

Research In Brief

<http://www.palomar.edu/irp/>

Vocational Education Employer Survey

Introduction: Employers of graduates who completed an Associate of Arts degree or a Certificate of Achievement from a vocational education program during the 1999-2000 academic year from Palomar College were contacted and asked to participate in a survey. The survey addressed the attitudes of employers toward Palomar graduates.

This research in brief summarizes the findings of the current study. The study was performed through an interviewing technique, in which employers of former students of Palomar College were surveyed over the telephone. The survey was conducted by the Social & Behavioral Research Institute (SBRI) at California State University San Marcos.

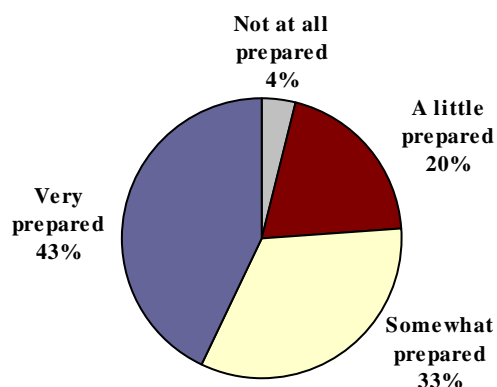
The sample consisted of 51 employers of Palomar graduates. The telephone interviewing began in October of 2001 and ended in January of 2002. The phone interviews lasted 20.23 minutes on average. The results that follow briefly describe our findings.

Results:

- Over 87% of employers indicated that they had been in business for 10 years or more.
- Businesses surveyed were evenly distributed by size ranging from small to medium and possible large.
- Palomar graduate employers indicated that 94.1% of the graduates still held the same position as when interviewed in summer 2001.
- Most of the employers indicated that Palomar graduates were either somewhat

prepared or very prepared for their position (See Figure 1 below).

Figure 1.
Preparedness of Palomar Graduate When Hired



Employers rated the competency level of Palomar graduates on 7 different job-related skills.

- Employers rated Palomar graduates high in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and math. While still strong communication and management skills received slightly lower ratings. One reason that management skills received a low rating could be because the job duties of incoming or new graduates do not include management tasks.

Employers rated 6 different technical skills of Palomar graduates.

- Quality of work, quality of education as it relates to job requirements, job-related conceptual knowledge, and job-related

technical knowledge received high ratings. Problem solving skills and critical thinking skills received slightly lower ratings.

Complete quantitative and qualitative results of the study can be obtained in the Office of Institutional Research and Planning.

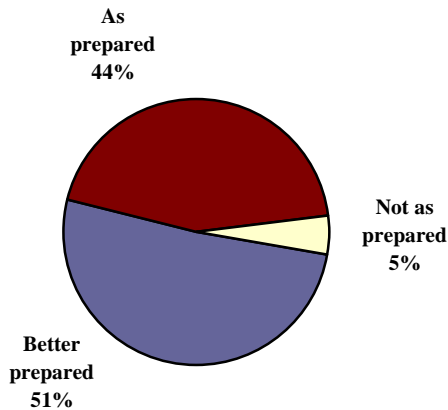
Employers rated 7 different behavior qualities of Palomar graduate employees.

- Results show that most of the graduates rate high on the various behavior qualities. For example, the mean rating for attendance and dependability equaled 9.08 out of a maximum of 10.

In addition, employers were asked to compare the graduates' preparedness in their technical education with other employees in the same workgroup who did not receive an education or training from Palomar College (see Figure 2).

More information? Please contact the Office of Institutional Research and Planning if you have any questions about this or other research and planning issues (760-744-1150 Ext. 2360).

Figure 2.
Comparison of Palomar Graduates with Non-Palomar Graduates



Summary and Conclusions: The results of the study provide a description of employers' attitudes about Palomar graduates. Some of the overall findings are as follows: Half of the employers felt that the graduate they hired was very prepared for the position. Overall, Palomar graduates received high competency ratings. Half of the employers stated that Palomar graduates were better prepared for their jobs, than their non-Palomar counterparts.

We recommend using caution when interpreting and generalizing the results presented in this study. The employers interviewed are not representative of all Palomar graduate employers.