Internet from home, compared to 52% from the university campus. It should be noted that a higher percentage of women and visible minorities were more likely to use the Internet from the university (54%).

Only two of the 2,537 students (.1%) accessed the Internet at government employment centres. This finding is consistent with the low probability that students might use government employment centres as part of their job-search methods. If individuals are not frequenting these centres to search for employment opportunities, it is unlikely that they would be using them for Internet access.

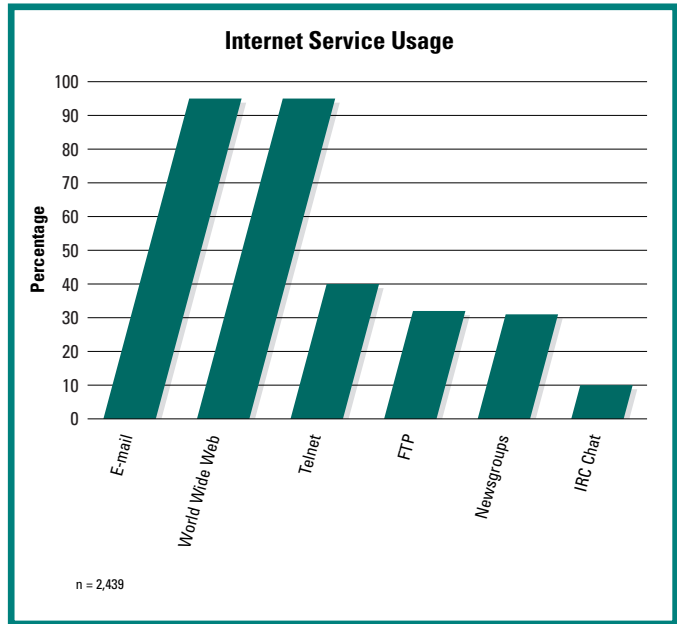
Not only did the majority of respondents have access to the Internet, but those who did have access made use of it quite frequently. In total, approximately 56% accessed the Internet on a daily basis, followed by 30% who indicated accessing it at least a few times per week, followed by 15% who accessed it a few times per month. Interestingly, of those students who indicated a preference to work for the federal Public Service, only 28% said that they accessed the Internet at least once a day. Women in this sample also appear to access the Internet at a lower rate on a daily basis, 48% compared to 64% of their male counterparts.

There is a clear positive relationship between the regularity of accessing the Internet and the probability of its use as a vehicle for job searches. Eighty-five percent of students who accessed the Internet more than once a day indicated they would use it for job searches, compared to 78% who used the Internet only once a day, 73% who use it a few times a week, and 59% who use the Internet a few times per month.

INTERNET SERVICES

Given the various Internet services available, students were asked to specify which they used on a regular basis. The majority indicated using e-mail and the World Wide Web the most, both categories being used by nearly 95% of the individuals with access to the Internet. A breakdown of the usage of the services are listed in Figure 22.

FIGURE 22



NATIONAL GRADUATE REGISTER (NGR)

The National Graduate Register (NGR) is an on-line employment register that can be used by both prospective employers and employees. This register, which is accessed through the World Wide Web, has been very successful in matching employers and students or recent graduates in employment arrangements. NGR statistics show that since its inception in January 1997, it has successfully matched the skills of more than 30,000 people to the needs of employers. The register receives an average of 32,000 hits every day.

Despite its apparent effectiveness, only 23% of students had heard of the National Graduate Register. This could be a result NGR's relatively recent creation. In general, there were no discernible differences in terms of awareness of the NGR based on age, gender, academic achievement, or those individuals designated as visible minorities. However, 34% of Francophone respondents had heard of the NGR compared to 22% of Anglophones.

Students who had experience with the NGR found it a useful tool. Of the 580 people surveyed who were aware of the NGR, 78% planned to use it as part of their job search. This adds credence to the confidence that users have in the NGR's ability to meet their job search needs, and increases the importance of marketing the NGR to raise awareness of its usefulness.

Clearly, the Internet has been shown to be effective at transferring knowledge on a wide variety of topics; its use as a job search tool is just one of them. It is evident from the responses that the majority of students had access to the Internet and were using it on a regular basis. Focusing just on the Public Service Commission's

Internet site, 4,987,872 hits were registered during the survey release in October, 1997, of which 3,879,056 were more specifically hits on the recruitment portion of the site. These hits on the recruitment directory represented 141,012 visitors who, on average, spent 10 minutes or more on the site. Clearly, traffic on this site is increasing given that in February, 1998 5,198,818 hits were registered on the recruitment portion of the Internet site from 172,157 visitors. In addition, during the last Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign, approximately 20% of all applications received were on-line sent via the PSC website.

PUBLIC SERVICE RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS

Students were asked about their awareness of the federal Public Service's annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign. Only 24% stated that they were aware of this program. However when the data are examined further we see discernible differences based on language, sector preference for employment, and in terms of those individuals who self-identified as part of a visible minority. In fact, 41% of Francophones indicated that they had heard of the annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign compared to 20% of Anglophones. This is likely attributable to the stronger preference Francophones have to work for the federal Public Service and the greater likelihood they indicated for using government employment centres. Interestingly, of those individuals who indicated a preference to work for the federal Public Service, 36% were aware of the annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign. Of those students who self-identified as being part of a visible minority group, 29% were aware of the annual recruitment program, somewhat higher than remainder of the sample.

To understand the reason for the low awareness rate, however, one has to look at the effectiveness of the various communication instruments and how they measure up against the preferred methods of performing job searches. First of all, 62% of respondents indicated an awareness of particular recruitment programs which fall under the annual federal Public Service recruitment campaign. While the students were given the option to choose among 16 programs, the highest percentage, 22% indicated learning about the programs through their respective campus career centres. This was followed by family and friends (13%) and faculty bulletin boards (12%). Figure 23 ranks in descending order the methods in which respondents learned of the federal Public Service recruitment programs.

HOW STUDENTS LEARNED ABOUT FEDERAL RECRUITMENT PROGRAMS

Of those respondents reporting awareness of federal recruitment programs, the Foreign Service Officer program garnered the widest awareness with 58%, followed by the Management Trainee Program (45%), and the Aboriginal Employment Program (39%). The students showed lower levels of awareness for the Financial Officer/Internal Auditor Recruitment and Development Program with 28%, the Accelerated Economist Training Program with 20%, and the Aboriginal Masters

Program with 17%. Generally speaking, those students who indicated a preference to work for the federal Public Service, also had a higher level of awareness about each program associated with the federal annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign.

It is interesting to note that awareness of federal Public Service recruitment programs appears to be higher than the awareness overall about the federal Public Service's annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign. Overall, 62% of students indicated an awareness of specific federal Public Service

recruitment programs which fall under the annual Post-Secondary recruitment program, while only 24% of students were actually aware of the annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign in general. This indicates that a number of students were aware of individual programs but did not connect them with the federal Public Service annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign.

Students' views on the ease of finding out about employment opportunities in the federal Public Service matched their awareness about recruitment programs. Almost 34% of students

FIGURE 23

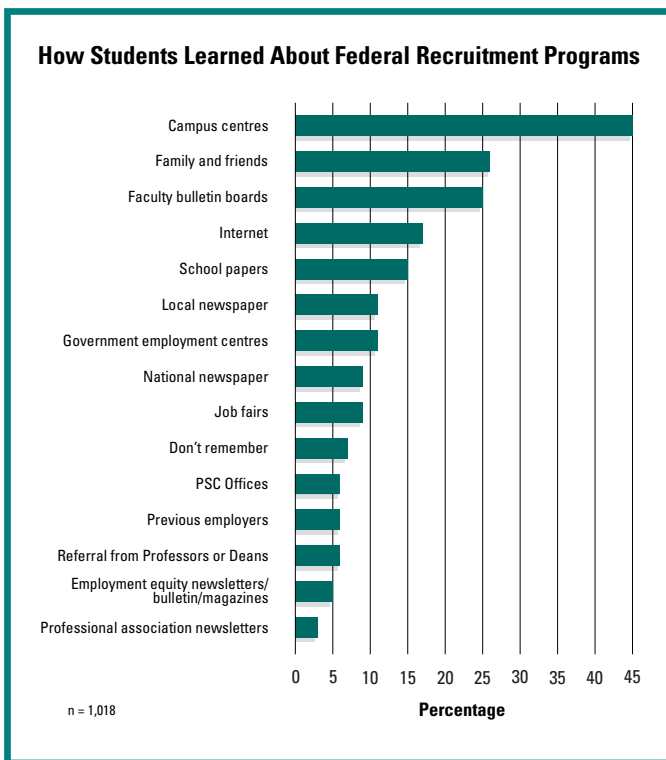
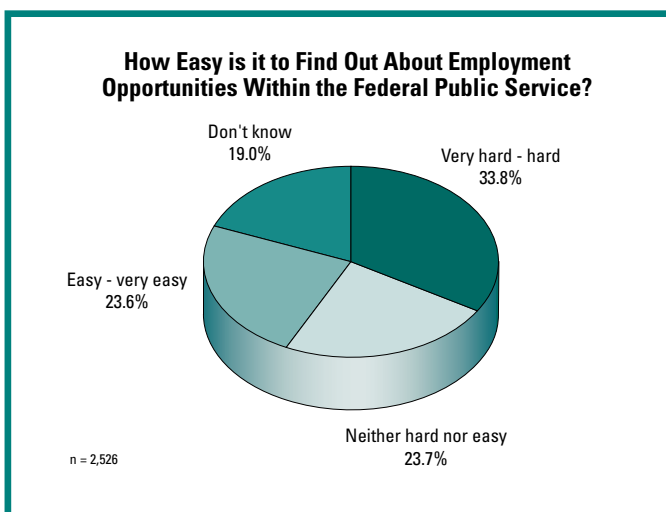


FIGURE 24



thought it would be hard or very hard to find out about employment opportunities within the federal Public Service compared to only 24% who thought it would be easy or very easy.

Interestingly, older workers were less confident that it would be easy to find out about employment opportunities in the federal Public Service. In fact, only 20% of students 25 years of age and over thought it would be easy or very easy to find out about federal employment opportunities, compared to 26% of those under 25 years of age.

Surprisingly, of those students who indicated a preference to work for the federal Public Service, only 26% responded that it would be easy or very easy to find out about federal employment opportunities, while 42% indicated that it would be hard or very hard. One might question whether these individuals had attempted to find out about federal employment opportunities and perhaps had encountered some difficulty.

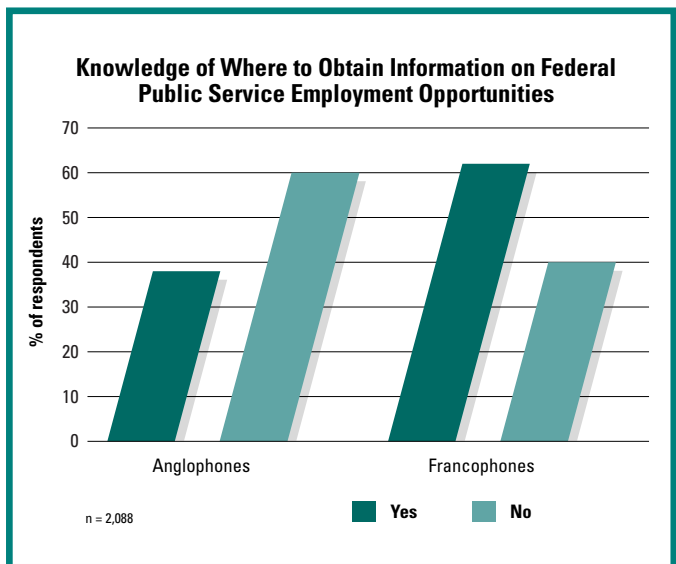
A further examination of the relationship between the ease of finding out about federal employment opportunities versus the awareness of recruitment programs shows that nearly 80% of respondents who thought it would be hard to find out about federal public service employment also were not aware of the federal Public Service’s annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign. In addition, nearly 60% of the respondents stated they did not know where to obtain information on opportunities within the federal Public Service. When examined further, again we find interesting differences based on language. As Figure 25 shows, while 38% of Anglophone students indicated they knew where to find information regarding employment opportunities within the federal Public Service, a much larger percentage of the Francophone respondents (60%) said they knew where to find this information.

These findings demonstrate that perhaps the Public Service Commission has been successful in establishing a visible presence in the Francophone universities and among Francophones in general while there may be a need to more effectively communicate this information to Anglophone university students.

BEGINNING THE SEARCH

In addition, students favour certain months of the year more than others in terms of beginning the job or career search. As illustrated in Figure 26, 35% of respondents reported focusing their

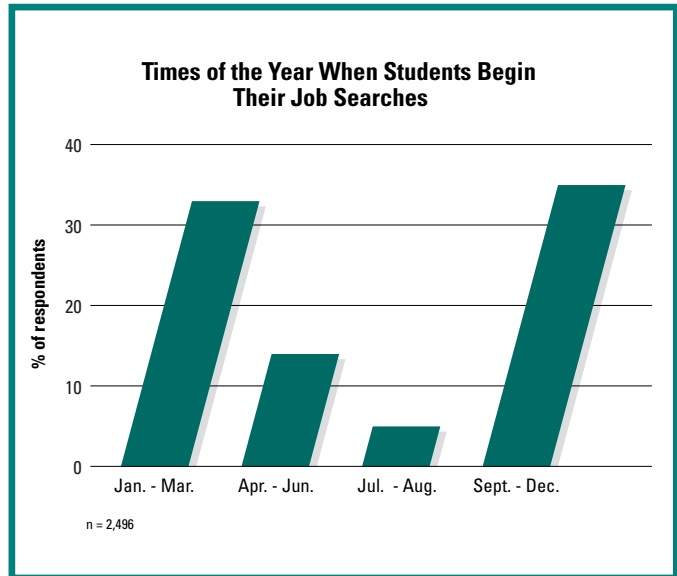
FIGURE 25



job search efforts during the period September to December. Similar efforts were reported for the months spanning January to March, with 33% of students selecting this option. In terms of when students begin their job search, no discernible differences were found based on gender, visible minority classification, age, language, or academic achievement.

When weighing the pros and cons of each job offer, two of the possible decision criteria for job seekers are the length of the recruitment process and the timeliness of the job offer. Our findings indicate that the interview process and the time before a job is offered is a factor that students consider when making their final decisions to begin employment. When asked how important these factors are, 60% of students stated that the timeliness of a job offer was important or very important, versus 10% of the respondents saying that it was either unimportant or very unimportant. Francophone respondents appear to place more importance on the timeliness of the job offer, with 63% of students stating that it was either important or very important, compared to 53% of Anglophone respondents. However, there were no differences in terms of how the timeliness of the job offer was rated based on gender, visible minority status, age, or academic achievement.

FIGURE 26



CURRENT JOB SEARCH ACTIVITY

Thirty-six percent of students had already begun their quest for employment prior to graduation when the survey was completed in October and November 1997. A greater number of older students had already begun their job search, 40% compared to 33% of those respondents under the age of 25 years. The data are also discernibly different when we consider language, with 47% of Francophones having already begun their job search, compared to 32% of Anglophones surveyed.

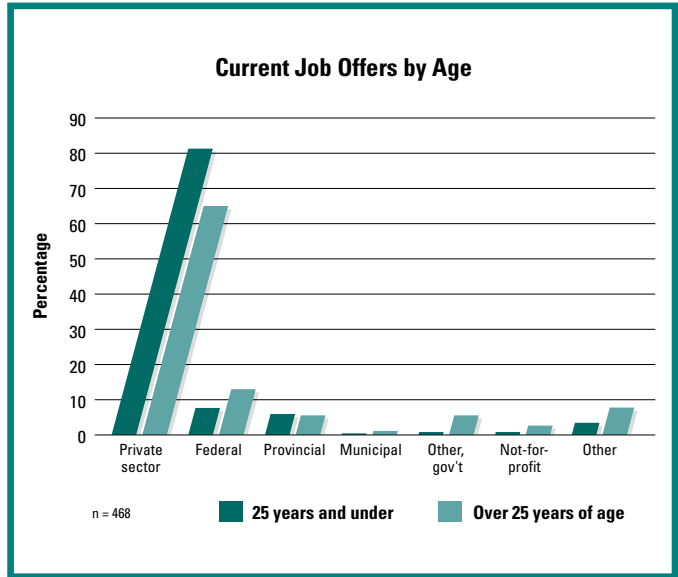
Of the 883 respondents who had begun their job search, 19% had already received job offers at the time of the survey. As noted in Figure 27, similar to their preference to work for the federal Public Service, students 25 years of age and over had received a higher percentage of job offers from the federal government, 13%

compared to 8% of students under 25 years of age. In contrast, over 80% of students under 25 years of age received job offers from the private sector, compared to 65% of students 25 years of age and over.

An examination of the entire sample indicates that 78% of the job offers came primarily from the private sector. In addition, 88% of the jobs originated in Canada, with 12% being offered from organizations outside Canada.

While the findings indicate a high concentration of offers coming from private sector organizations, this breakdown is actually very much in line with the distribution of work in the general labour market. In 1996, 68% of jobs in Canada were with private sector companies, while 15% were found in public sector organizations.²³ Therefore, it should not be surprising that such a large majority of jobs originated from the private sector as opposed to federal, provincial and municipal governments.

FIGURE 27



On graduating, conducting an effective job search is one of the most important undertakings for a student. The results of this survey show that most students take the job search seriously and as such, many begin their efforts prior to graduation. With the apparent importance of the timeliness of job offers, it makes it more imperative for the federal government to keep an on-going presence in the universities throughout the entire calendar year.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

What follows is the Public Management Research Centre’s assessment of the implications of the survey results for future federal Public Service post secondary recruitment and its recommendations and suggestions for developing more responsive recruitment mechanisms. The implications and recommendations are separated into two sections: (1) the implications and recommendations for the development of Public Service recruitment strategies, and (2) the implications and recommendations for the future role of the Public Service Commission in terms of Public Service recruitment. Finally, “Next Steps” highlights where further research is required.

PUBLIC SERVICE RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

What’s Important

It is evident that many of the Public Service Commission’s long-favoured approaches to recruit employees are no longer appropriate to tomorrow’s university graduates sampled in this study. While the federal government has in the past recruited and often marketed the fact that it offers a diverse work environment, opportunities to learn another language, and work in an environment enabling the use of either French or English, it is clear that students in this sample place little importance on these factors. Interestingly, the opportunity to contribute to the betterment of society or the public interest also falls behind a number of other work related factors. The results of this study indicate that the level of interest found in a job and the compensation for that work are of utmost importance, followed first by an opportunity to work in a chosen field of study, and then by the ability to balance work, family, and other interests.

RECOMMENDATION I

The Public Service Commission should continue to move away from marketing the employment factors it has traditionally used to recruit university students and develop new recruitment incentives based on the following factors:

1. A challenging and dynamic work environment
2. The opportunity to apply acquired skills and expertise and to work in one’s field of choice or field of study
3. Competitive compensation packages

For all recruitment campaigns, we recommend that a secondary level of promotion include opportunities to work in a diverse environment and to learn and use a different language. Furthermore we recommend that the Public Service Commission use information gathering tools, such as survey instruments and focus groups, to regularly assess and track the evolving interests and needs of students in terms of their employment.

Employment Opportunities

Our findings clearly demonstrate that the majority of tomorrow's university graduates sampled for this study are looking to the private sector for their employment opportunities. This not surprising given that the private sector employs the bulk of the labour force. However, we found that over twice as many students would prefer to work for the federal government than actually expect to find opportunities there. This is in contrast to provincial and municipal governments, where expectations and preferences are more evenly matched. The Public Service Commission needs to attract and encourage those students who would like to work for the federal government. After a very large and public downsizing, the Public Service Commission should market the fact that it is hiring in numerous areas and that it is looking for new and innovative people who are interested in the challenges and opportunities which can be found only in the federal Public Service.

RECOMMENDATION II

It is recommended that the federal government develop visible signals and disseminate clear messages that downsizing in government is over and renewal of the Public Service is a key priority.

The findings of this study indicate that students 25 years of age and over have a much higher interest in working for the federal government, and are generally more insecure about the employment opportunities which will be available to them than students under age 25. Furthermore, it is the older cohorts which share a low representation in the federal labour force. Demographics would dictate that those students over the age of 25 would likely have been disproportionately affected by the recession of the 1990s and the downsizing era which followed. So, it is this cohort which is more likely to have experienced the "last hired, first fired" realities of today's labour market, and therefore, the group more likely to be less secure and optimistic about future employment opportunities. However, these older students should recognize that they can offer their experience and maturity which the younger students have yet to acquire.

At the same time, in its efforts to infuse and invigorate the Public Service, the Public Service Commission must ensure that older students are not inadvertently marginalized. As one of Canada's largest employers, the federal government has a commitment to employ a labour force that is reflective of Canadian society. Six years of salary freezes and severely restricted recruitment have significantly affected the federal labour force. The average age of recruitment in 1996/97 hovered at approximately 35 years of age, down from 40 in 1995/96. In fact, fewer than 20% of all indeterminate federal employees are under the age of 34. On the other hand, it is estimated that approximately 70% of executives will be eligible to retire by the year 2005. One must question who will be there to succeed them? Clearly, the lack of recruitment of individuals in their late twenties and early thirties does not bode well for succession planning in the federal government.

RECOMMENDATION III

The Public Management Research Centre recommends that the Public Service Commission segment its marketing and recruitment campaigns and directly market employment opportunities to age cohorts over the age of 25 years. There is a need to focus on the particular needs of the targeted age group and promote the factors within the federal work environment that would attract that age group.

We would also note, once again, that the data show that younger students in this sample have less desire to work for the federal Public Service than students 25 years of age and over. Similarly, they are less well-informed than the older students about employment opportunities in the federal government. This could be attributed to their youth and therefore the likelihood of their being less informed or interested in the opportunities available from Public Service employment. On the other hand, this might signal a broader trend in which government is becoming less and less relevant to younger Canadians.

There are definite benefits for the federal government in informing younger students about the Public Service and the many and varied employment opportunities it offers. The more younger students that the government can reach should mean that, on graduation, more students will be aware and informed about work in the Public Service. The targeted students should include those in their graduating high school years. If students are more informed it is likely that career choices and, consequently, their course or program choices will be more suitably selected. For the Public Service Commission, this should translate into more applications from better-informed and more appropriately educated students.

RECOMMENDATION IV

The Public Management Research Centre recommends that the Public Service Commission develop a more visible presence on university campuses. We also recommend that the Public Service Commission begin distributing federal recruitment and employment information to students in their final year of secondary school.

Taking Advantage of Co-op and Student Placements

It is evident from this research that the federal government is utilizing the opportunities afforded by co-op placements. These placements offer employers the positive social benefit of providing students with the opportunity to apply their skills and acquire much needed experience. Additionally, it is an economical method for bringing new and innovative ideas into the organization. In light of the fact that the majority of the students who had undertaken a co-op within the federal government indicated it to be a satisfactory experience, co-ops hold the additional benefit of marketing the positive aspects of working for the federal government. As for high

school students, they can gain work experience as well as find out about working for the federal government in summer job placements through programs such as the Federal Student Work Experience Program (FSWEP).

RECOMMENDATION V

It is recommended that the Public Service Commission take full advantage of co-op opportunities and programs such as FSWEP by increasing the use of student placements wherever possible.

Knowing When to Recruit

It is clear that the traditional study path of university students is less prevalent in today's ever changing environment. Students no longer typically graduate in the spring. Instead, some students are attending university on a part-time basis and many incorporate co-op placements into their studies. As a result, students are graduating at different times throughout the year. Among the students sampled for this study, approximately 35% declared they would begin their job searching efforts during the period September to December. However, an almost equal percentage indicated an intention to begin their job searches during the months of January to March. A smaller percentage said they planned to begin their job searches after April and into the summer months. The Public Service Commission has recently extended its annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign, which traditionally only targeted students in the fall, to include a second phase of recruitment in the spring.

RECOMMENDATION VI

It is recommended that the Public Service Commission continue to use a two-pronged recruitment campaign – in the fall and in the winter (January/February) – thus creating greater awareness about employment opportunities within the federal Public Service as well as giving the employer a potentially larger pool of students from which to choose.

Forging Links

The findings of this study indicate that students in the fields of study sampled are in fact very 'plugged-in.' Approximately 97% of the students sampled had access to the Internet and of those, 76% reported that it was likely or highly likely that they would use the Internet when searching for a job.

The Public Service Commission is taking advantage of Internet opportunities in terms of recruitment and has developed a strong presence with a homepage which provides searchers with an overview of job opportunities open to the public, student

employment, and post secondary recruitment programs, as well as information on the Public Service Commission and recruitment exams. However, the findings of this study indicate that students are not aware of the many different departments and agencies comprising the federal government. Consequently, it is likely that students do not know that the Public Service Commission is the federal agency responsible for recruitment. Our findings indicate that many students believed it would be difficult to find out about employment opportunities within the federal Public Service. For example, only 24% of those surveyed responded that it would be either easy or very easy to learn about federal employment opportunities. Therefore, there is a real potential for the Public Service Commission to promote, to a much wider audience than previously, the opportunities available in the federal Public Service.

RECOMMENDATION VII

The Public Service Commission needs to clarify and make more visible its mandate as the single agency legislated to ensure a highly competent Public Service. To be effective in this role, the Public Service Commission will need to implement new and more visible recruitment strategies to a much wider target group which should result in more complete and accessible information in more locations.

Out of the total sample of 2,537 students, 1,018 respondents had learned of federal recruitment programs with the majority finding the information at campus career centres. The campus and college career centres are ideal venues for the Public Service Commission to provide students with accessible and timely information on federal employment opportunities. Only an estimated 17% of those sampled learned of these programs through the Internet, and even fewer through national newspapers, government employment centres, and job fairs.

RECOMMENDATION VIII

It is recommended that the Public Service Commission develop a stronger presence on the Government of Canada Internet homepage (www.canada.gc.ca). For example, along with the current links (i.e., About Canada, Government Overview, Federal Organizations, What's New, et cetera), a link should be added for Employment Opportunities which would immediately link users to the Public Service Commission's Recruitment Menu. In addition, the Public Service Commission's homepage would benefit by being more dynamic and interactive, as with the Post Secondary Recruitment link from the Public Service's Recruitment homepage.

We further recommend that the Public Service Commission develop a stronger presence on university and college campuses across Canada. In its recruitment initiatives, it should continue to use campus career centres while also making better use of national newspapers and job fairs.

It is also clear that students in the particular fields of study sampled for this study were not aware of the annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign. However, when respondents were probed further, they were in fact knowledgeable about individual recruitment sub-components that fall under the annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign. It would appear, therefore, that students are not making the link between specific federal recruitment programs and the annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign. As prospective applicants, students need to be more familiar with and aware of the annual recruitment drive and its various components, including significant dates for submission of applications and entrance exams.

RECOMMENDATION IX

It is recommended that the Public Service Commission's annual Post Secondary Recruitment Campaign be more visible and public in order to attract more attention among university graduates.

Job Security

While the banner of the 1990s might read "The Death of Job Security," it would seem that, instead of embracing the transitory nature of today's labour markets, tomorrow's university graduates are accepting the realities grudgingly. In fact, almost 55% of the students sampled would prefer to find employment promising job security in excess of two years. Clearly, students are looking for some forms of job security, but not necessarily for a lifetime. It is recognized that the Public Service can no longer realistically offer long-term job security. However, employment which is secured for approximately two years would help alleviate some of the insecurities university graduates may feel upon entering the labour force. This approach might also help the government in its search for a more mobile and multi-skilled labour force.

RECOMMENDATION X

The Public Service Commission could examine the possibility of hiring new recruits into the federal government with a guarantee of a least two years' job security, instead of recruiting employees for an indeterminate period of time.

THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Promoting Mobility

It is clear that the insecurity of today's labour market has led to a divergence between the expected career paths of tomorrow's university graduates and those of their parents. While the majority of students surveyed anticipate working in more than one organization throughout their career, almost one-third of the sample continue to prefer a career path in one organization rather than in several.

As Canada's largest employer, the federal government can meet the needs of both those individuals who would prefer to work in one organization and those who want to move through many organizations. As a single employer, the federal government offers its employees opportunities to move throughout its 78 departments and agencies thus providing individuals who prefer to work for numerous organizations with the opportunity to move through a number of diverse placements. However, from previous work conducted by the Public Management Research Centre, it is clear that mobility among departments and agencies, especially the new hybrid agencies, has been limited.²⁴ There is some debate that the present culture does not support mobility.

Public servants are now required to be more knowledgeable about their clients' industries and sectors; at the same time, they also need to be more consultative. Consequently, there is a need to allow employees to move freely between sectors. One view of the Public Service of the future foresees a small core workforce and a larger, more transitory workforce moving within and outside the government.

RECOMMENDATION XI

The Public Management Research Centre recommends that the Public Service Commission develop a recruitment campaign which identifies the vast number of opportunities that it has to offer tomorrow's university graduates. Acknowledging the preferences of young graduates, the Public Service Commission should offer new recruits increased opportunity for mobility among the different departments and agencies.

It is recommended that the Public Service Commission work with other central agencies, specifically the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Privy Council Office, to identify the barriers to intra-government mobility, to develop a culture which supports greater mobility, and develop initiatives which will ensure greater mobility for public servants.

SELL THE PUBLIC SERVICE

It is clear that a number of the university students sampled were misinformed about the realities of working for the federal government and in fact held a number of misconceptions and stereotypes. It is likely that students form their opinions about the federal Public Service predominantly from negative images that are prevalent throughout society. At the same time, the students demonstrated a lack of understanding regarding the opportunities available in the Public Service, as well as limited knowledge of the work environment and the values the federal Public Service supports.

Individuals in different fields of study have different needs and desires which cannot be addressed in one universal recruitment campaign. A recruitment initiative segmented according to areas of study would undoubtedly help the government recruit graduates in areas where the Public Service is looking for employees. By the same token, such a campaign would both inform and attract more applicants.

RECOMMENDATION XII

We recommend that the Public Service Commission develop a recruitment campaign which demonstrates to students in different fields of study that they can apply their skills in a number of different positions throughout the federal government.

The Public Service Commission needs to segment its marketing/recruitment campaign based on field of study, especially in those areas where the federal government is having difficulty recruiting graduates. For instance, posters could target engineers clearly stating the numerous and diverse positions which are available and the factors of the work environment which would be attractive to graduates in that particular discipline.

Such information should be placed throughout campuses in employment centres, faculty bulletin boards, and central gathering places of students. This information could also be posted on the Public Service Commission's web site.

NEXT STEPS

1. Given the divergence between expected and preferred career paths, it would be interesting to track students' perceptions on these issues. Have we caught a snapshot in the middle of a trend or at the end? Is it likely that in two or five years time, the percentage of students who would prefer to work in one organization will remain constant or will it decline further?
2. Clearly younger students have less desire to work for the federal Public Service. Is this attributable to their youth and therefore a general naiveté and their being less informed about the opportunities available from Public Service employment? Or, is it part of a broader trend in which government is becoming less and less relevant to younger Canadians? The Public Service Commission should consider tracking the perceptions and attitudes of youth over the next five to ten years to reach a better understanding of this generation of Canadians.

END NOTES

¹ Please note that although each university was asked to verify the sample which was drawn, not all universities provided information at the same level of detail. Therefore, the information regarding each university is presented according to the records of each institution.

² Aboriginals and individuals with disabilities were also identified. However, a separate analysis of their responses was not possible as there was not a high enough number of responses to provide significant results. A total of 20 aboriginals and 30 students with disabilities answered the survey.

³ Please note that all employment statistics refer to departments and agencies for which the Treasury Board is the employer as listed under Schedule 1, Part 1 of the *Public Service Staff Relations Act*.

⁴ Ekos Research Associates Inc., *Rethinking Government* (Ottawa: March/April 1997).

-
- ⁵ David Zussman, "Declining Trust in Government: A Global Phenomenon," *INSIGHTS: Public Sector Management in Canada*, vol. 2, no. 2 (August/September 1997).
-
- ⁶ Ekos Research Associates Inc., *Rethinking Government* (Ottawa: November, 1997).
-
- ⁷ Youths are defined as individuals 15 to 24 years of age.
-
- ⁸ Sunter, D., "Youth Waiting It Out," *Perspectives*, Catalogue 75-001E (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Spring 1994).
-
- ⁹ The Royal Bank of Canada, Angus Reid Group, d~Code, *Building Bridges: New Perspectives on the Nexus Generation* (Toronto: June 24, 1997).
-
- ¹⁰ Usher, P., *Some Facts about Recent Graduates: A Preliminary Paper* (Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1997).
-
- ¹¹ It should be noted that the following analysis is provided to give a glimpse at what students from various fields of study might be searching for in terms of career paths. It should be recognized that the number of students in each sub-sample is statistically too small to make any reliable determinations of significance or relationships.
-
- ¹² Sunter, D., "Youth Waiting It Out," *Perspectives*, Catalogue 75-001E (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Spring 1994).
-
- ¹³ Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Update: Youths and the Labour Market* (Ottawa: Spring, 1997).
-
- ¹⁴ Youth is defined as individuals 15 to 24 years of age.
-
- ¹⁵ Sunter, D., "Youth Waiting It Out" *Perspectives*, Catalogue 75-001E (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Spring 1994).
-
- ¹⁶ While at first glance these percentages may seem low, it should be noted that the students were allowed to choose any number of work-related factors from amongst the 33 listed in the questionnaire. Because of the diversity of preferences and needs identified by students, almost all the factors were chosen by a small number of students. Therefore, even though a majority response did not emerge, a clear consensus regarding a number of factors is evident.
-
- ¹⁷ Public Service Commission, "Review of Student Focus Groups and Student Fact Sheets," *S&T Human Resources Framework* (April 1997).
-
- ¹⁸ Statistics Canada, *General Labour Force Survey* (Ottawa: February, 1997)
-
- ¹⁹ Ekos Research Associates Inc., *Rethinking Government* (Ottawa: October 1996).
-
- ²⁰ It should be noted that pre-testing of the survey did not elicit confusion regarding these statements. Therefore, we can conclude that students understood the nature of the questions, but did not have the knowledge to respond in a manner other than 'don't know' or 'neither agree nor disagree.'
-
- ²¹ Ekos Research Associates Inc., *The Information Highway and the Canadian Communication Household* (Ottawa: November 1997).
-
- ²² Phase-5 Consulting Group Survey of Canadian Companies, "Make way for the new Internet consumer" (Ottawa: September 1997).
-
- ²³ Statistics Canada, *General Labour Force Survey* (Ottawa: February, 1997)
-
- ²⁴ The Public Management Research Centre, *Executive Consultations On Issues Related To Organizational Retention And Compensation* (Ottawa: September, 1997).

APPENDIX – I

OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

On completing the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments. Roughly one in five respondents took up this opportunity, providing comments that varied considerably. It is recognized that these individuals, having taken the time to submit their feedback, felt strongly about the issues addressed in the survey. Although their comments may not be representative of all students, they do point to a number of issues that are of concern to many students within this target group. Below they are summarized in order of prevalence according to particular themes, highlighted by quotations from the questionnaires that encapsulate the sentiments succinctly.

FUTURE JOB PROSPECTS

Overwhelmingly, two principle themes surfaced when respondents spoke of their future employment prospects: a serious concern about the scarcity of jobs in the broader labour market, and how a growing student debt load adds to their already heightened sense of anxiety. For many students, salary was an important issue, not simply because they felt they deserved a high salary, but rather because of their outstanding debt loads.

With respect to the scarcity of jobs in Canada, many students recognized that there might not be employment opportunities for them in their field of study. Others noted that this in turn has led to an ever growing competition for the few existing jobs and recognized that this would factor into their decision whether to stay in Canada or seek opportunities abroad. This was particularly evident among a few respondents enrolled in advanced degrees (Master's or Ph.D.).

Other respondents spoke more specifically as to how job scarcity related to the choice between the public and private sectors. Some observed that, while unfortunate, many young people might choose the private sector over the public sector because of the many “bad stories” one hears about public service employees. In general these individuals noted that salary was certainly a factor, but perhaps more important is that they simply perceived more opportunities in the private sector, and in some cases, abroad. This sentiment, expressed by many students, was clearly articulated by one individual:

I was more or less faced with the choice of remaining unemployed in Canada or taking one of a number of lucrative job offers in the US. If I were to be offered a position within Canada, even at a lower salary, I would consider returning.

This particular comment broadly highlights the general pessimism of many students toward today's labour market. A result of this pessimism is evident in some students' concerns for the limited job choices they face.

...my main concern is to find a job and provide a future for myself. Secondary are the working conditions and the specifics. This is not to understate the importance in decision making but rather to emphasize that the ability to choose between factors by means of being employed is of primary concern!

This survey assumes that we have a choice – we don't have a meaningful choice. For the past 6-10 years, EVERYONE has told us what to expect to the point of selling our dignity just to bolster our CVs. The hypocrisy of the job market rhetoric is sickening. The business sector and government sector create an atmosphere of desperation – part-time work, no benefits, no security – and then define it as the 'new normal.' It's not simply a disillusionment to not find a job for your skills, it's a betrayal.

Not all respondents were pessimistic about their future employment prospects. Some stated they were optimistic because they believed they possessed the necessary knowledge and social skills, and, furthermore, were committed to hard work. While their optimism may be attributed to their particular personalities, it may also be tied in part to their lack of employment experience.

PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYMENT – PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES

Concerning respondents' perceptions of, or attitudes toward, Public Service employment, several recurring themes surfaced in the feedback. Generally, these themes pertain to the work environment; to staff or employees within the federal Public Service; to the work carried out within the Public Service; and opportunities for career advancement.

The most widespread view was that the federal Public Service, as a whole, is inefficient, too bureaucratic, exceedingly disorganized, and wasteful as to the allocation of resources. The majority of these comments came in fact from respondents' own personal experiences, rather than being based on general public opinion. Two respondents comments are worthy of particular note:

I felt that I was type-cast into a particular role that did not take full advantage of my skills and abilities.

[The federal Public Service is] such a top heavy organization that every request needs several signatures of approval.

Many respondents also pointed out that they perceived the federal Public Service as unable to offer competitive salaries. This was viewed as a problem, both for attracting new employees, and retaining existing employees.

I would never consider working in the public sector because the earning potential is no way near what I will be able to earn in the private sector. If some of the salaries were competitive in the public sector, I would consider a career there.

The government in general does not act as a business, losing employees due to not offering competitive salaries/benefits.

If the government is to recruit high-calibre grads, they must make salaries more competitive so that industry doesn't take all. [sic]

Government pay is not competitive with the private sector for professionals [engineers].

Performance pay is an asset to you and a motivational tool for the employee! [original in French]

... I hope the Canadian Government will one day be able to offer job opportunities that are on par with those offered in the private sector. Don't hesitate to make yourself visible in university recruitment centres as they are the students' most widely used tool. [original in French]

Other students raised the issue of salary in the context of the shift towards increasing use of 'casual' or 'contract' employees. Beyond salary, their criticism addressed broader issues such as benefits, training, access to internal job competitions, and the work environment for individuals in these positions.

... contractors are essentially employees without employee benefits. The cheques are generally late, and we are expected to perform duties like the employees... but we have no rights, no office, no mailboxes, and not the dignity to get paid on a regular basis.

The shift toward contract hiring leaves a public service job at the bottom rung of future career options.

A number of students also raised concerns about job security. The comments made by one respondent captured many of these sentiments:

It is quite ironic that the federal government 'downsizes' our parents' jobs and then expects us to gleefully jump into their jobs at half the salary... Why on earth would I enjoy the painfully boring, bureaucratic, and low-paying public service?

Turning to the perception of federal Public Service employees, several students held the broad opinion that many are not committed or dedicated to their work, and that there is widespread abuse of the 'system' (such as taking extended coffee, lunch, or cigarette breaks or leaving work early). While a few students suggested that federal Public Service employees take their jobs for granted, only one noted that a negative view of federal Public Service employees reflects poorly on the few who do good work. In a larger context, these negative opinions of Public Service employees are recognized as feeding directly into the broader perception of government inefficiency. As one individual put it:

The reputation of government workers is doing the job as slow as possible with the least effort... one does not promote government job experiences on a résumé.

A number of respondents also expressed misgivings about the efforts that are made to hire the most appropriate individuals for positions. As an example, one individual's aversion to public service employment was the result of a misunderstanding of the federal government's language requirements:

It seems that one has to be bilingual (English and French) to be able to work for the federal government, not easy for people who are only comfortable with only one of the official languages.

With regard to the work carried out within the Public Service, a number of respondents believed it to be unchallenging, stuffy and stifling, and thus less fulfilling. Some attributed this directly to the environment – one that makes it difficult to introduce new ideas or changes. Others perceived the Public Service as an environment within which advancement or promotion are difficult. One individual reflecting this perception said: “true advancement is linked to political affiliation and not job performance.”

Only one respondent noted that this particular question (regarding attitudes toward, or perceptions of public service employment) assumes that people have only stereotypical views of government. This individual argued that the question supported too broad a generalization (that all departments and branches are alike), and ignored the “many complexities that exist within government.”

AWARENESS OF OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE

The students' responses demonstrated an overall low level of awareness with respect to opportunities within the federal Public Service. While this lack of awareness was widespread, it was raised by several students who stated specifically that they were unaware of opportunities for individuals in their particular field (including MIS, field biology, pharmacy, and public administration at the undergraduate level). Very few respondents indicated having even a limited awareness of opportunities. Among those who did, there was a similar call for more widespread advertising. Only two respondents indicated an awareness of the federal Public Service's web site on the Internet. However, one of these individuals confessed to learning of this site “by accident,” while the other felt the general information presented on the site was incorrect. A number of students were of the opinion that most employment opportunities arise via personal contacts rather than through any other means.

There exists a difficult communication between employer and prospective employees in their job area... the large majority of jobs obtained [by student field biologists] are given to them by a fellow professor and not from an external source.

It seems that if we do not have a father or relative in the federal government, our résumé will never even be noticed, let alone read.

Comments from another group of respondents were directed more specifically at the recruitment of students. Broadly speaking, many were completely unaware of any federal Public Service recruitment programs. Among those who were, there

were repeated calls for an increase in the number of students hired, and questions from others about the fairness of the recruitment process.

I believe that the federal government's Student Summer Employment Program should be available to more students. It is a fact that some students get five or six calls and others get none. Each student should have a call if they fit the qualifications.

The Federal Student Employment Program does not hire enough students. The actual budget is usually 50% less than the proposed budget. Sometimes the FSEP has quirky qualifications, i.e., in one interview I was asked if I could work full-time (job requirement) in the month of September.

I do not feel that the government's method of summer employment search is fair to all students. This is where the government should give all students a chance (regardless of the skills they possess) and invest in the time and money to train these students. The only difficulty in searching for a job is that the skills possessed by a new graduate may be great but this may not be the case in terms of 'experience.' The government should help students to get their experience (i.e. in summer or through a special co-op program).

The last comment above addresses a dilemma many students face on graduation. In spite of having abundant skills, they describe the added difficulty of lacking the requisite experience when competing for already scarce jobs.

On a similar note, other students attributed their own lack of awareness to the prevalence (or lack thereof) of recruiting on campus. Interestingly, these comments were frequent from the MBA students.

I have not heard of any recruitment programs at the University of Ottawa for MBA students. Perhaps campus recruitment should be pursued.

Our MBA program is very career oriented with very active recruiting 10 months of the year. Other than a poster, there has been no government interest to speak of. By not being there, no interest is generated and the government loses out on some very bright people.

The Federal government and its agencies have not made any attempts to recruit at my MBA school at U of T. Feds do not actively seek out exceptional candidates. As far as I know, no hiring is being done.

I think you should advertise job opportunities at universities. I often check the job offers at my department and I cannot remember any career opportunities in the governmental level.

Once again, this sentiment speaks to the need for more thorough advertising by the federal Public Service. As one respondent put it, "If the government wants to promote the public sector, then the government must take the initiative to inform the public."

Interestingly, there was one respondent who recommended several specific steps the federal Public Service could take to recruit high calibre graduates. Among them was the suggestion for the Public Service Commission to ask students directly how best to recruit; to keep close contact with university student unions or representatives; and to establish less strict hiring quotas regarding women. With respect to the federal Public Service's web site on the Internet, this individual recommended more 'links' to other recruitment sites.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Overall, respondents were quite expressive in their opposition toward the federal government's employment equity practices. Many indicated that they believed these practices did not necessarily always ensure the selection of the best qualified, or best and most suitable candidates. Rather, they believed the selection process was compromised in order to meet particular employment equity targets. The opposition ranged along a continuum from such issues as age discrimination to 'reverse discrimination' (that faced by white males).

*I would like to have the opportunity to work for the federal government in the communications field. Being a white male I am afraid that I would be taken out of the running from the start. I believe that the government has made a complete turnaround in regards to discrimination – to our disadvantage (white males). Everyone should be given an equal opportunity and no person should be favoured for his or her race or gender.
[original in French]*

In my opinion, any federal government attempt at employment equity only adds to the discrimination. Because I don't fall into one of the designated areas does not mean I am not qualified. The only criteria one should have for grading the value of an applicant should be their skills and experience/qualifications.

I feel that I am discriminated against in the federal/provincial/municipal governments. I'm a white male. These agencies have to meet a certain quota of visible minorities in order to satisfy regulations where I am more qualified.

The federal government should be more open to hiring visible minorities who have studied in Canada but are not Canadian citizens. [original in French]

Only two respondents spoke in favour of the government's employment equity practices, however, both argued that they did not go far enough. One of these respondents criticized the discrimination faced by lesbians and gays in the federal government. The other argued that one does not see any visible minorities above entry level positions, and that white females appear to be the only minority group to have benefited from employment equity.

CO-OP PROGRAMS

Several respondents commented on co-op programs, either their own experience within the federal government, or more generally, about the program itself. Overall, these respondents were largely supportive of such programs, with many arguing for their expansion in order to give students much needed work experience. One respondent added that, through experiencing the ‘work world,’ students can discover “what they are good at and what interests them.” Very few respondents questioned the benefits of co-op programs.

GENERAL SUMMARY

A number of respondents spoke of the increasing debt load that students face today and, when coupled with today’s job market, there is a general degree of anxiety beyond what one might normally expect. Many related how their own personal debt load would affect their job searches, both in terms of scope (geographic region) and expectations (salary and job security). This issue is tied closely to the high degree of anxiety among respondents regarding future employment prospects.

It is evident that the federal Public Service needs to address the current image students have of both employment within the Public Service, and of public servants. There is a widespread perception that employment within the federal Public Service is unrewarding or unchallenging; that the work environment is inefficient, too bureaucratic, and disorganized; and that many Public Service employees are not committed or dedicated to their work. Very few of the respondents regarded the federal public sector as a desirable environment within which to seek employment. If the federal Public Service is to achieve its goal of recruiting the best individuals, it must overcome these negative sentiments. Additionally, the Public Service Commission must be more aggressive in its advertising efforts on campus and via the Internet so as to make more students aware of employment opportunities within the federal Public Service.

APPENDIX – II

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC STUDENT PROFILE

Of the 2,537 respondents who participated in the survey, 54% (1,374) were female and 45% (1,148) were male (1% did not indicate their gender). The majority of these respondents were 25 years of age and older, as indicated in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1	
Survey Respondents, by Age	
Age Group	Percentage of Sample (n = 2,537)
Under 25 years	42%
25 years and over	58%

As might be expected, the vast majority of these respondents (74%) were single or had never been married. Twenty-four percent of respondents indicated they were married or living common law, while 2% indicated that they were either divorced, separated, or widowed.

Eighty-six percent of respondents reported that they were Canadian citizens, 7% were permanent residents (formerly known as ‘Landed Immigrants’), and the remaining 7% indicated they were foreign students.

Respondents were asked to indicate the province or territory in which they maintained a primary residence, regardless of whether or not they were a Canadian citizen. This data is summarized below.

TABLE 2	
Survey Respondents, by Primary Residence	
Geographic region in which primary residence is maintained	Percentage of Sample (n = 2,537)
Ontario	41%
Atlantic Region ²⁵	7%
Quebec	16%
British Columbia	9%
Western Provinces	26%
Yukon	0.1%

When asked to indicate their first language, 64% reported English, while 18% reported French. The remaining 17% indicated languages other than either of Canada’s two official languages.²⁶

Respondents were also asked to rate the degree to which they felt comfortable reading, writing, and speaking both of Canada’s two official languages. As shown in Table 3 below, the majority of students reported a greater degree of comfort reading, writing, and speaking English than French. Given the number of English universities sampled and the proportion of respondents reporting English as their first language, these figures are not surprising. The level of comfort with the French language is still reasonably high, however, and is not incongruous with Public Service demographics.²⁷

TABLE 3
Survey Respondents, Degree of Comfort with Canada’s Official Languages

Comfort Level	Reading		Writing		Speaking	
	English	French	English	French	English	French
Not at all comfortable/ Uncomfortable	0.4 %	36.0 %	2.2 %	50.2 %	2.3 %	46.9 %
Somewhat comfortable	3.4 %	21.5 %	6.5 %	18.3 %	5.8 %	17.9 %
Comfortable/ Very comfortable	96.1 %	42.5 %	91.3 %	31.5 %	91.9 %	35.2 %
n = 2,527						

With respect to the respondents’ personal income at the time of the survey, a clear majority (53%) reported income levels below \$10,000. A further 28% of respondents reported income levels between \$10,000 and \$19,999. The remaining 19% reported income levels at \$20,000 or greater (12% of whom reported incomes between \$20,000 and \$39,999, while 7% reported incomes at \$40,000 or greater). Considering the average age of these respondents, the fact that the majority had yet to enter the labour force full time, and that only 15% indicated having a family member dependent upon them for financial support, these figures are not surprising.

Respondents were also asked to report whether or not they fell under any of three federal government designated employment equity groups. Of the 2,537 respondents, 23% (588) were members of a visible minority. Within this group, 53% were women, 20 identified themselves as an aboriginal person, and 30 identified themselves as a person with a disability.

PROFILE OF EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUNDS

When asked the highest level of education achieved to date, 36% indicated they had some college or university, 5% reported having a college diploma, 31% a Bachelor’s or Bachelor’s with Honours degree, and 10% had some post-graduate schooling. The remaining 18% had received a graduate degree.²⁸

The vast majority of respondents (93%) were completing their studies full-time. The major areas of study reported by respondents are indicated in Table 4 below.

TABLE 4	
Survey Respondents, Major Area of Study	
Area of study	Percentage of total sample (n = 2,456)
Engineering	24%
Public Admin./Business Admin./ International Development	19%
General Sciences	18%
Computer Science / Management Information Systems	11%
Finance/Accounting	10%
Journalism/Communications/Arts	7%
Statistics/Math	4%
Economics	4%
Other	3%

With respect to their current program of study as of October 1997, 66% of the respondents anticipated graduating in the spring, 13% in fall, and 19% in winter. Ten percent of the respondents indicated that their anticipated year of graduation was 1997; 47% indicated it would be 1998; and 30% said it would be 1999. Although this question was only meant in regard to their current program, several respondents (10%) reported graduating years which indicated that they had either interpreted the question to mean ‘year in which you anticipate completing all education,’ or that they were completing their studies on a prolonged part-time basis.²⁹ One percent of the respondents had already graduated, and thus reported a graduation year prior to 1997.

Almost one-third (29%) of the students indicated having a full-time career or job before deciding to return to school to complete their current program of study. Of these 712 students, 56% reported having previous experience working in the private

sector. This figure compares to 11% with previous experience working in the federal public sector, 10% in the provincial public sector, and 3% in the municipal public sector. Additionally, some students (10%) indicated previous experience with other levels of government.³⁰ Also cited as previous employers were the not-for-profit/non-governmental organizations (6%); the volunteer (1%) and self-employed sectors (4%) were also cited as previous employers. At the time of the survey, a small portion of these students (13%) were on a leave of absence to complete their degrees, however two-thirds indicated that they did not plan on returning to their employers.

All respondents were asked to give their grade-point average (GPA) and the scale upon which it was based. For the sake of comparison, all responses were then converted into percentage grade ranges.³¹ Students with averages of 80% or higher comprised 41% of the sample, while students with averages ranging between 70% and 79% constituted 43% of the sample. While these broad categories collectively represent 84% of the sample of 1,607 respondents, the use of smaller percentage grade ranges was rendered impossible due to the diversity of scales used by the universities sampled. Students with averages falling between 60% and 69% formed 15% of the sample, while those with averages between 50% and 59% made up just 1% of the sample.

END NOTES

²⁵ The Atlantic Region includes Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, and New Brunswick. It should be noted, however, that 90% of those respondents indicating that they maintained a primary residence in this region did so in the province of New Brunswick.

²⁶ Among those reporting a first language other than either of Canada's two official languages, Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese) was the largest group at 48%.

²⁷ Although 32% of the positions in the Public Service require knowledge of both official languages, a majority of the positions are accessible to unilingual persons. With respect to appointments to the Public Service in 1996-97, unilingual Anglophones had access to 71% of the positions staffed, and unilingual Francophones had access to 28% (*PSC Annual Report, 1996-97*, p. 9). Among the respondents of this survey, however, there was the perception that unilingual candidates are among the minority.

²⁸ Of those respondents indicating they had a graduate degree, 91% were at the Master's level.

²⁹ The graduating years in question span the period 2000 to 2002.

³⁰ The majority of these students reported employment experience in government bodies outside Canada, with a small number of students noting work with the First Nations.

³¹ The conversion process was only possible for 1,607 respondents. Please refer to page 87, question 5 for further details regarding this conversion process.

APPENDIX – III

SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND RESULTS

SECTION A: YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON THE FUTURE

1. What are your plans upon graduation from your current program of study?

Begin new job/employment already arranged	6.3 %
To look for a job	66.3 %
Continue working for my present employer	6.8 %
Return to school for further studies	13.9 %
Other, please indicate	4.2 %
Do not know	2.4 %

2. What type of work will you be looking for upon graduation from university?³²

Permanent part-time employment	6.2 %
Contract/term employment	19.9 %
Permanent full-time employment	66.7 %
Self-employment	5.9 %
Not interested in employment	0.2 %
Do not know	1.1 %

3. Given the current labour market and your educational background and skills, how likely do you think it will be that you will find the type of work you are looking for within 6 months of graduation?

Highly unlikely	3.2 %
Unlikely	6.4 %
Neither likely nor unlikely	12.2 %
Likely	39.1 %
Highly likely	33.9 %
Do not know	5.3 %

4. Upon graduation, what will be your minimum annual income requirements when looking for work?

Less than \$20,000	3.5 %
\$20,000 to \$29,999	23.3 %
\$30,000 to \$39,999	38.2 %
\$40,000 to \$49,999	22.7 %
\$50,000 to \$59,999	7.5 %
\$60,000 to \$69,999	3.1 %
\$70,000 to \$79,999	0.7 %
Over \$80,000	1.0 %

5. When you consider your future career path do you expect to have a life-long career in mainly one organization or do you anticipate working for multiple organizations/companies?

Mainly one	13.8 %
2-3	44.2 %
4-5	21.2 %
6 or more	7.6 %
Self-employed	4.9 %
Do not know	8.2 %

6. In light of your answer in question 5, if given the choice, which would you prefer?

A career in one organization	30.3 %
A career in a number of different organizations	41.1 %
Self-employment	15.7 %
No preference	7.8 %
Do not know	5.1 %

7. What type of career path will you prefer upon graduation from university?

Traditional (employment in mainly one organization with primarily vertical promotion opportunities)	23.0 %
Spiral (lateral as well as vertical promotion either within a single organization or between different organizations)	62.2 %
Transitory (hired by organization(s) to work on a temporary/contractual basis)	4.1 %
Self-employment	7.0 %
Do not know	3.7 %

8. Throughout your future career path, do you anticipate being a specialist or more of a generalist?

Generalist (a skill set that is flexible enough to adapt to changing demands within the organization and focused more on the management of people)	50.4 %
Specialist (a highly specialized skill set that is less likely to involve the management of people)	38.5 %
Neither	3.3 %
Do not know	7.8 %

9. What duration of employment security do you reasonably expect to be offered in your first job following graduation?

None	3.6 %
Less than 6 months	5.9 %
6 months to a year	20.6 %
One year to two years	38.0 %
Greater than two years	23.4 %
Do not know	8.5 %

10. What duration of employment security would you prefer to have in your first job following graduation?

None	0.9 %
Less than 6 months	2.4 %
6 months to a year	6.2 %
One year to two years	32.2 %
Greater than two years	54.2 %
Do not know	4.0 %

11. Which of the following methods have you or will you likely be using in your job search?

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Likely	Very Likely
Local newspapers	13.7 %	15.5 %	10.9 %	34.0 %	25.9 %
National newspapers	9.9 %	17.8 %	17.6 %	33.6 %	21.1 %
School newspapers and magazines	15.4 %	21.0 %	19.6 %	27.6 %	16.4 %
The Internet	5.1 %	7.7 %	13.0 %	35.5 %	38.8 %
Network of family and friends	7.1 %	10.7 %	17.8 %	35.4 %	29.0 %
Network of previous employers and colleagues	6.4 %	12.6 %	16.3 %	32.8 %	31.8 %
Campus career centres	5.2 %	8.1 %	13.3 %	30.3 %	43.1 %
Job fairs	8.5 %	15.8 %	24.5 %	31.9 %	19.3 %
Government employment centres	12.6 %	20.3 %	23.6 %	27.9 %	15.5 %
Referral from professors/ Deans	8.5 %	16.1 %	25.3 %	28.7 %	21.3 %
Referrals from professional associations	13.0 %	19.7 %	29.4 %	24.2 %	13.8 %
Other, please indicate	16.3 %	7.0 %	11.7 %	19.5 %	45.5 %

12. Do you have access to the Internet?

Yes	96.5 %
No	3.5 %

13. If yes, how do you most often access the Internet? ³³	
Public libraries	1.3 %
Home computer	41.4 %
Office	8.7 %
University campus	47.2 %
Government employment centres	0.3 %
Other, please indicate	1.0 %
14. On average, how often do you access the Internet?	
More than once a day	27.6 %
Once a day	28.0 %
A few times per week	29.8 %
A few times per month	14.6 %
15. Which Internet services do you use? ³⁴	
E-mail	31.5 %
Newsgroups	10.2 %
World Wide Web	31.4 %
FTP	10.6 %
TELNET	13.1 %
IRC chat	3.2 %
16. Have you heard of the National Graduate Register (NGR)? (http://www.schoolnet.ca/ngr)	
Yes	23.1 %
No	76.9 %
17. If yes, have you or do you plan to use NGR as part of your job search?	
Yes	66.1 %
No	33.9 %
18. Have you used other online job matching sites?	
Yes	16.1 %
No	83.9 %

19. Please indicate the degree to which the following factors will be important to you when looking for your first job upon graduation.

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Important	Very Important	N/A
Competitive salary/compensation	0.8 %	3.7 %	11.0 %	50.6 %	33.7 %	0.4 %
Performance pay	2.5 %	6.8 %	31.6 %	39.4 %	15.4 %	4.3 %
Some form of employment security	0.7 %	4.5 %	14.7 %	52.8 %	26.8 %	0.6 %
Health/dental benefits	1.9 %	6.4 %	20.3 %	46.5 %	24.5 %	0.4 %
Pension plan benefits	2.7 %	9.7 %	27.3 %	39.3 %	19.8 %	1.1 %
Disability/life insurance benefits	3.7 %	11.2 %	34.3 %	35.8 %	13.6 %	1.4 %
Pension plan which is portable from one organization to the next	3.3 %	9.4 %	29.5 %	34.0 %	21.4 %	2.4 %
Flexible work hours	3.0 %	9.9 %	30.4 %	35.3 %	20.7 %	0.7 %
Team approach to work	1.7 %	6.2 %	29.3 %	39.8 %	22.1 %	0.8 %
Opportunities to network	1.2 %	4.4 %	22.2 %	46.1 %	24.5 %	1.7 %
Job located within my region	13.2 %	14.0 %	25.6 %	25.7 %	20.8 %	0.7 %
Ability to balance work, family and other interests	1.3 %	3.9 %	10.3 %	37.4 %	46.4 %	0.6 %
Access to support staff	2.2 %	7.9 %	34.2 %	41.8 %	11.1 %	2.8 %

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Important	Very Important	N/A
A culturally diverse workplace	9.3 %	11.4 %	43.8 %	23.5 %	10.4 %	1.5 %
An inclusive and supportive workplace	1.0 %	3.8 %	16.6 %	49.8 %	27.1 %	1.5 %
Ability to work in my choice of French or English	11.3 %	8.2 %	27.3 %	27.3 %	20.7 %	5.3 %
Environmentally friendly workplace	3.1 %	5.5 %	20.9 %	43.8 %	26.0 %	0.8 %
Opportunity to learn another language (English/French/Other)	13.3 %	13.7 %	40.9 %	21.2 %	9.1 %	1.8 %
Opportunities to use state-of-the-art technology	2.2 %	4.3 %	19.1 %	39.9 %	32.6 %	1.9 %
Access to a paid leave of absence in order to upgrade skills	1.9 %	4.3 %	20.8 %	45.3 %	26.4 %	1.3 %
Power and influence	6.6 %	12.5 %	38.0 %	31.5 %	9.4 %	1.9 %
Opportunities for promotion	0.8 %	1.9 %	8.9 %	45.0 %	42.7 %	0.8 %
Flexibility to move throughout the organization	0.8 %	2.6 %	15.2 %	45.9 %	33.8 %	1.6 %
Opportunities to develop marketable skills	0.7 %	2.6 %	11.1 %	41.2 %	42.7 %	1.7 %
Opportunities to move into senior management	3.4 %	6.6 %	21.8 %	35.5 %	29.7 %	2.9 %

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neither Important nor Unimportant	Important	Very Important	N/A
Organization prestige	4.1 %	9.6 %	31.7 %	38.5 %	13.9 %	2.2 %
Opportunities to travel	3.7 %	8.0 %	32.2 %	34.5 %	20.7 %	0.9 %
Work that contributes to the betterment of society/social good	2.2 %	5.1 %	23.8 %	38.6 %	29.1 %	1.3 %
Access to training and development opportunities (life long learning)	0.4 %	1.5 %	8.8 %	47.7 %	41.0 %	0.6 %
Work which is interesting	0.1 %	0.3 %	1.8 %	27.6 %	70.0 %	0.2 %
Opportunity to work in my field of study	0.4 %	1.4 %	8.2 %	32.9 %	56.9 %	0.1 %
Ability to use skills/expertise appropriately	0.2 %	0.7 %	4.8 %	40.1 %	53.8 %	0.4 %
Other, please indicate	1.2 %	—	1.5 %	5.6 %	26.6 %	65.1 %

20. In reference to the above question, what would you say are the 3 most important and 3 least important factors driving your career choice?³⁵

Most Important – First choice

Interesting work	21.3 %
Competitive salary/compensation	21.2 %
Opportunity to work in my field of study	9.3 %
Ability to balance interests	6.4 %
Employment security	4.8 %
Other (remaining factors combined)	37.0 %

Most Important – Second choice

Interesting work	12.5 %
Opportunity to work in my field of study	10.0 %
Opportunities for promotion	6.6 %

Ability to balance interests	6.5 %
Competitive salary/compensation	6.2 %
Access to training and development opportunities	5.0 %
Opportunity to develop marketable skills	5.0 %
Other (remaining factors combined)	48.2 %

Most Important – Third choice

Interesting work	13.0 %
Opportunity to work in my field of study	7.9 %
Access to training and development opportunities	7.0 %
Competitive salary/compensation	6.6 %
Opportunities for promotion	6.5 %
Ability to balance interests	6.4 %
Ability to use skills/expertise appropriately	6.4 %
Other (remaining factors combined)	46.2 %

Least Important – First choice

Local job	14.8 %
Opportunity to learn another language	11.1 %
Culturally diverse workplace	10.6 %
Ability to work in my choice of English or French	9.1 %
Power and influence	8.7 %
Other (remaining factors combined)	45.7 %

Least Important – Second choice

Opportunity to learn another language	12.5 %
Culturally diverse workplace	10.4 %
Power and influence	9.7 %
Ability to work in my choice of English or French	8.3 %
Local job	7.6 %
Organization prestige	6.1 %
Other (remaining factors combined)	45.4 %

Least Important – Third choice

Opportunity to learn another language	10.8 %
Organization prestige	8.0 %
Power and influence	7.8 %
Opportunity to travel	7.0 %
Culturally diverse workplace	6.4 %
Ability to work in my choice of English or French	6.1 %
Local job	6.0 %
Other (remaining factors combined)	47.9 %

SECTION B: MAKING CHOICES

1. In what sector do you feel there will be the most opportunities for employment following your graduation from university?

Private sector	76.3 %
Federal (public sector)	8.4 %
Provincial (public sector)	6.6 %
Municipal (public sector)	1.8 %
Other government, please indicate	1.3 %
Not-for-profit/NGO (i.e., non-governmental/charitable)	2.2 %
Other, please indicate	3.4 %

2. Are you currently planning to work for yourself (i.e., self-employed)?

Yes	10.9 %
No	62.0 %
Do not know	27.1 %

3. If you were given the choice, in which sector of the economy would you most prefer to work?

Private sector	64.8 %
Federal (public sector)	18.0 %
Provincial (public sector)	6.9 %
Municipal (public sector)	2.0 %
Other government, please indicate	1.6 %
Not-for-profit/NGO (i.e., non-governmental/charitable)	3.5 %
Other, please indicate	3.2 %

4. Have you ever considered employment in the public sector?

Yes	69.9 %
No	30.1 %

5. If yes, at what level of government would you most prefer to work?

Federal	68.3 %
Provincial	21.6 %
Municipal	7.1 %
Other government, please indicate	3.0 %

6. Have any family members or friends worked for any level of government?

Yes	58.4 %
No	41.6 %

7. If yes, what level were/are they employed?³⁶

Federal	42.2 %
Provincial	37.4 %
Municipal	17.6 %
Other government, please indicate	2.9 %

8. To what degree have these family members or friends encouraged you to seek employment in the public service?

Strongly discouraged	3.6 %
Discouraged	8.3 %
Neither encouraged nor discouraged	69.4 %
Encouraged	14.6 %
Strongly encouraged	4.1 %

9. To what extent do you feel that “knowing someone” would make it easier for you to find a job in any of the following sectors?

	To a Very Little Extent	To a Little Extent	To Some Extent	To a Great Extent	To a Very Great Extent	Don't Know
Public	7.2 %	10.1 %	25.9 %	21.7 %	28.4 %	6.6 %
Private	1.7 %	2.7 %	16.2 %	32.5 %	44.0 %	2.9 %
Not-for-profit	6.0 %	8.0 %	21.0 %	18.3 %	21.3 %	25.5 %

MORE SPECIFICALLY ON THE FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICE

10. To what extent do you agree with the following statements when you first think of employment in the federal Public Service?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Has excellent benefits	0.3 %	3.6 %	10.0 %	43.6 %	32.7 %	9.8 %
Has too much bureaucracy	0.2 %	2.5 %	13.1 %	36.9 %	38.2 %	9.1 %
Has salaries comparable to other sectors	4.4 %	22.9 %	16.4 %	33.8 %	8.9 %	13.5 %
Is basically a 9 to 5 job	1.3 %	8.7 %	12.6 %	46.8 %	22.9 %	7.6 %
Offers a wide variety of career opportunities	1.5 %	12.6 %	23.5 %	39.7 %	13.6 %	9.2 %

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Has an aging workforce	0.1 %	3.4 %	17.7 %	41.0 %	19.1 %	18.7 %
Is resistant to change	0.7 %	7.5 %	21.8 %	37.1 %	18.9 %	14.0 %
Promotes innovation	6.6 %	30.6 %	33.4 %	13.8 %	2.2 %	13.4 %
Is too political	0.8 %	7.6 %	23.9 %	34.8 %	22.9 %	10.2 %
Has fair hiring practices	3.9 %	14.6 %	23.3 %	31.5 %	8.4 %	18.3 %
Is disconnected from the average Canadian	1.7 %	18.3 %	32.5 %	24.5 %	6.7 %	16.4 %
Offers the latest in technological developments	3.0 %	18.9 %	27.2 %	26.0 %	5.8 %	19.1 %
Has public servants who are committed to serving Canadians	4.4 %	20.6 %	34.6 %	24.9 %	3.8 %	11.8 %
Is concerned with empire building	4.3 %	19.1 %	30.4 %	10.7 %	2.8 %	32.7 %
Is committed to the betterment of Canada	1.3 %	10.0 %	32.4 %	40.1 %	6.7 %	9.5 %
Is too rules and process oriented	0.6 %	5.5 %	22.0 %	41.4 %	16.3 %	14.2 %
Has opportunities for advancement	1.1 %	9.1 %	23.2 %	45.2 %	6.6 %	14.8 %
Inhibits risk taking	1.8 %	10.6 %	25.9 %	31.5 %	7.3 %	22.9 %
Is constantly downsizing	0.7 %	9.1 %	26.6 %	35.0 %	12.3 %	16.4 %
Is changing for the better	2.7 %	13.7 %	37.7 %	21.6 %	2.6 %	21.7 %
Promotes teamwork	1.6 %	10.4 %	29.5 %	26.9 %	4.2 %	27.5 %

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
Limits independent decision-making	0.9 %	7.6 %	21.8 %	42.0 %	8.2 %	19.4 %
Values its employees	1.8 %	15.4 %	34.9 %	26.6 %	2.6 %	18.7 %
Has poor employee morale	1.8 %	14.6 %	27.0 %	27.2 %	6.8 %	22.4 %
Promotes personal growth and development	1.6 %	18.4 %	32.7 %	21.6 %	2.5 %	23.2 %
Is committed to diversity in the workplace	0.8 %	6.4 %	22.0 %	38.7 %	12.6 %	19.4 %
Other, please indicate	1.8 %	0.4 %	5.3 %	8.8 %	18.9 %	64.8 %

11. Are you aware of the federal Public Service's annual post-secondary recruitment campaign?

Yes	24.3 %
No	75.7 %

12. In particular, please indicate if you are aware of any of the following federal Public Service recruitment programs.³⁷

Management Trainee Program	21.7 %
Accelerated Economist Training Program	9.9 %
Financial Officer/Internal Auditor Recruitment and Development Program	13.4 %
Aboriginal Employment Program	19.0 %
Aboriginal Masters Program	8.1 %
Foreign Service Officer positions with Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada	27.9 %

13. If you noted that you have heard of any of the above federal Public Service recruitment programs, please indicate how you have learned about these recruitment campaigns.³⁸

Local newspapers	5.6 %
National newspapers	4.4 %
School newspapers and magazines	7.1 %
Faculty bulletin boards	12.1 %
Professional associations' newsletters	1.2 %
Employment equity newsletters, bulletins, magazines	2.4 %

The Internet	8.2 %
Network of family and friends	12.5 %
Network of previous employers and colleagues	2.7 %
Campus career centres	21.7 %
Job fairs	4.2 %
Referral from professors/Deans	2.7 %
Government employment centres	5.2 %
Public Service Commission offices	2.9 %
Do not remember	3.6 %
Other, please indicate	3.5 %

14. How easy do you think it is to find out about employment opportunities within the federal Public Service?

Very hard	6.9 %
Hard	26.9 %
Neither hard nor easy	23.7 %
Easy	18.7 %
Very easy	4.9 %
Do not know	19.0 %

15. Do you feel that you know where to go to obtain information regarding employment opportunities within the federal Public Service?

Yes	40.7 %
No	59.3 %

SECTION C: PERSONAL CAREER CHARACTERISTICS

1. In what calendar month and year do you expect to graduate?

Month

January	2.2 %
February	1.0 %
March	0.6 %
April	29.5 %
May	23.5 %
June	10.5 %
July	1.6 %
August	6.5 %
September	5.6 %
October	2.7 %
November	1.6 %
December	14.7 %

Year

1996 and prior	1.0 %
1997	10.5 %

1998	47.6 %
1999	30.6 %
2000	7.0 %
2001	2.2 %
2002 or later	1.0 %

2. With what type of degree will you graduate?

Bachelor	31.7 %
Bachelor with honours	23.9 %
Masters	31.9 %
Ph.D.	12.5 %

3. What is your major area of study?²³⁹

Economics	4.2 %
Finance/Accounting	9.5 %
Engineering	24.2 %
General Sciences	18.4 %
Computer Science/Management Information Science	10.8 %
Journalism/Communications/Arts	7.2 %
Public Administration/Business Administration/ International Development	18.7 %
Statistics/Math	4.4 %
Other, please indicate	2.5 %

4. How are you completing the majority of your studies?

Full-time	92.6 %
Part-time	7.4 %

5. In your present program of study, what is your grade point average (GPA)?

Respondents were asked to indicate their grade point average, and the scale upon which it is based. It should be noted that many respondents were unable to indicate what their GPA was, either because of uncertainty or confusion. Furthermore, in order to facilitate any analyses incorporating the GPA variable, all reported scores ultimately had to be converted to a percentage grade. This process was necessary for several reasons: in order to include respondents from schools that do not use a GPA measure; due to the number of diverse scales used by the universities sampled; and in order to incorporate those respondents who reported a percentage grade rather than a GPA score. Below, the converted GPA scores are presented.

Percentage Grade Ranges for Converted Grade Point Averages

Percentage Grade Range	Frequency	Percentage of Sample (n = 1,607)
80 percent or higher	658	40.9 %
70 - 79 percent	690	42.9 %
60 - 69 percent	240	14.9 %
50 - 59 percent	19	1.2 %

6. How important will the timeliness of the job offer be in making your final decision for employment? (i.e., a shorter interview process leading to an early job offer)

Very unimportant	1.9 %
Unimportant	8.1 %
Neither unimportant nor important	25.3 %
Important	41.2 %
Very important	14.7 %
Do not know	8.8 %

7. During the last year of your studies, at what time of the year do you think you will be focusing your attention on a job/career search?⁴⁰

January, February, March	32.2 %
April, May, June	13.6 %
July, August	4.7 %
September, October, November, December	33.5 %
I have already found a job	5.2 %
Do not know	10.8 %

8. Have you already been actively looking for a job following graduation?

Yes	35.7 %
No	64.3 %

9. Have you received any job offers?

Yes	18.6 %
No	81.4 %

10. If yes, in what type of organization were you offered employment?⁴¹

Private sector	72.2 %
Federal (public sector)	10.4 %
Provincial (public sector)	5.7 %
Municipal (public sector)	0.8 %
Other government, please indicate	3.3 %
Not-for-profit/NGO (i.e., non-governmental/charitable)	1.8 %
Other, please specify	5.7 %

11. Has this offer originated from an organization within or outside of Canada?

Within Canada	87.9 %
Abroad	12.1 %

12. What was the primary factor motivating your decision to obtain a university degree?⁴²

Personal development	31.5 %
To be able to get a job	27.5 %
Change jobs/careers	5.2 %
Change sector of employment	2.0 %
Promotion restricted without degree	8.1 %

Potential for higher salary	21.8 %
Other, please indicate	3.8 %

13. Did you have a full-time career/job before deciding to return to school?

Yes	28.5 %
No	71.5 %

14. If yes, in which of the following sectors were you employed?⁴³

Private sector	55.9 %
Federal (public sector)	10.7 %
Provincial (public sector)	9.6 %
Municipal (public sector)	3.1 %
Other government, please indicate	10.7 %
Not-for-profit/NGO (i.e., non-governmental/charitable)	5.9 %
Volunteer/unpaid	0.7 %
Self-employed	4.0 %

15. Did you take a leave of absence from work to complete this degree?

Yes	12.8 %
No	87.2 %

16. If yes, do you plan to return to your present employer upon completion of your degree?

Yes	25.6 %
No	74.4 %

17. To what extent do you agree that your career is your is the highest priority in your life right now?

Strongly disagree	1.8 %
Disagree	8.9 %
Neither agree nor disagree	12.3 %
Agree	34.4 %
Strongly agree	41.3 %
Do not know	1.2 %

SECTION D: PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE

1. What is the total number of years you have worked in career oriented jobs (including teaching/research assistant work and summer employment) in the public, private, or other sectors?⁴⁴

None	21.9 %
Less than one year	17.5 %
1 – 2 years	13.0 %
More than 2 years but less than 5 years	24.3 %
5 – 10 years	17.9 %
More than 10 years	5.5 %

2. Please indicate if you have ever been employed in any of the following sectors.⁴⁵

Private sector	47.3 %
Federal (public sector)	14.4 %
Provincial (public sector)	11.5 %
Municipal (public sector)	6.2 %
Other government, please indicate	6.2 %
Not-for-profit/NGO (i.e., non-governmental/charitable)	7.2 %
Other, please specify	7.1 %

3. If federal government experience has been indicated, please indicate in which department/agency you have worked and your overall satisfaction in you last 3 positions within the federal government.

First Response

Department / Agency	Frequency	Percent
DND	24	7.4 %
HRDC	20	6.2 %
PWGSC	20	6.2 %
Agric / AAFC	19	5.9 %
NRC-IRC,BRI,PBI	19	5.9 %
Revenue	16	4.9 %
STATS CAN	16	4.9 %
Nat Resources	14	4.3 %
Health CAN	13	4.0 %
Transport	13	4.0 %
Industry	12	3.7 %
Environment	11	3.4 %
DFO	9	2.8 %
AECB-AECL	6	1.9 %
Canada Post	5	1.5 %
RCMP	5	1.5 %
NSERC	4	1.2 %
House of Commons	4	1.2 %
Forestry	4	1.2 %
Finance	4	1.2 %
Cdn Heritage	3	0.9 %
DFAIT	3	0.9 %
Parks Can	3	0.9 %
CIDA	3	0.9 %
Education	3	0.9 %
Customs	2	0.6 %
Justice	2	0.6 %

Department / Agency	Frequency	Percent
OSFI	2	0.6 %
CMHC	2	0.6 %
Port	1	0.3 %
Citizen and Immig	1	0.3 %
PSC	1	0.3 %
Cdn Space Agcy	1	0.3 %
Senate	1	0.3 %
EMR	1	0.3 %
Western Econ Div	1	0.3 %
Privy Council	1	0.3 %
Auditor Gen	1	0.3 %
Elections Can	1	0.3 %
Technical Assis	1	0.3 %
APECA	2	0.6 %
Veterans Affr	1	0.3 %
NCC-CCN	1	0.3 %
Other, please indicate	48	14.8 %

Satisfaction – First Response

Very dissatisfied	3.5 %
Dissatisfied	10.0 %
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	16.5 %
Satisfied	43.7 %
Very satisfied	26.3 %

Second Response

Department / Agency	Frequency	Percent
STATS CAN	8	10.1 %
HRDC	6	7.6 %
NRC-IRC,BRI,PBI	4	5.1 %
Nat Resources	4	5.1 %
PWGSC	4	5.1 %
Health CAN	4	5.1 %
Agric / AAFC	4	5.1 %
Citizen and Immig	3	3.8 %
Cdn Space Agcy	2	2.5 %
Industry	2	2.5 %
Revenue	2	2.5 %
Environment	2	2.5 %
DND	2	2.5 %
DFAIT	2	2.5 %
Forestry	1	1.3 %

Department / Agency	Frequency	Percent
RCMP	1	1.3 %
NSERC	1	1.3 %
House of Commons	1	1.3 %
Nat Energy Brd	1	1.3 %
Empl & Immig	1	1.3 %
PSC	1	1.3 %
Canada Post	1	1.3 %
SolGen	1	1.3 %
Corrections	1	1.3 %
DFO	1	1.3 %
Senate	1	1.3 %
EMR	1	1.3 %
CIDA	1	1.3 %
Elections Can	2	2.5 %
Other, please indicate	14	17.7 %

Satisfaction – Second Response

Very dissatisfied	2.5 %
Dissatisfied	16.1 %
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	18.6 %
Satisfied	36.4 %
Very satisfied	26.3 %

Third Response

Department / Agency	Frequency	Percent
NRC-IRC,BRI,PBI	5	16.1 %
DND	4	12.9 %
Health CAN	3	9.7 %
PSC	2	6.5 %
DFO	2	6.5 %
PWGSC	1	3.2 %
Transport	1	3.2 %
Industry	1	3.2 %
STATS CAN	1	3.2 %
Agric / AAFC	1	3.2 %
Nat Resources	1	3.2 %
Environment	1	3.2 %
Citizen and Immig	1	3.2 %
CHRC	1	3.2 %
Western Econ Div	1	3.2 %
Other, please indicate	5	16.1 %

Satisfaction – Third Response

Very dissatisfied	2.3 %
Dissatisfied	16.3 %
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	11.6 %
Satisfied	39.5 %
Very satisfied	30.2 %

4. Have your studies included any co-op education placement?

Yes	20.0 %
No	80.0 %

5. If yes, in which sectors were your co-op placements?⁴⁶

Private sector	49.1 %
Federal (public sector)	22.1 %
Provincial (public sector)	10.6 %
Municipal (public sector)	3.9 %
Other government, please indicate	3.9 %
Not-for-profit/NGO (i.e., non-governmental/charitable)	3.2 %
Other, please specify	7.2 %

6. Do you feel that your co-op experience has better equipped you to find employment in today's labour market?

Yes	83.1 %
No	6.0 %
Do not know	10.9 %

7. Upon graduation, do you plan to look for employment in the same organization for which you worked during your most recent co-op placement?

Yes	32.6 %
No	40.4 %
Do not know	27.0 %

SECTION E: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Please indicate the year in which you were born.

Prior to 1960	5.3 %
Between 1960 - 1964	6.3 %
Between 1965 - 1969	13.3 %
Between 1970 - 1974	36.3 %
Between 1975 - 1979	38.7 %
Missing	1.1 %
Respondents under 25 years of age	42 %
Respondents over 25 years of age	58 %

2. Please indicate the highest level of education you have achieved to date.

Some college/university	36.1 %
College diploma	4.5 %
Bachelor	17.8 %
Bachelor with honours	14.1 %
Some post-graduate schooling	9.6 %
Masters	16.3 %
Ph.D.	1.4 %
Post-doctoral studies	0.2 %

3. Please indicate in which of the following brackets your current personal income falls.

Less than \$10,000	52.9 %
\$10,000 - \$19,999	27.8 %
\$20,000 - \$29,999	8.2 %
\$30,000 - \$39,999	4.1 %
\$40,000 - \$49,999	3.2 %
\$50,000 - \$59,999	1.6 %
\$60,000 - \$69,999	1.3 %
Over \$70,000	0.8 %

4. What is your marital status?

Married	19.1 %
Common law	4.7 %
Single/Never married	73.7 %
Divorced, Separated, Widowed	2.4 %

5. Do you have a family member who is dependent upon you for financial support?

Yes	14.7 %
No	85.3 %

6. What is your citizenship status?

Canadian citizen	85.7 %
Permanent resident (formerly known as 'Landed Immigrant')	7.0 %
Foreign student (holder of student authorization)	7.3 %

7. In which province or territory is your primary residence? (Regardless of whether or not you are a Canadian citizen)

Nova Scotia	0.4 %
Manitoba	8.4 %
New Brunswick	6.5 %
Saskatchewan	8.0 %
Prince Edward Island	0.1 %
Alberta	9.7 %

Newfoundland	0.3 %
British Columbia	8.9 %
Quebec	16.4 %
Ontario	41.3 %
Yukon	0.1 %

8. What would you consider to be your first language?

English	64.8 %
French	18.4 %
Other, please indicate	16.8 %

9. Please indicate the degree to which you feel comfortable communicating in the following languages:

	Not at all Comfortable	Uncomfortable	Somewhat Comfortable	Comfortable	Very Comfortable
French					
Reading	22.8 %	13.2 %	21.5 %	13.7 %	28.8 %
Writing	29.5 %	20.7 %	18.3 %	9.6 %	21.9 %
Speaking	27.1 %	19.8 %	17.9 %	9.9 %	25.3 %
English					
Reading	0.0 %	0.4 %	3.4 %	12.1 %	84.0 %
Writing	0.3 %	1.9 %	6.5 %	15.5 %	75.8 %
Speaking	0.2 %	2.1 %	5.8 %	15.0 %	76.9 %

10. Please indicate your gender.

Female	54.5 %
Male	45.5 %

11. Please indicate whether you fall into any of the following federal government designated employment equity groups.⁴⁷

Aboriginal peoples (a North American Indian or member of a First Nation, Métis or Inuit)	3.1 % (20)
Members of a visible minority group (someone [other than an Aboriginal person as defined above] who is non-white in colour/race, regardless of place of birth)	92.2 % (588)
Persons with disabilities (a person who has a long-term or recurring condition or health problem which limits the kind or amount of activity that he/she can do in the workplace; OR feels that he/she is perceived by others as limited in the kind or amount of work which he/she can do because of a physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric, or learning impairment)	4.7 % (30)

END NOTES

-
- ³² As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ³³ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ³⁴ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ³⁵ The choices noted for Section A, question 20 are either those which represent at least five percent of all responses, or they are among the top five for that particular response.
-
- ³⁶ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ³⁷ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ³⁸ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ³⁹ Due to the large percentage of respondents who originally had indicated a response of 'Other', this variable was recoded to include general science and arts.
-
- ⁴⁰ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ⁴¹ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ⁴² As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ⁴³ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ⁴⁴ This question allowed respondents to provide an answer in terms of number of months and/or years. Subsequently, all responses were converted into the categories noted.
-
- ⁴⁵ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ⁴⁶ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.
-
- ⁴⁷ As a multiple response question, the figures reported represent percentage of all responses.

PROFILE OF SPONSOR ORGANIZATIONS

The Public Management Research Centre is the research division of the Public Policy Forum, a national non-profit organization which seeks the commitment of leaders in government, business, labour, the voluntary sector, and the media to work together towards developing and attaining a shared vision for public policy, public sector management, and its impact on the nation's business. Through the establishment of the Public Management Research Centre, the Public Policy Forum has undertaken numerous studies and projects using various research tools to support the work and direction of the Forum. It is now recognized as a leader in its ability to accurately document and pinpoint important policy, governance, and human resources issues within the public sector.

The Public Service Commission of Canada is the independent agency responsible for the appointment of qualified persons to and within the Public Service, for providing recourse and review in matters under the Public Service Employment Act (PSEA), for delivering training and development programs and for carrying out other responsibilities as provided for in the PSEA and the Employment Equity Act.