

Employer Satisfaction Survey: FY25 Results

Context

In early 2022 calendar year, a group of stakeholders at Hennepin Technical College convened to review the institution's employer satisfaction survey. As a result of their discussions, a new process was developed in which employers would be asked to assess the skills, preparation, and overall quality of Hennepin Technical College graduates as employees. Fiscal Year 2023 was selected as the first year to administer the revised survey. The completion of the Fiscal Year 2025 survey provides three full years of comparison data, directly relevant to the new iteration of the survey.

The findings from this survey reflect the college's commitment to providing high-quality education to its students. Serving as an indirect measure of student success, the survey evaluates how well graduates are prepared for employment, based on employer feedback. The results will be posted on the Hennepin Technical College website and shared widely within the campus community. These findings will be used to inform, support, and guide decision-making related to educational delivery and student support moving forward.

Methods

The Institutional Research team compiled a list of potential employers using two primary sources. First, employers identified by students on the Graduate Follow-Up Survey were included. Second, the team collaborated with academic support staff to compile a list of employers serving on Program Advisory Committees across campus. In total, 319 individuals and/or organizations were identified from these two sources.

To reach the 319 employers, the Institutional Research team used one of two methods. If an email address was provided, the team sent a direct email invitation to participate in the survey. If no email address was available, the team visited the employer's website, submitted a contact form, or contacted the employer's human resources department directly to obtain the appropriate email address for sending the survey. Invitations were initially sent on the third Monday of October 2024, with the survey remaining open for responses until the first Monday of December 2024. A complete copy of the survey instrument is provided in Appendix A.

Results

The overall response rate was 16.9%, with 54 responses collected from the 319 individuals and/or organizations contacted. Response rates between 5% and 10% are typical for surveys conducted through unsolicited outreach methods, such as email or form submissions. For data to be considered statistically representative, a minimum of 30 responses is generally required. Since the research team exceeded this threshold, the findings can be reasonably extrapolated to the broader population of Hennepin Technical College graduates. Furthermore, the 16.9% response rate represents a notable improvement over the two previous years, with response rates of 5.7% in FY24 and 9.3% in FY23.

The feedback received was predominantly favorable (see Table 1). For 12 of the 16 skills evaluated, the majority of respondents rated our students as performing "Very Well," the highest rating on the Likert scale. This indicates that our students consistently excel in the key areas considered most important by both the institution and employers.

The area with the strongest performance, as rated by employers who assessed student skills as either "Very Well" or "Well," was "produces quality work." A total of 85.2% of employers shared this view. Two skills received the lowest ratings from employers, though it is important to note that only 3.8% of employers felt these skills required improvement, based on ratings of "Poor" or "Very Poor." These areas were:

- Communicates well orally
- Alignment of skills/abilities with employer needs

The first area, "Communicates well orally," aligns with Hennepin Technical College's Learner Outcomes (HTC LOs), which encompass essential skills all students are expected to develop, regardless of their program or award level (certificate, diploma, or degree). HTC has consistently assessed these outcomes across all general education courses. Notably, "Communicates well orally" has shown significant improvement, with the percentage of employers rating this skill as "Poor" or "Very Poor" decreasing from 10.3% in FY23 to just 3.8% in FY24. This represents a 63% improvement over the past three years.

"The second area, 'To what degree do the skills/abilities match your needs?', improved from the previous year's 'Very Well' rating of 20%. However, it remains notably lower than the FY23 rating of 64.3% (Appendix B). This disparity underscores an opportunity for the institution to focus on this area in the coming fiscal years, as learner outcomes are reviewed and adjusted to better meet the dynamic needs of the modern workforce, especially the current and future employers who rely on HTC graduates joining their teams."

Table 1 Response Distribution to Survey Questions – FY25

Metric	Very Well	Well	Average	Poor	Very Poor	N/A
Produces quality work	51.9%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%
Uses technology (tools, equipment) properly/safely	44.4%	44.4%	7.4%	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%
Applies environmental health and safety regulations	48.1%	33.3%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
Communicates well orally	37.0%	40.7%	16.7%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
Communicates well in writing	35.2%	24.1%	29.6%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
Demonstrates necessary math skills	35.2%	27.8%	20.4%	1.9%	0.0%	14.8%
Demonstrates necessary computer skills	37.0%	29.6%	18.5%	0.0%	0.0%	14.8%
Exhibits critical thinking/problem-solving skills	31.5%	37.0%	25.9%	3.7%	0.0%	1.9%
Demonstrates community/global awareness	31.5%	24.1%	31.5%	0.0%	0.0%	13.0%
Follows job-related rules and regulations	46.3%	37.0%	13.0%	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%
Follows instructions	42.6%	40.7%	14.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
Pays attention to job details	40.7%	33.3%	20.4%	3.7%	0.0%	1.9%
Shows initiative	40.7%	35.2%	18.5%	3.7%	0.0%	1.9%
Accepts responsibility	44.4%	37.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
Exhibits a positive work attitude	50.9%	30.2%	17.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%

To what degree do the skills/abilities match your needs?	38.9%	46.3%	9.3%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
	Yes	No				
Would you hire an HTC graduate again?	98.0%	2.0%				

Green shading: highest rated skill by respondents

Red shading: lowest rated skill by respondents (two-way tie)

Respondents were asked to identify the job title(s) held by HTC graduates at their companies (see Table 2). Graduates held a variety of titles, with "Technician" being the most common. It's important to note that this title is used across multiple industries, so these graduates may not all be employed in the same sector. The FY23 results were consistent with this trend, as "Technician" was also the most common job title reported in that cycle. The 52 job titles collected in this survey mark a substantial increase compared to the 4 job titles reported in the FY24 survey.

Table 2 Job Titles on which Employers Rated Hennepin Technical College Graduates – FY25

Job Title	Number
Technician	4
Automotive Technician	3
Dental Assistant	3
Carpenter/Finish Carpenter/Carpenter Helper	3
Builder/Production Builder	3
Machinist (Grade 40 & CNC)	3
Test Technician	3
LPN	2
Police Officer	2
Intern	2
HVAC (Service Tech & Apprentice)	2
Molding Technician	1
General Service Technician	1
Assistant Grower	1
Plumbing Apprentice	1
Paint Prepper	1
Process Technician	1
Engineer	1
Operator	1
Diesel Technician	1
Cabinet Maker	1
Welder	1
Design & Install	1
Maintenance Technician	1
Service & Repair	1
Power Unit Assembly	1
Manifold Assembly	1
CAD Engineer	1
Drafter	1
Culinary Director	1
Sr. Chef	1

EMT	1
Video Producer	1

At the end of the survey, respondents were invited to provide any additional comments regarding the survey or the HTC graduates they had hired. This reporting cycle saw the highest number of responses in the past three years of data collection.

*Instructor names were replaced with “Instructor A thru H”, graduate names were replaced with “Graduate”.

- “(*Instructor A* and *Instructor B*) in the Ford Asset program do a great job producing students who are ready to work and have a thorough understanding of the job. They are always in contact with the employers and make sure the students are performing well. Great program”
- “(Graduate) enjoys school and appears he is enjoying working for us”
- “We currently have 7 graduates from HTC power sports program and I'm very pleased with each of them. I credit the success we have had with great students due to the work that (*Instructor C*) and his team has done. He is patient about his students success and how they will fit into an organization.
- “Please keep the Plastics Engineering Program going to provide the technical skills/abilities required for technicians HTC”
- “*Graduate* left shortly after graduation to work for another organization”
- “The assistant grower I have on staff has been with us for 5 years. I have had past assistant growers from the program as well, but have not hired recently.”
- “(*Instructor D*) is a fantastic instructor!”
- “We appreciate everything you guys do for our industry. Keep up the good work!”
- “Keep the Plastics Program at HTC it is very valuable to the industry!”
- “Great program, we appreciate everything you do for the industry!”
- “HTC Cabinet program is a true Blessing in an industry like ours that is struggling to find qualified employees!”
- “We have always valued hiring graduates from your carpentry programs and will continue to do so in the future”
- “Many perspective employees struggle with the hands-on weld test. The specific items they struggle with are the largest single pass fillet weld (8mm or 5/16") and the smallest multi-pass fillet weld (10mm or 3/8"). It is essential to be able to perform these welds in the horizontal fillet position without overthinking it. Successful candidates have to be able to concentrate on how to put the parts together, not just focus on making a good weld. The welding skill needs to be "muscle memory".”
- “HTC graduates have been a great addition to our team!”
- “We strongly support Hennepin Tech diesel program.”
- “The skills program at HTC, particularly within the ICPOET - Pathways program needs to be revamped. The skills/education they receive prior to employment does not currently meet standards compared to other PPOE educational institutions (Alexandria and Rasmussen). Students are not being properly trained by HTC resulting in their failure during FTO at our organization. Would be willing to assist in providing further guidance.”
- “We appreciate & respect the job that both (*Instructor E* & *Instructor F*) do with the students in the Cabinetmaking program. Keep up the great work!”
- “The students were employees and the company paid to have them go to HTC to better themselves.”
- “I know that the Marine/Motorcycle program has a great program in place. The constantly update to industry standards as the standards change.”

- “I appreciate the partnership we have with the Culinary Department and the skill level the students graduate with.”
- “We have 5 graduates working for us. They are a great addition to our team.”
- “I think some emphasis should be put on production time and efficiency. When students come here at first they are in "teaching" mode and need to realize there is value in getting a job done quickly and efficiently at or under "book time" for the benefit of the shop and customer.”
- Both (*Instructor G & Instructor H*) have done a very good job with preparing their students for the work that they are doing for us, here @ Star.

Future Improvements

The employer satisfaction survey and its results have shown notable improvements in both employer engagement and participation, yet there is still room for further enhancement. Maintaining a continued focus on collecting responses will provide a more comprehensive understanding of graduates' abilities. Expanding employer participation will offer deeper insights into the specific skills required across different industries. While this fiscal year has seen a marked increase in responses, ongoing efforts are necessary to ensure a more complete picture, with broader representation across additional program areas and job titles.

2. Overall rating - would you hire the HTC graduate(s) again?

Yes

No

3. Please tell us which company you are representing.

Enter your answer

4. For those hired in the last year, which job title(s) do the HTC graduates have at your organization?

Enter your answer

5. Please include any additional comments you have here. Thank you for completing this survey!

Enter your answer

Submit

Appendix B Longitudinal Data

Response Distribution to Survey Questions, by Fiscal Year

Metric	FY	Very Well	Well	Average	Poor	Very Poor	N/A
Produces quality work	FY25	51.9%	33.3%	11.1%	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%
	FY24	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	58.6%	58.6%	10.3%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%
Uses technology (tools, equipment) properly/safely	FY25	44.4%	44.4%	7.4%	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%
	FY24	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	55.2%	31.0%	10.3%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%
Applies environmental health and safety regulations	FY25	48.1%	33.3%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
	FY24	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	58.6%	27.6%	13.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Communicates well orally	FY25	37.0%	40.7%	16.7%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
	FY24	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	58.6%	17.2%	13.8%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Communicates well in writing	FY25	35.2%	24.1%	29.6%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
	FY24	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	40.7%	33.3%	18.5%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%
Demonstrates necessary math skills	FY25	35.2%	27.8%	20.4%	1.9%	0.0%	14.8%
	FY24	0.0%	80.0%	20.00%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	44.4%	37.0%	14.8%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%
Demonstrates necessary computer skills	FY25	37.0%	29.6%	18.5%	0.0%	0.0%	14.8%
	FY24	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	53.6%	32.1%	10.7%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%
Exhibits critical thinking/problem-solving skills	FY25	31.5%	37.0%	25.9%	3.7%	0.0%	1.9%
	FY24	0.0%	80.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	58.6%	17.2%	13.8%	6.9%	3.4%	0.0%
Demonstrates community/global awareness	FY25	31.5%	24.1%	31.5%	0.0%	0.0%	13.0%
	FY24	0.0%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	46.2%	30.8%	19.2%	0.0%	3.8%	0.0%
Follows job-related rules and regulations	FY25	46.3%	37.0%	13.0%	1.9%	0.0%	1.9%
	FY24	40.0%	40.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	63.0%	25.9%	7.4%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%
Follows instructions	FY25	42.6%	40.7%	14.8%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
	FY24	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	58.6%	20.7%	17.2%	0.0%	3.7%	0.0%
Pays attention to job details	FY25	40.7%	33.3%	20.4%	3.7%	0.0%	1.9%
	FY24	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	62.1%	20.7%	6.9%	3.4%	6.9%	0.0%
Shows initiative	FY25	40.7%	35.2%	18.5%	3.7%	0.0%	1.9%
	FY24	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%

	FY23	64.3%	17.9%	14.3%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%
Accepts responsibility	FY25	44.4%	37.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
	FY24	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	64.3%	25.0%	7.1%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%
Exhibits a positive work attitude	FY25	50.9%	30.2%	17.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
	FY24	40.0%	40.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	66.7%	25.9%	7.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
To what degree do the skills/abilities match your needs?	FY25	38.9%	46.3%	9.3%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
	FY24	20.0%	60.0%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	FY23	64.3%	21.4%	10.7%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%
		Yes	No				
Would you hire an HTC graduate again?	FY25	98.0%	2.0%				
	FY24	80.0%	20.0%				
	FY23	93.1%	6.9%				