

WYANDOT COUNTY, OH BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION PROGRAM

2014 Final Report



December 2014





Wyandot County, OH
Business Retention & Expansion Program
Final Report

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THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
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Wyandot County

Building a Stronger Community

Economic Development



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Introduction

The retention of local business remains a primary goal for local public officials and community leaders in Wyandot County, Ohio. A concerted effort to meet the needs of local businesses and enhance their ability to profitably grow and expand has been made annually in Wyandot since 2008 and sporadically in years prior. The implementation of a Business Retention and Expansion (BR&E) program has increasingly become a staple for municipal, county, regional, and statewide economic development organizations across the United States. As stated in the 2006 Wyandot County BR&E Final Report, the best “barometers” of how well the community functions as a place to do business and a place to live and work are existing businesses and the existing workforce. Research shows that in Ohio, an average net job growth of 70% comes from existing businesses, and that number increases to as high as 86% in rural areas.¹

Not only does the success of existing businesses allow for a larger tax base, increased local spending, enhanced public services, and an overall better quality of life, but strong local businesses also play a major

role in the attraction of new business to an area. Satisfied existing businesses can serve as a community's best ambassadors when recruiting new firms as well as being a source of leads when seeking new firms to recruit.²

As a result of those stated here and many other proven facts, BR&E programs were conducted in Wyandot County in 1996, 2006, and annually since 2008. Starting in 2009 the local BR&E program was facilitated through leadership from the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development (WCOED). This 501(c)(6) organization was formed as a result of those early BR&E offerings, in partnership with Ohio State University Extension, which prompted local public and private stakeholders to formalize an entity who would conduct the local BR&E program as one of its primary functions. The 2014 Wyandot County BR&E effort also received financial support from the Wyandot County Commissioners and the Regional Growth Partnership.

¹ Kraybill, D. 1995. Retention and Expansion First. *Ohio's Challenge* 8(2):4-7 [Department of Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH].

² Morse, G. 2004. *The Retention and Expansion of Existing Businesses*. CARDI-Cornell, Ithaca, NY.
http://www.cdtoolbox.net/economic_development/000195.html.

Program Goals

Long term goals of the Wyandot County BR&E program remain very similar to those stated in the initial program offering in 1996:

- **To formalize and implement a concerted effort that assists in the retention and expansion of existing businesses and the workforce**
- **To increase the competitiveness of local businesses**
- **To create a narration of the local economy**
- **To enhance local business climate and image for potential business**

Implementation

The Wyandot County Business Retention and Expansion program used a combination of methods to collect data in 2014. As in recent years, the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development Executive Director / Wyandot County Community Development Educator served as the local BR&E practitioner. The BR&E survey was made available on the WCOED website and could be emailed or mailed to participating employers.

In contrast to recent years, a notification

letter was not used to inform local businesses of their request to take part in the program. Instead, the BR&E practitioner either directly called or emailed potential participants to schedule BR&E visits. Those identified to participate in the program were offered the option to take the annual BR&E questionnaire online prior to the visit, or to complete the questionnaire verbally during the visit.

This method of invitation was used due to the fact that in recent years, response rates of less than 10% were seen from the businesses mailed initial letters to participate. This method of invitation to take part in the program therefore negated much of the costs and time used in the past to first mail a notification and try following up by phone or email.

The 2014 program year also saw another programmatic change in the businesses targeted to participate. Since the Wyandot County BR&E program is conducted by leadership from the WCOED, that organization's strategic planning committee set the parameters for targeted local businesses. The group of stakeholders determined the top-15 employers (in terms of total employment) should be visited each year, and a remaining 15 employers would be visited based on need; for a total of at least 30 local businesses visited per year. In 2014, a total of 31 businesses took part in the Wyandot County BR&E program.

Similar to the 2013 BR&E program, the Wyandot County Commissioners joined the BR&E practitioner on a visit roughly once a month, and other members of the WCOED joined visits as well. The inclusion of the commissioners enhanced one of the primary facets of the BR&E program, which is to open direct lines of communication to local policy and community leaders.

Program Benefits and Outcomes

The 2014 Wyandot County BR&E program was completed through the efforts of many organizations other than the before mentioned partnership between the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development and Ohio State University Extension. The Northwest Ohio region JobsOhio partner, the Regional Growth Partnership, also provided funding to the local program in exchange for the collection of specific information for the state-level BR&E effort.

Therefore, data from this local BR&E effort was also used to assess the economy and provide a detailed understanding to state-wide community leaders, public leaders, and economic developers, which advised of concerns faced by their employers. This data provides evidence-based information that these individuals and organizations can develop efforts around to address identified areas that need improvement.

Locally, the 2014 Wyandot County BR&E program led to the identification of one employer that faced challenges to its potential expansion project. Specifically, the local manufacturer needed increased electrical capacity from what was currently available.

WCOED leadership led an effort to facilitate the project with the Village of Carey, regional-, and state-level partners by identifying available assistance to make the project a reality. Assistance was garnered through JobsOhio and incentives were approved by the Ohio Development Services Agency to ensure the expansion took place in Ohio instead of another state.

The WCOED and Village of Carey in turn ensured the company would have adequate electrical capacity to expand in Wyandot County by securing a U.S. Economic Development Administration grant for \$1.5 million. The grant helped to offset a portion of a new municipally owned and operated electrical substation that would supply power to the local manufacturer.

This effort resulted in a new source of funding that had not previously been used in Wyandot County. The combination of funding sources will result in not only updated infrastructure for the immediate area, but lead to the creation of 50 new jobs and capital investment of over \$18 million over the next 3 years as well as the retention of 585 existing jobs.

The increased electrical capacity provided by the new substation helped to alleviate the loads placed on other substations in the Village of Carey that also serve local residences, and the project will also service and make possible future industrial expansion in the project area.

Again similar to 2013, another Wyandot County organization, the Wyandot County Health Alliance, also benefited from the

data collected by the 2014 BR&E program effort. The Wyandot County Health Alliance is using baseline data gathered through BR&E surveys to identify the local workplace wellness programs in place. This data will then be used to assess how those businesses lacking wellness programs could implement an effort already being successfully used by another local business.

Wyandot County, OH Demographic Overview³

- In 2013, Wyandot County had a population of [22,560](#). Since the year 2000, the population growth of Wyandot County was -1.5 percent ([22,908](#) in 2000).
- The median value of a home in Wyandot County in 2012 was [\\$108,400](#). [95.0%](#) of the total [9,860](#) housing units were occupied, and [71.6%](#) of those households were owner-occupied.
- Wyandot County's median age was [42.2](#). The U.S. median age was [37.4](#).
- The average county household size was [2.38 people](#). [20.3%](#) of residents are married with children. [6.9%](#) have children, but are single.
- The unemployment rate in Wyandot County was [3.7%](#) and the U.S. average was [5.5%](#) (October 2014).
- Of the population aged 25 and older, 89.8% had a high school diploma or higher degree (86.3% across the U.S.), and 12.9% had a bachelor's degree or higher (29.1% across the U.S.).
- The average commute time for those living in Wyandot County was [23.7 minutes](#). The national average was [25.7 minutes](#).

	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Total population	22,560	11,557,868	313,861,723
Male population	49.5%	48.9%	49.2%
Female population	50.5%	51.1%	50.8%
Median age (years)	42.4	39.2	37.4
Total households	9,364	4,551,497	115,731,304
Average household size	2.38	2.47	2.64
Percent high school graduate or higher	89.8%	88.7%	86.3%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	12.9%	25.4%	29.1%

³ Information obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2013 3-Year American Community Survey <http://factfinder2.census.gov> and Ohio Labor Market Information, Civilian Labor Force Estimates <http://ohiolmi.com/asp/laus/vbLAUS.htm>, which reflect the most current information on Wyandot County, OH.

Economy in Wyandot County, OH⁴

ECONOMY	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Civilian labor force	11,300	5,763,000	156,616,000
Unemployment Rate	3.7%	4.6%	5.5%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	23.7	23.1	25.7
Per capita income (dollars)	22,812	25,967	27,884

POPULATION BY OCCUPATION	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	24.0%	34.4%	36.2%
Service occupations	16.3%	17.9%	18.3%
Sales and office occupations	18.0%	24.2%	24.4%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	13.3%	7.8%	9.0%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	28.3%	15.7%	12.1%

ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLDS BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Less than \$10,000	5.8%	8.4%	7.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6.6%	5.9%	5.5%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	12.8%	11.9%	10.9%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	12.2%	11.2%	10.3%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	14.7%	14.5%	13.6%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	21.4%	18.6%	17.9%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	15.3%	11.7%	11.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	8.7%	11.1%	12.7%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1.3%	3.6%	4.8%
\$200,000 or more	1.2%	3.1%	4.8%
Median household income (dollars)	46,695	47,782	52,176

⁴ Information obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2012 American Community Survey <http://factfinder2.census.gov> and Ohio Labor Market Information, Civilian Labor Force Estimates <http://ohiolmi.com/asp/laus/vbLAUS.htm>, which reflect the most current information on Wyandot County, OH.

Cost of Living in Wyandot County, OH⁵

COST OF LIVING	Wyandot County	Ohio	United States
Overall	86	88	100
Grocery	99.3	99.2	100
Health	95	98	100
Housing	62	66	100
Utilities	100	99	100
Transportation	100	100	100
Miscellaneous	95	98	100

- Cost of living indices are based on a U.S. average of 100. If Wyandot County scored above the cost of living index in any category it would indicate that local residents experience a cost of living above that of the U.S. average. Likewise, a cost of living index less than 100 in a category would indicate a cost of living below the U.S. average. The same applies to the figures representing cost of living for the State of Ohio.
- Overall, the cost of living index for Wyandot County is 86.4. Comparatively, the overall cost of living index for the State of Ohio is 88.2.
- The Wyandot County, OH cost of living does not exceed that of the national average in any category, and only exceeded the cost of living in the State of Ohio in the Grocery and Utilities categories.
- The overall cost of living in Wyandot County is 13.6% below that of the U.S. average and 1.8% below that of the State of Ohio average.

⁵ Information obtained from Sperling's Best Places <http://www.bestplaces.net/>, which reflects the most relevant data for Wyandot County, OH.

BR&E Survey Results

Participant Information

The 2014 Wyandot County Business Retention and Expansion program was carried out from January through October. Over that period of time, survey data was gathered from 31 local businesses that were also visited by the BR&E practitioner to further discuss their survey responses.

Survey participants provided a good sampling of the various types of businesses located in Wyandot County, as well as a good mix of other various aspects. Geographically, 80% of respondents were located in or around the City of Upper Sandusky, 10% were located in the vicinity of the Village of Carey, and another 10% were located in other villages and unincorporated areas of the county.

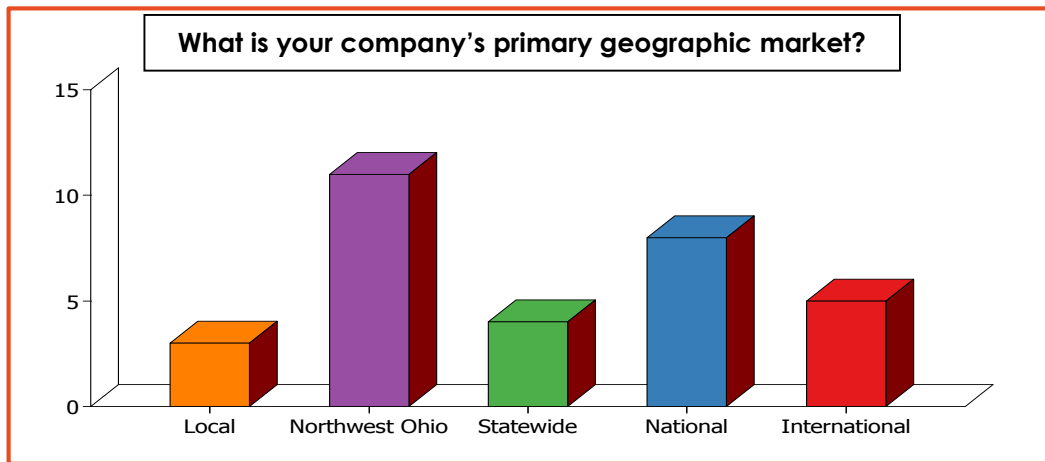
Of the 31 survey respondents, a vast majority (over 83%) had operated in Wyandot County for over 10 years. Out of the respondents, 35% were manufacturing businesses, 29% were service operations, 16% were retail operations, 6% were agricultural related businesses, 3% were construction related companies, and 10% indicated they fell into an 'Other' industry

category not provided in the list of available options on the survey.

In terms of the primary space occupied by survey respondents, the majority (52%) were located in an industrial/manufacturing facility, followed by 23% in a retail space, 19% in an office space, and 6% in warehouse space. 30 of the 31 respondents indicated they owned the space where their business was located.

Another area where respondents had varying basic characteristics was in their primary geographic market, or areas where their good and services were sold or delivered. In contrast to the 2013 BR&E results, the largest percentage (35%) of responding businesses had a primary market in Northwest Ohio, followed by 26% with a national primary market, 16% with an international market, 13% state-wide, and only 10% had a local primary geographic market.

All of these varying characteristics including physical location, industry, and customer base indicates diversity among local Wyandot County businesses, and potentially makes for a stronger local economy when there are fluctuations in certain business sectors.



Future Plans

The 2014 Business Retention & Expansion data collected gives a clear picture that most local businesses are researching ways to profitably grow their business. 90% of program participants reported they had plans for growth over the next 3 years, while the remaining respondents reported their businesses were stable. Of the respondents who reported their company was growing; 93% projected growth in their sales/total revenue and profits, 86% projected growth in their number customers, and 46% projected growth in their employment levels. There were only 4% of these respondents who projected a decline in employment levels.

Nearly all of the businesses who indicated they were growing also reported they had plans to modernize, renovate, or expand their operation, or they had recently completed a related project. These combined pieces of data suggest that

local employers are seeing heightened demand from more customers or are increasing operational efficiency which is allowing them the opportunity to profitably grow their operations in Wyandot County.

Labor Force & Training

Employment levels among respondents varied with the majority (25%) of respondents having 10 or less employees working at their business location. 14% of respondents had 11-20 employees, 21% had 21 – 50 employees, 18% had 51 – 100 employees, and 21% had over 100 employees.

Most respondents noted a low employee turnover rate. The majority (60%) of respondents indicated the average length of employment at their location was 10 years or more, 20% reported an average length of employment of 5-10 years, and the remaining 20% as 1-5 years.

Similar to past BR&E program data, the availability of workforce was noted as a top concern. In contrast to 2013 BR&E data, most businesses with difficulty recruiting employees had trouble finding unskilled labor. 68% of respondents indicated difficulty in recruiting employees, and of those respondents 32% had difficulty recruiting unskilled labor positions while 27% had difficulty recruiting skilled labor. The primary job requirement for the majority of unskilled labor positions was for applicants to hold a high school diploma or GED.



The primary skills lacking in potential employees interviewed by all 2014 BR&E program respondents were (in order) customer service skills (interpersonal skills), general skills (basic math, reading & writing, problem solving), and equipment operation skills. Customer service skills also ranked as the top needed training for current employees of respondents; followed by managerial, computer, and

specialized skills (medical, legal, etc.). 13% of respondents indicated their current employees were not in need of training.

Only a quarter of all the respondents indicated a current relationship with a college, university, or vocational school to help find and train talent.

View of Wyandot County

Local business owners, operators, and employees play a pivotal role in not only their organization's growth, but to the attractiveness of the area for potential businesses. Existing businesses that are performing well show outside firms that businesses can operate profitably in the area. Furthermore, these well-performing operations can lead to the attraction of a supplier, service provider, or customer. The 2014 BR&E program also helped to identify characteristics of Wyandot County that lead to aiding and hindering business growth as well as potential business attraction efforts in the immediate area.

90% of survey participants indicated a quality of life in Wyandot County that was good or excellent, 10% rated it as average, and none rated the quality of life as poor or very poor. When asked for their general opinion of Wyandot County as a place to do business; 84% responded it was good or excellent, while the remaining 16% ranked Wyandot County as average.

Respondents also indicated their top 3 reasons for locating or keeping their business in Wyandot County, which were (in order): location, access to customers, and access to suppliers. The access that Wyandot County's location provides to local businesses made it no surprise that when asked this question, these 3 factors have been ranked as the top three in the past two years of BR&E data. Roads, highways and freeways also received top ratings among the local services and amenities that respondents were satisfied with. The 2, 4-lane freeways, 9 state routes, and 3 rail lines intersecting Wyandot County are heavily relied upon and make it attractive to area businesses.

Among the services and amenities that BR&E participants were asked to rate; public utilities and services (police and fire) received the best rankings. Similar to previous years; recreation, restaurants, and conference facilities received the lowest rankings.

Action Plan

A primary objective of any Business Retention & Expansion program, outside of creating a narrative of the strengths and weaknesses in a local economy, is to identify a course of action for local community, public, and business leaders as well as economic development

professionals. This action plan should work to address identified concerns from the collected BR&E data. Changes in the local economy will not take place in the short-term and therefore the action plan must also lay the groundwork for sustaining local economic prosperity.

The BR&E assessments done for Wyandot County in 1996, 2006, 2012, 2013, and now in 2014 express similarly trending data, which has been noted throughout this report. The data has maintained the importance of a few action plan objectives, which were derived after the initial implementation of the Wyandot County BR&E program. The differentiating trends between data from year-to-year also highlight new areas that should be targeted moving into the future. The changes in data derived in the past three years has led to the creation of new objectives for this updated action plan as well:

Objective One: Enhance and encourage cooperation between business leaders, government leaders, and education leaders to further the goals and purposes of the BR&E initiative.

Collaboration and cooperation among local leaders remains the number one factor that can either enhance and/or limit the success and effectiveness of the BR&E program. This aspect becomes even more prevalent in a rural community such as Wyandot County. A gathering of

resources and efforts from many individuals are necessary to disseminate and collect survey information as well as make company visits. In 2014, the county commissioners and various board members of the WCOED took part in BR&E visits, which should be a common practice in the future.

This cooperation also extends outside of actual data collection into carrying out the objectives defined by the BR&E program. Local policy and decision changes are made by a number of individuals. The more closely these individuals are exposed to the BR&E program and collected data, the more informed their decision making can become and ultimately the better they can serve their local businesses and residents.

Objective Two: Improve the quality and quantity of the local workforce to satisfy the current and anticipated future needs of local businesses.

This objective was stated in the original Wyandot County BR&E study conducted in 1996, and continues to maintain its relevance. As previously noted, workforce, and particularly the availability of needed workforce, remains to be one of the largest issues facing local employers. Although it is expressed year-after-year by Wyandot County employers, this issue is widespread. Organizations in many areas of Ohio and the nation face problems finding skilled and trained talent. Many labor market

experts through examining available government data estimate as many as 25 million, or 47%, of all new job openings from 2010 to 2020 will fall into the 'middle-skills' range, which the U.S. is already seeing a shortage of qualified workers in.⁶

As stated earlier in this report, local business have difficulty recruiting skilled talent, but the majority also lack any relationship with local educational institutions that train the type of talent they seek. The garnering of new relationships between local industry and education as a direct means to convey the need for certain types of skilled talent, or exposing local students and school administrators to the types of positions in high demand by local employers are just a few instances of how the local skills gap can begin to be addressed. Also expressed in the most recent 2014 BR&E data, is the fact that not only do skilled labor positions remain in high demand, but employers are also finding it increasingly difficult to recruit unskilled labor.

⁶ Kochan, T., Finegold, D., & Osterman, P. (2012). WHO CAN FIX THE "MIDDLE-SKILLS" GAP?. Harvard Business Review, 90(12), 81-90.

Objective Three: Connect local business leaders to programs, services, and other resources available through local, State, and Federal agencies.

Another underlying reason for conducting a Business Retention & Expansion program in Wyandot County is to identify needed resources that can be brought to local businesses to help them prosper and grow. Local community leaders and economic development professionals have knowledge of these resources and programs from which local businesses can benefit. The direct line of communication that the BR&E program creates between business leaders and local leadership allows for the identification of programs to satisfy the local needs.

In 2014, the BR&E program identified a business whose expansion plans were hindered by a lack of needed infrastructure. Once this was communicated to local development and community leaders, an effort was made that brought in outside financial resources from the State of Ohio, and through a federal grant that was used to put the needed infrastructure in place. Removing these roadblocks to local business expansion is now allowing that company to grow both in employment numbers and its capability to serve new clients.

A strong BR&E program functions as an outlet of communication to community and policy leaders, which results in a more

business- and growth-friendly environment for local industry.

Objective Four: Connect the needs of local business to policymakers at the state and federal levels by participating in opportunities to relay collected informational from the local BR&E effort.

Not only should a local BR&E program serve as a direct line of communication to local policy and decision makers, but the response data should be included in any existing outside efforts to make the state and region more business-friendly whenever possible. Much of the information collected in the Wyandot County BR&E program assesses opinions of working not only in the county, but within the state of Ohio. The concerns expressed by local companies should be directed to those individuals who can possibly have a positive effect on those issues.

In 2014, the state's privatized economic development organization, JobsOhio, began an effort to collect BR&E-related data from companies operating in the state's nine targeted industry sectors. Wyandot County should continue to take part in this effort, which will lead to a better understanding of Ohio business needs and a better chance of growth within the state.

Summary

The data collected through the 2014 Business Retention & Expansion program in Wyandot County will assist local economic development officials, community leaders, and stakeholders in planning future strategies that will best aid local business growth. Therefore, the data will also be used to guide future policy decisions in directions that will not inhibit the profitable growth of existing firms.

The information collected in 2014 gave an overall positive narrative of the local economy when looking at the growth potential planned by local firms. Possibly more importantly, that data also noted a

few ongoing concerns faced by local businesses that will help to guide ongoing efforts for local leaders.

Infrastructure and access has been continually noted as playing a significant role in the decision-making process for companies to both locate and remain in Wyandot County. Ensuring continued transportation access and other heightened public services continues to remain a large driver keeping existing businesses in the area.

Program data from 2014 also showed an increasing difficulty for local employers to find not only skilled talent, but non-skilled as well. Labor availability continues to remain a top concern for area employers.

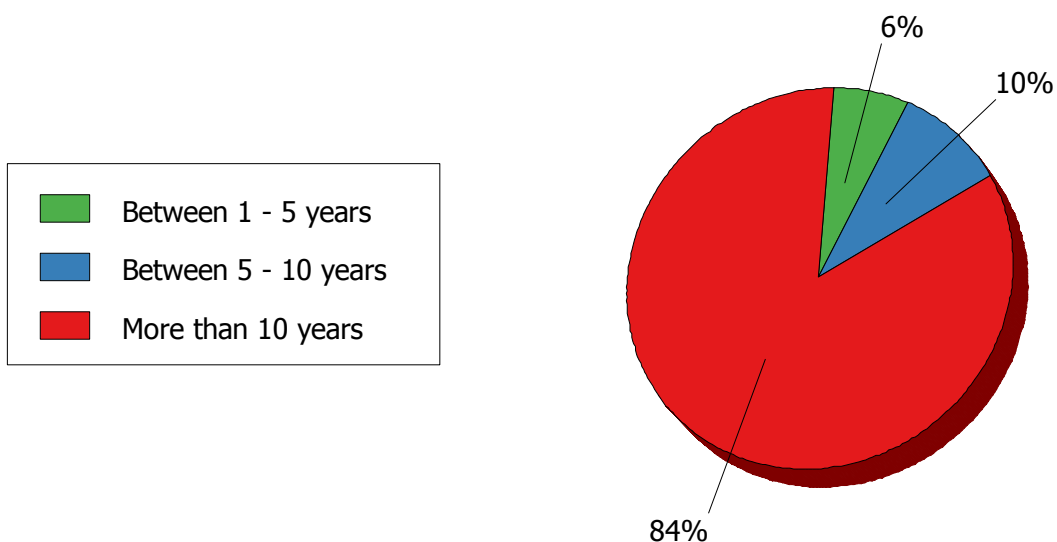
Appendix A: 2014 BR&E Sample Survey Results

Survey Results

The following is a graphical depiction of the responses to each survey question. Additional comments provided by respondents, if any, are included after each graph.

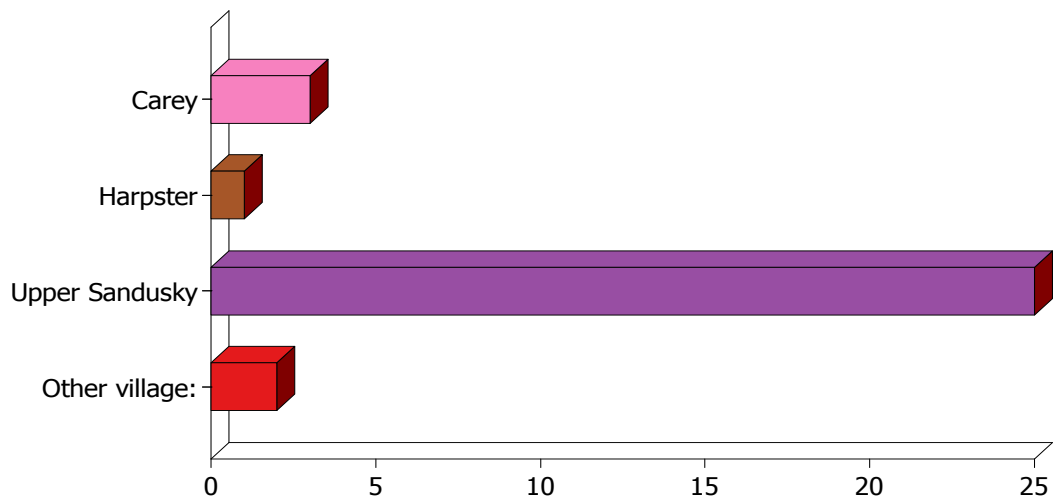
SECTION - GENERAL INFORMATION

1. How long has your business been operating in Wyandot County?



2. In which of the following areas is your business located?

Min: 1.00 Max: 8.00 Mean: 4.71 Mode: 5.00 Median: 5.00 Std Dev: 1.53

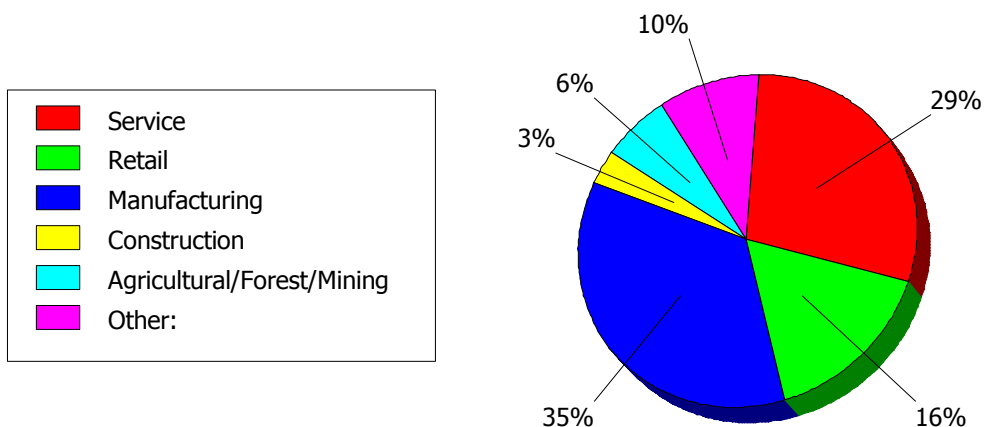


Comments/Notes for "Other village:"

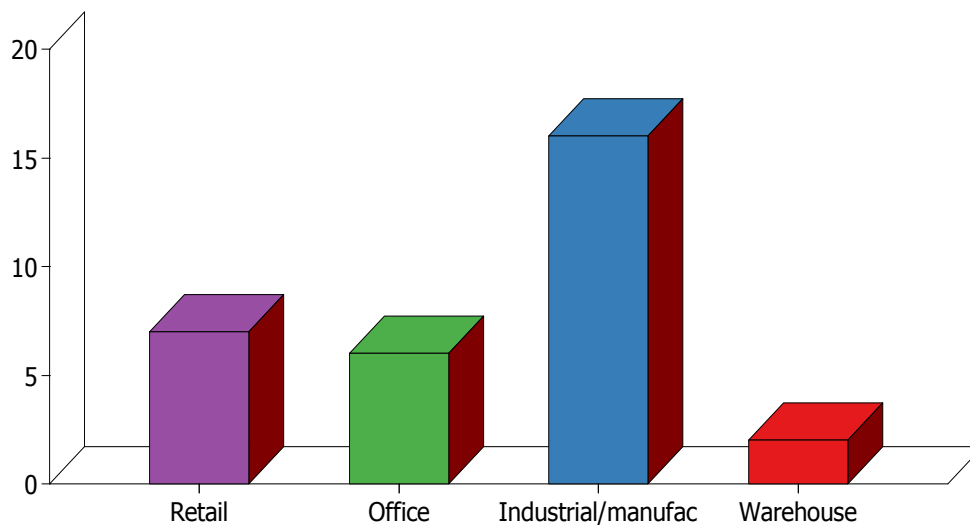
Carey, Upper Sand, NW Ohio

Multiple: Upper Sandusky, Wharton, Nevada

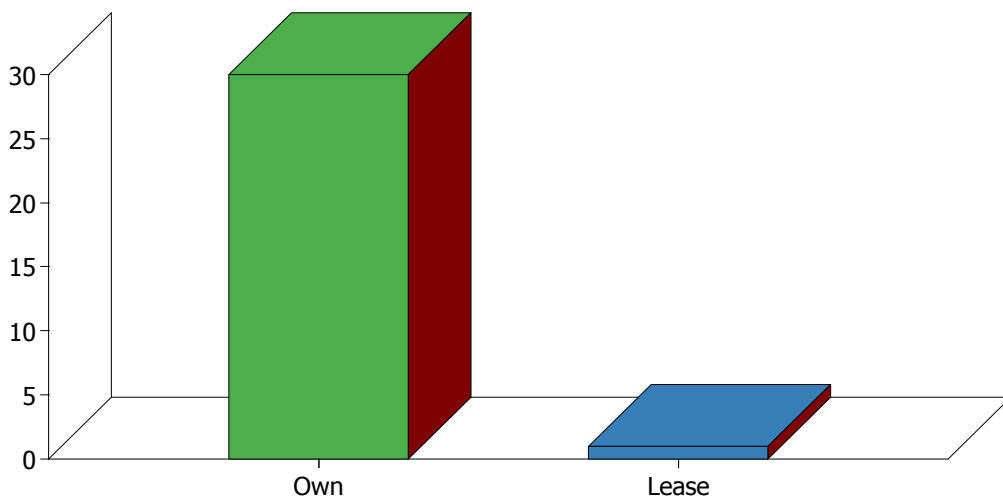
3. Please check the primary industry sector that best describes your business:



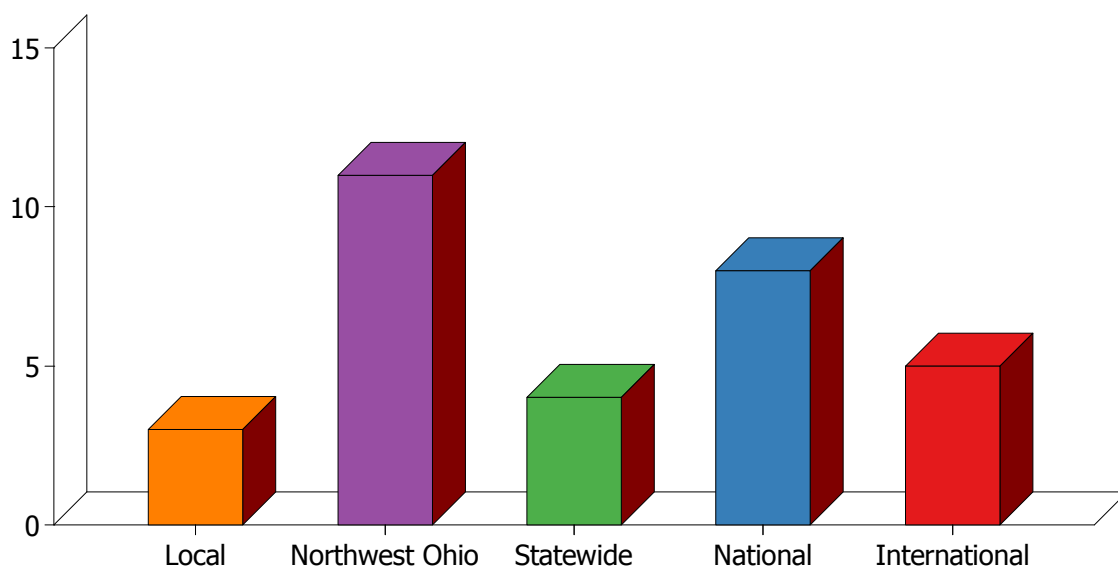
4. What is the primary type of space your business occupies?



5. Do you own or lease your space?

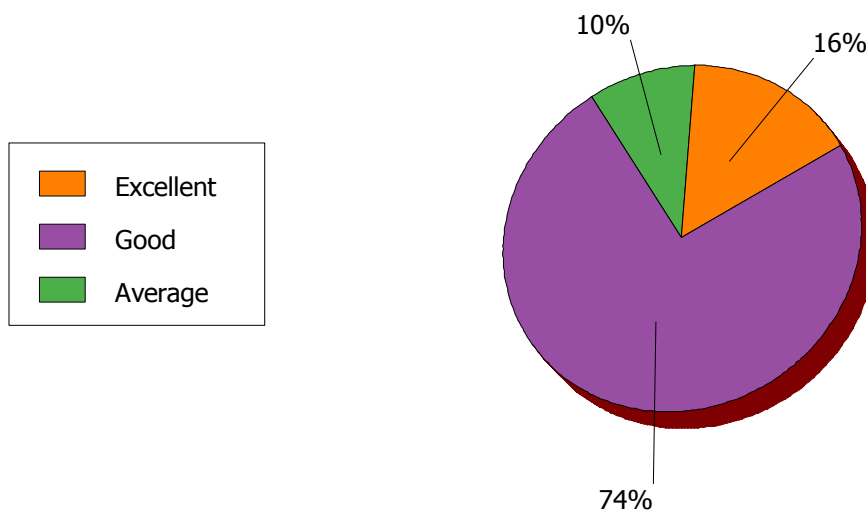


6. What is your company's primary geographic market?

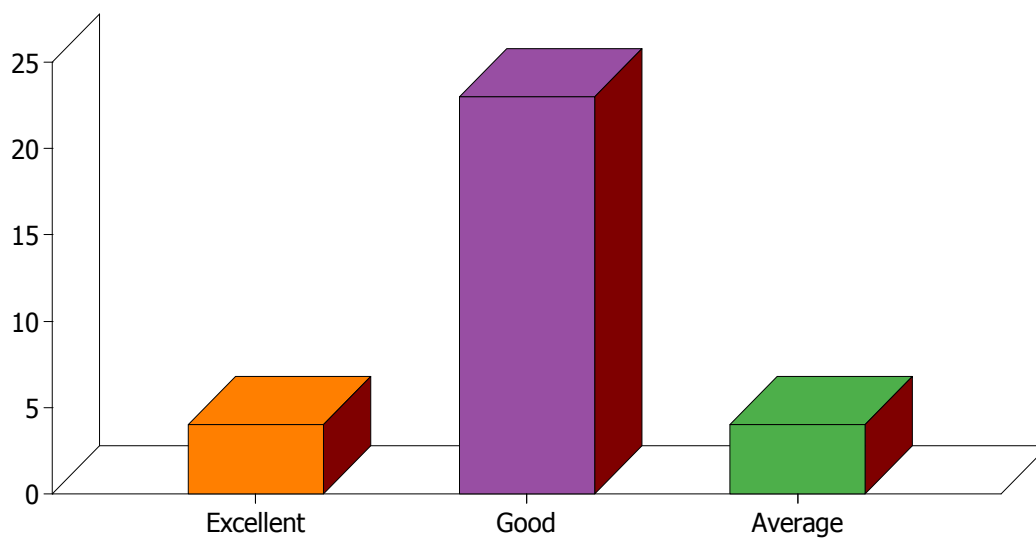


SECTION - LOCAL BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

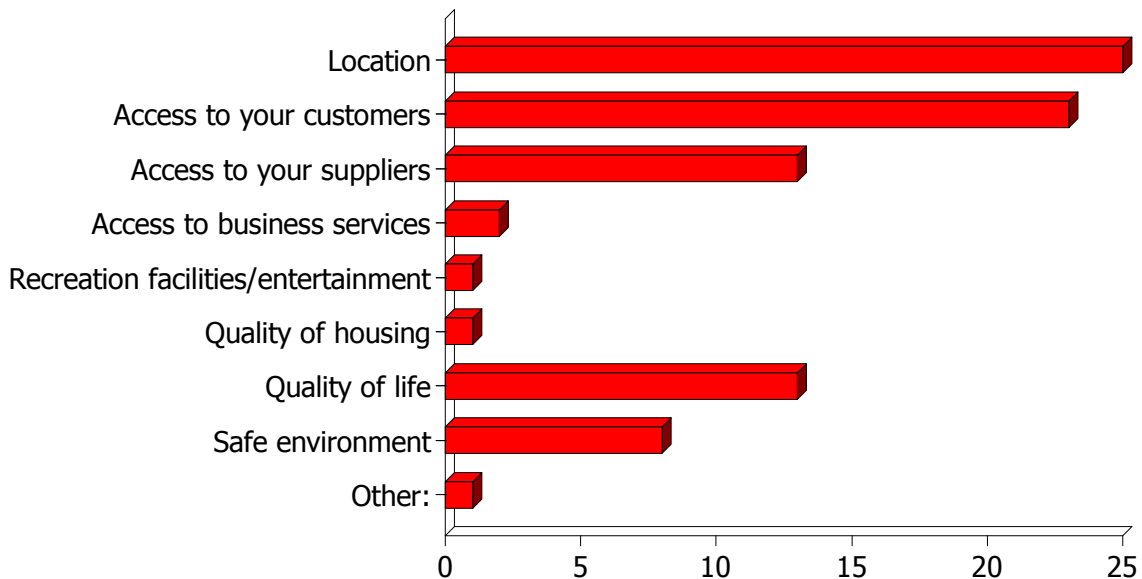
7. From your perspective as a businessperson, please rate the overall quality of life in Wyandot County.



8. What is your overall opinion of Wyandot County as a place to do business?



9. What are your top three (3) reasons for locating or keeping your business in Wyandot County?



10. Please describe any IMMEDIATE or LONG TERM business needs or concerns that could be addressed by local government or local private entities.

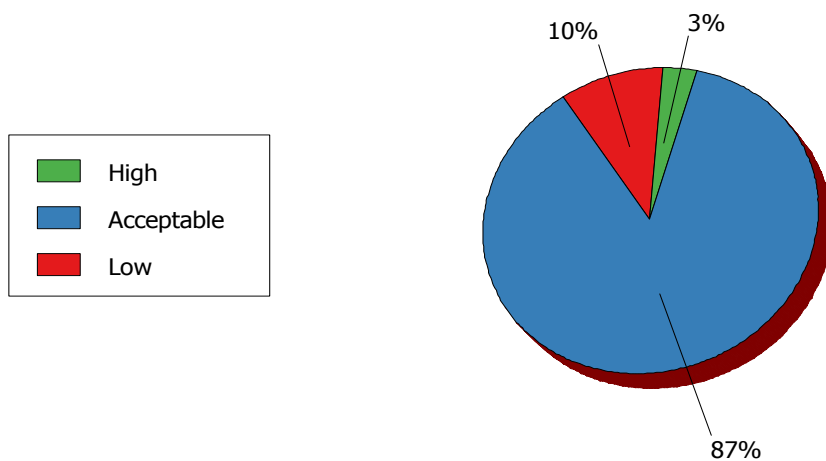
- Assistance in expediting installation of electrical substation.
- Assistance with building permit and natural gas infrastructure upgrade.
- Expanding shopping, restaurants and other services that will bring more traffic to the area.
- I feel that there is a lack of quality housing options that would attract executives of potential companies that could locate here. We need to attract educated young professionals to the area as well.
- Maybe some help on building project
- more jobs
- Overpass could help customer access to our location.
- Providing general business classes for retail store owners.
- Tax relief
- Water lines on the east side of Carey
- We need to ensure retention of citizenry. We have an aging population that will need replenishing.

SECTION - LOCAL BUSINESS COSTS

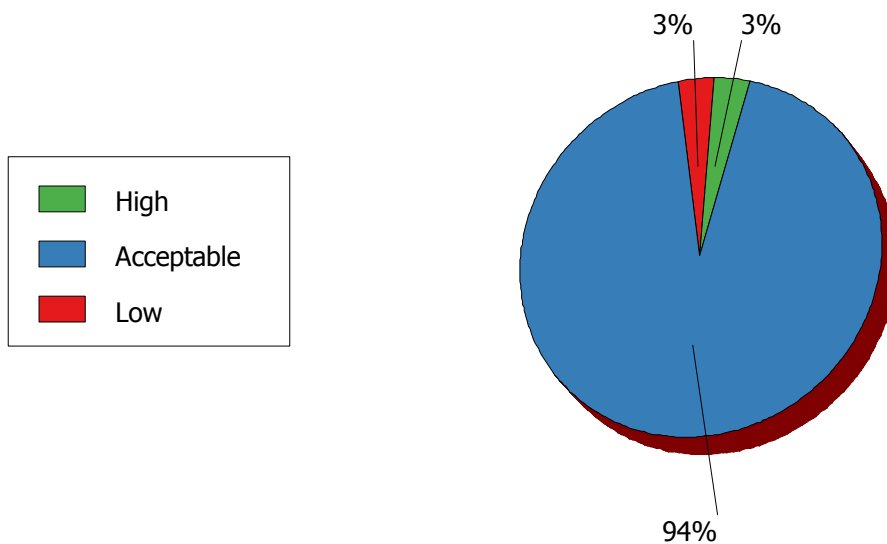
Instructions Provided To Respondents

Please indicate whether you believe the cost of doing business in the community is high, acceptable, or low:

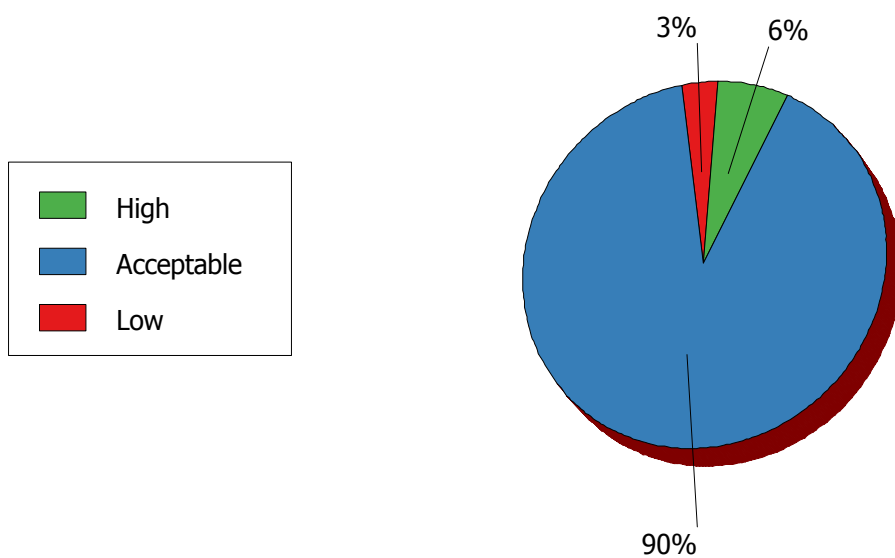
11. Building costs (rent)



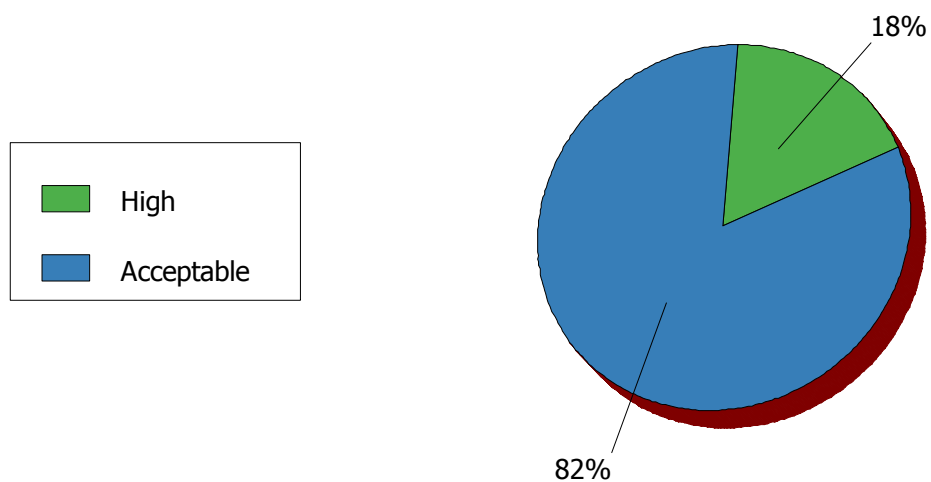
12. Local Pay Wages



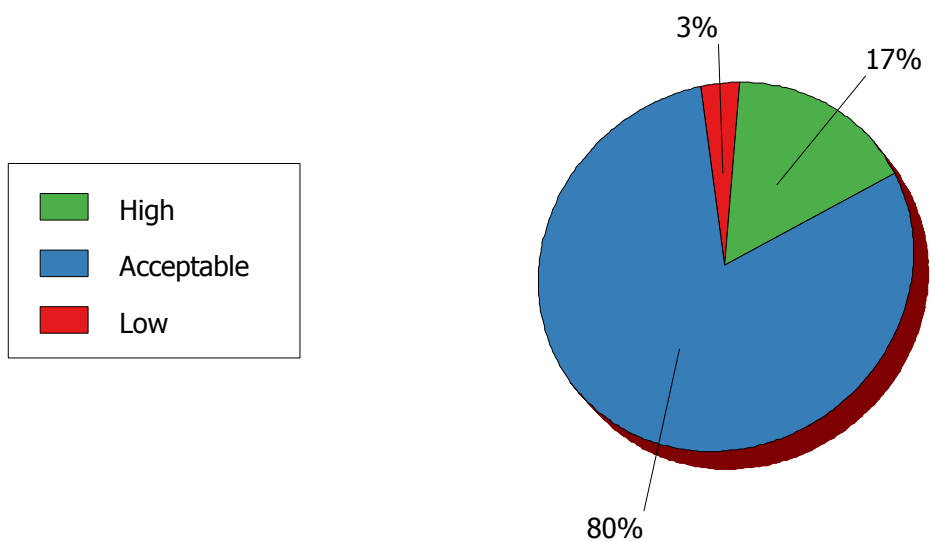
13. Property Taxes



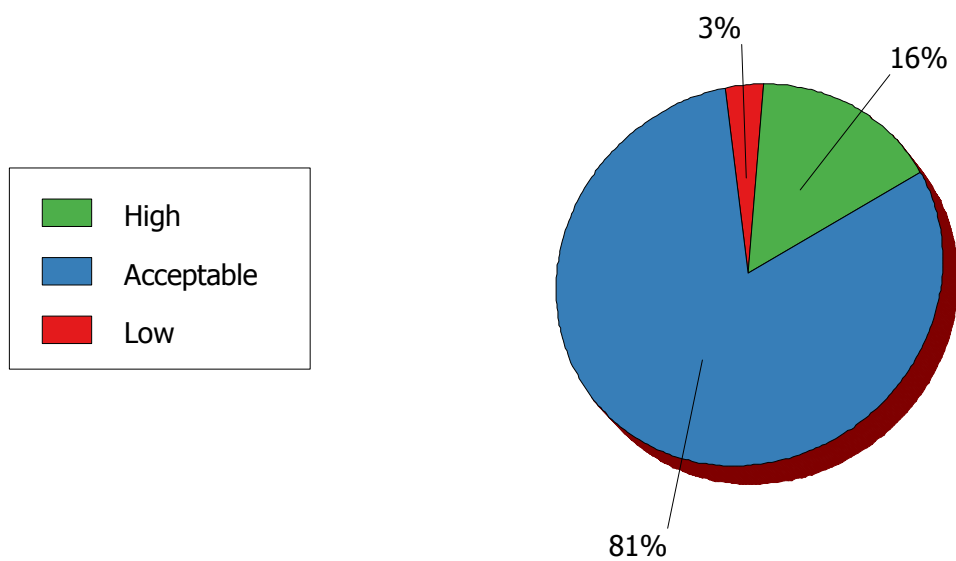
14. Public Utilities - Water & Sewer



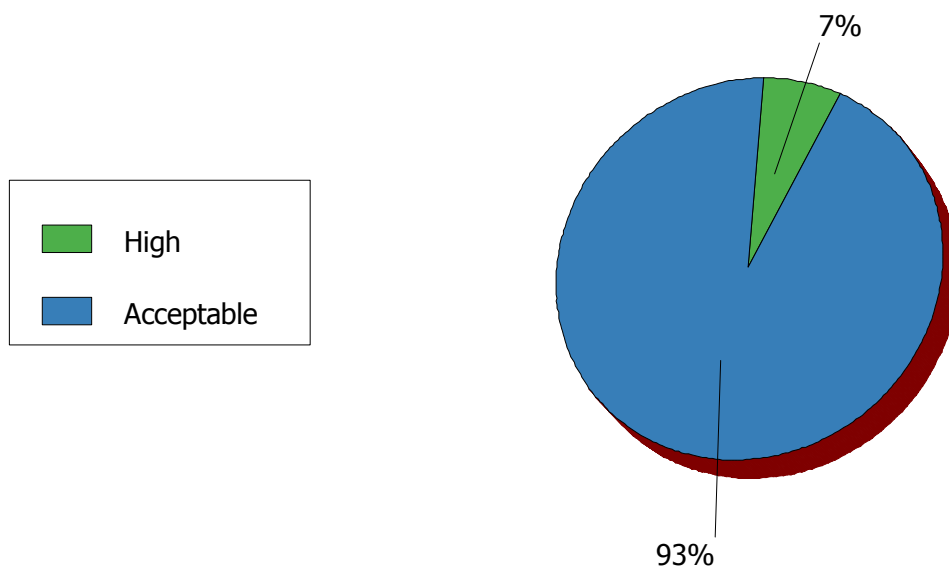
15. Utilities - Gas



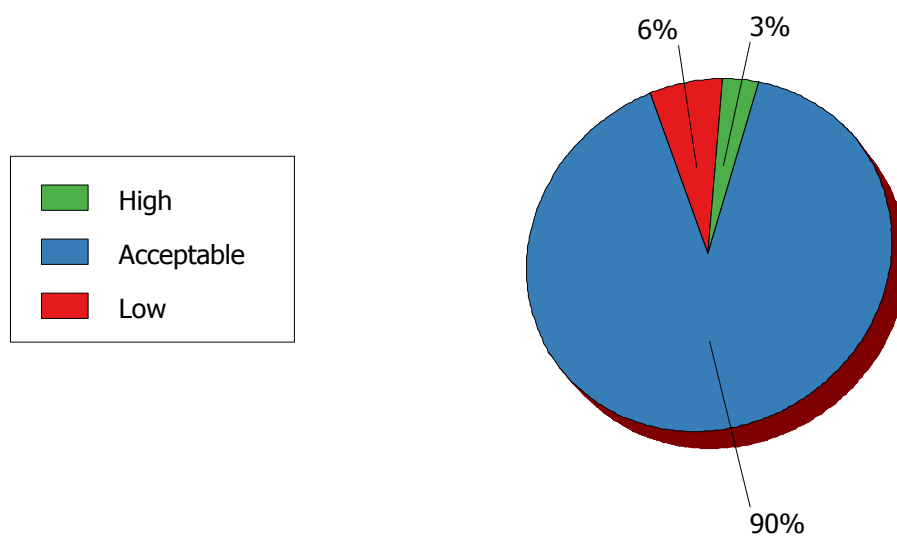
16. Utilities - Electricity



17. Utilities - Telecommunications



18. Transportation of product to market

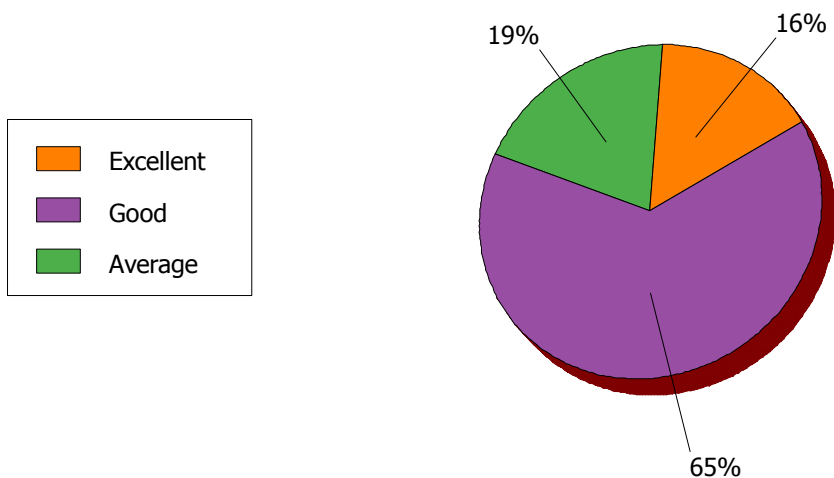


SECTION - LOCAL SERVICES AND AMENITIES

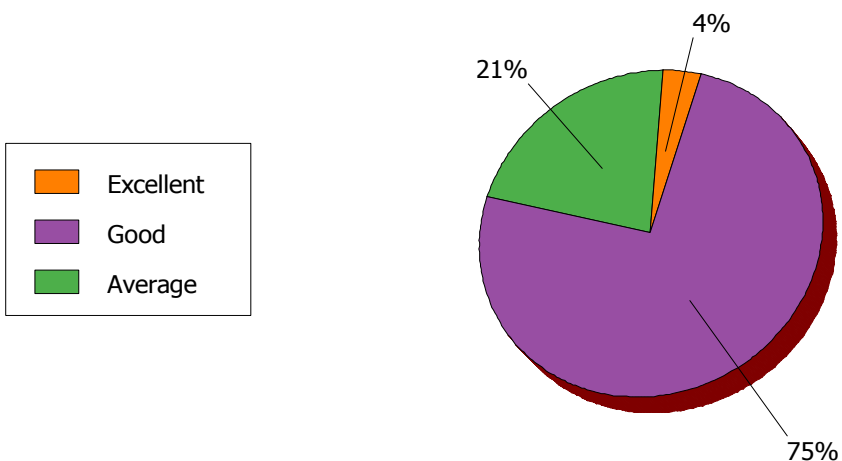
Instructions Provided To Respondents

From your perspective as a businessperson, please rate the following services and amenities in Wyandot County:

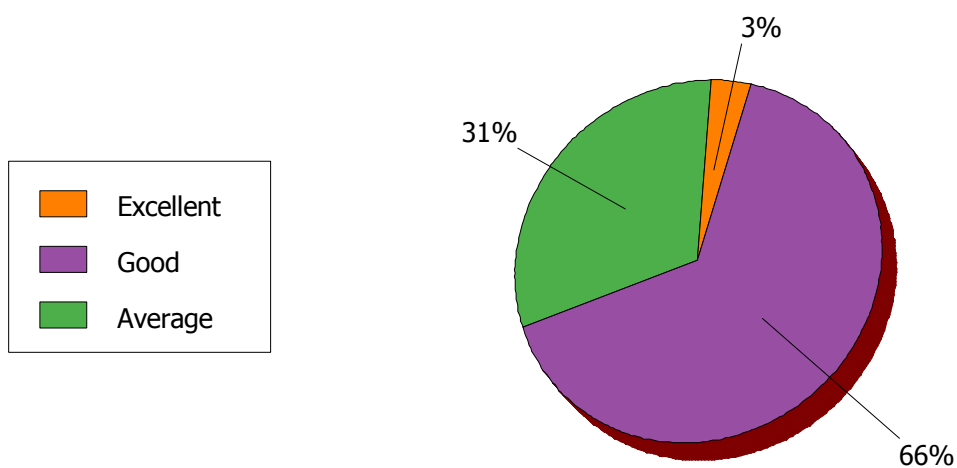
19. Roads, highways and freeways



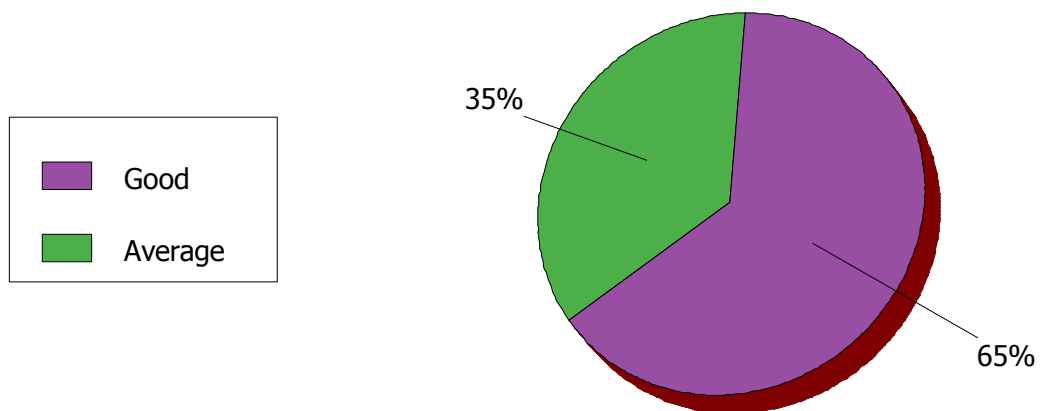
20. Water and sewer



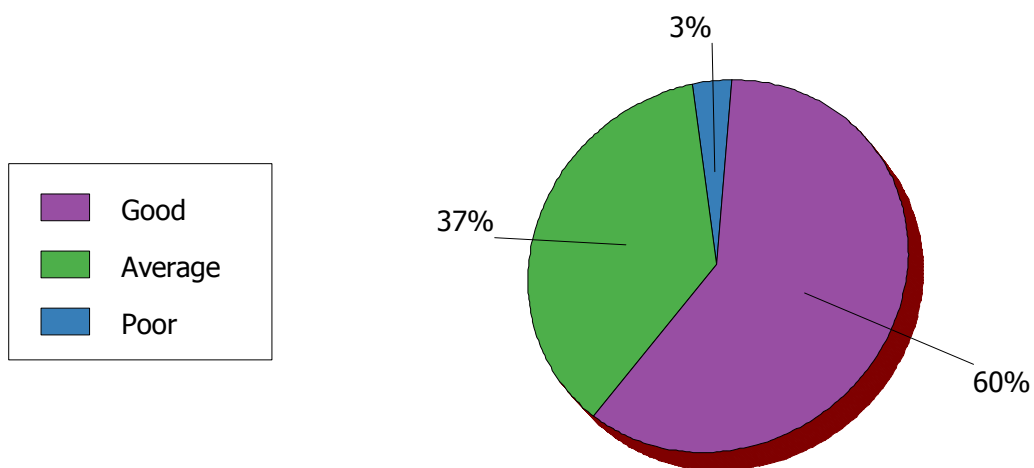
21. Natural Gas services



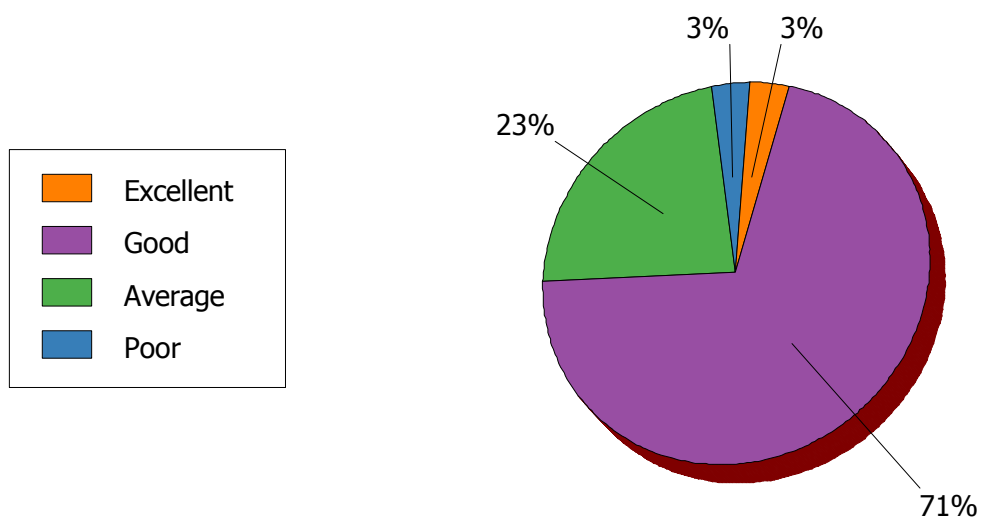
22. Telecom services



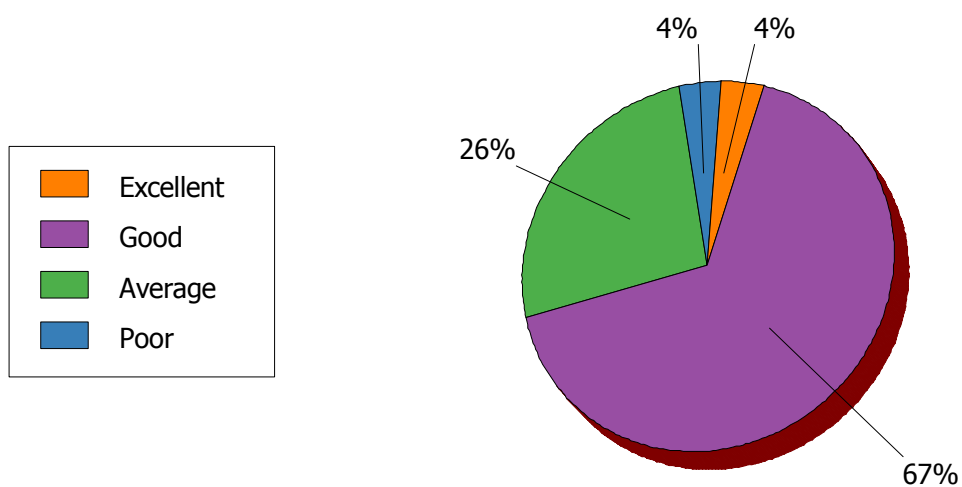
23. High Speed Internet access



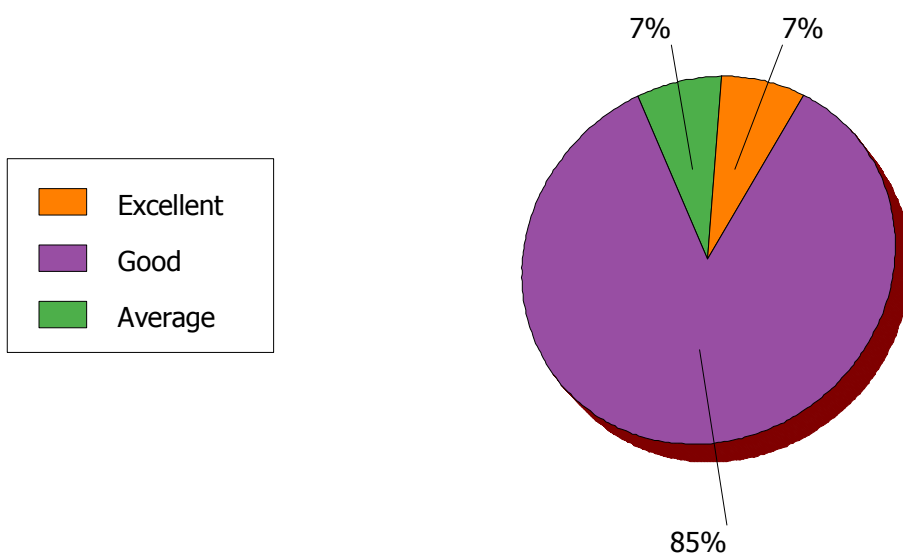
24. Electrical services



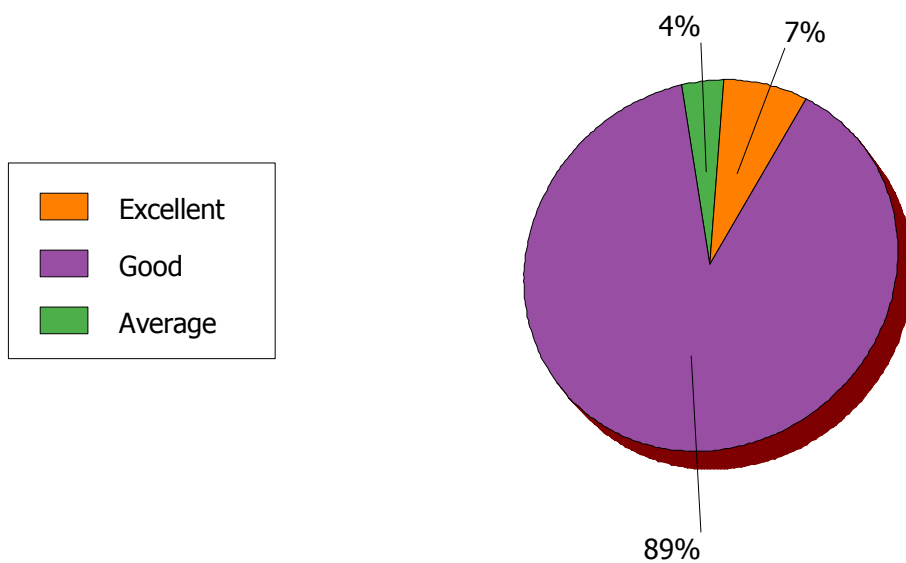
25. Health Care services (EMS, hospital, clinics)



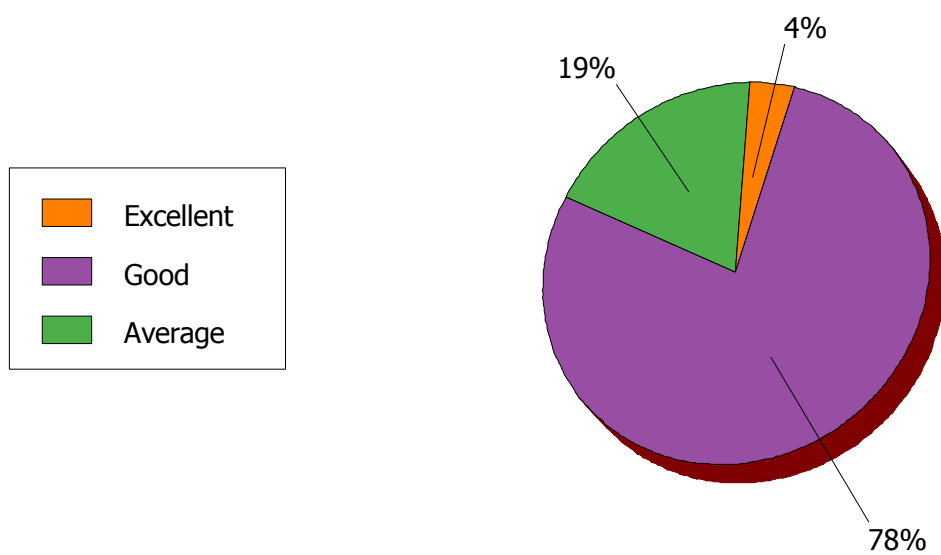
26. Fire protection



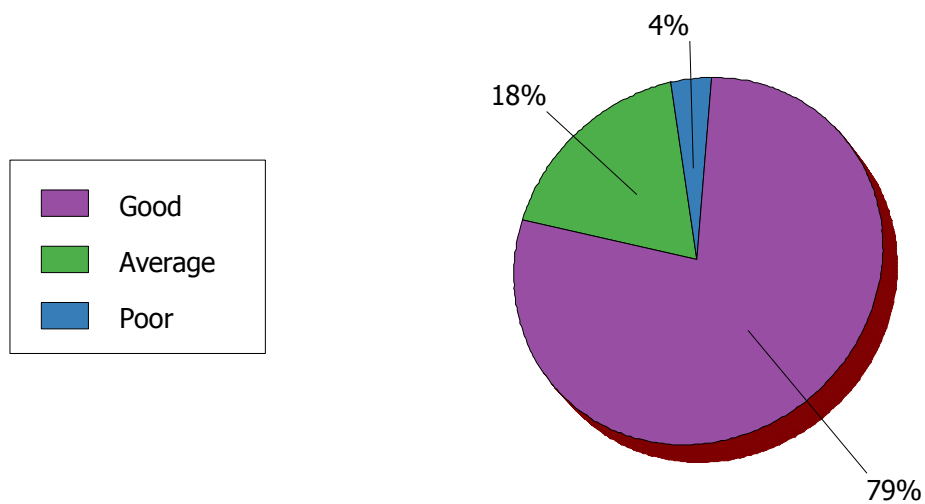
27. Police protection



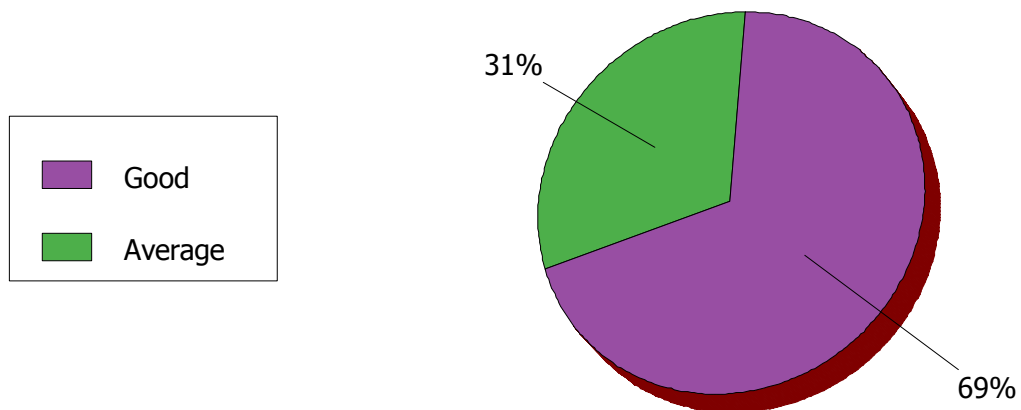
28. School system



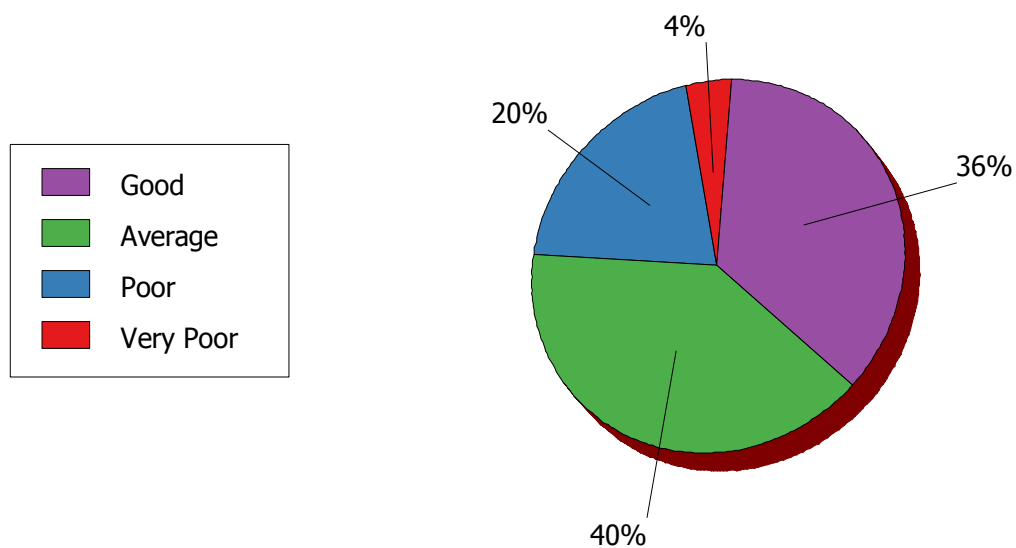
29. Professional services



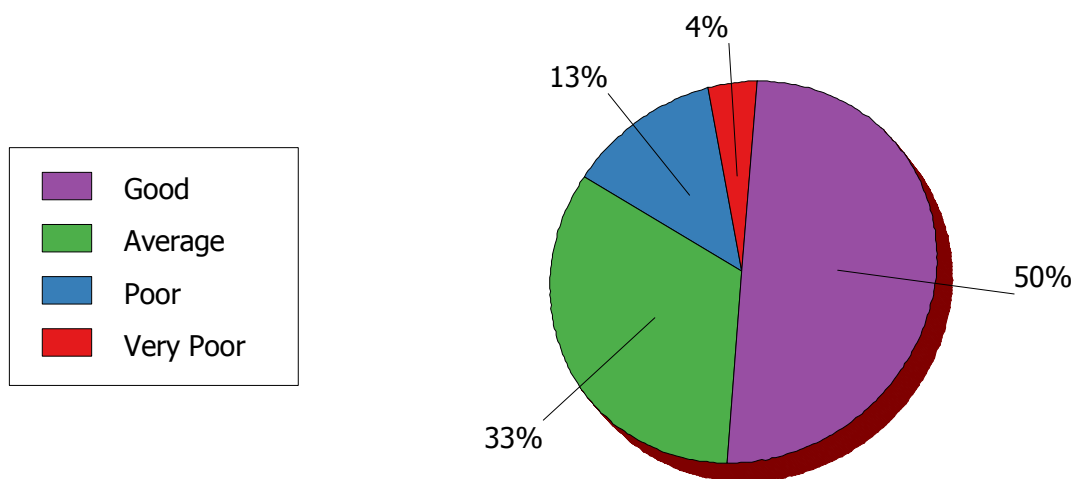
30. Child care services



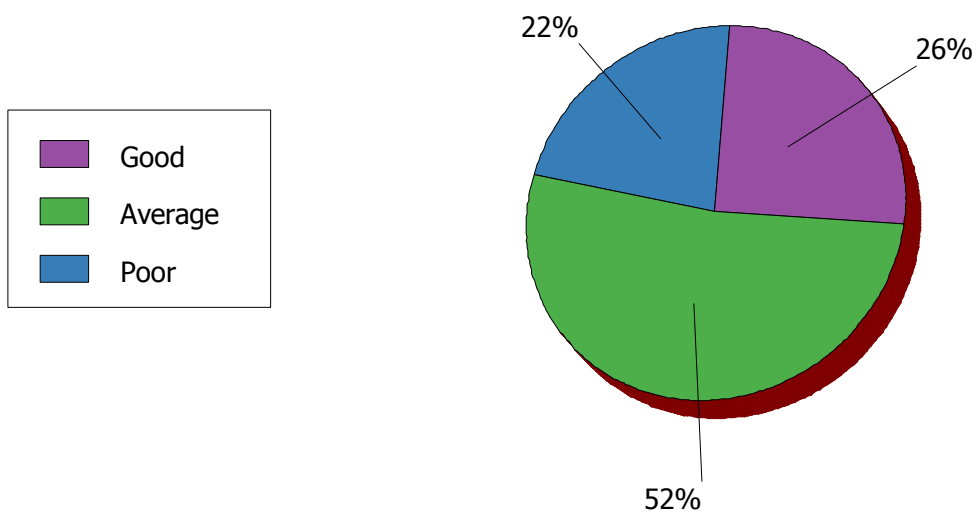
31. Recreation/entertainment



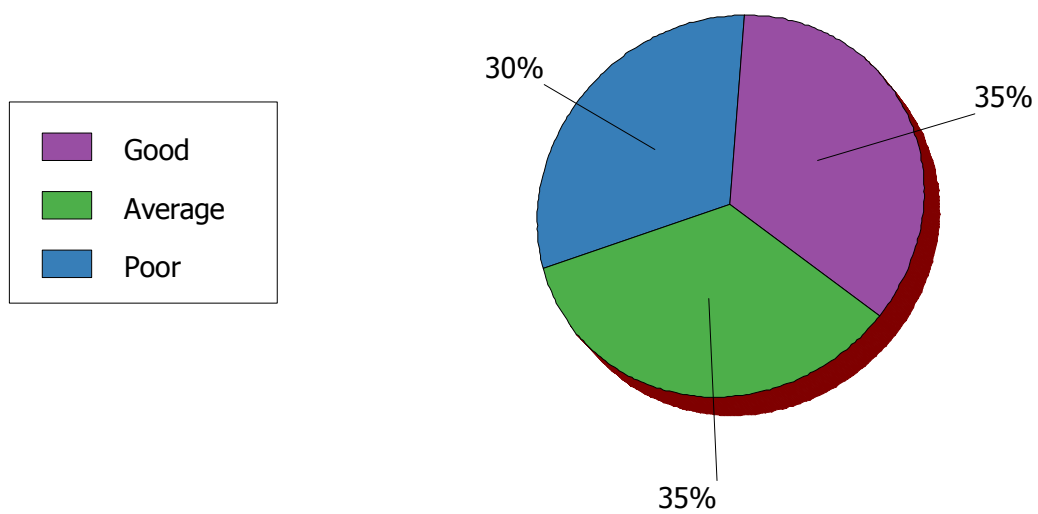
32. Restaurants



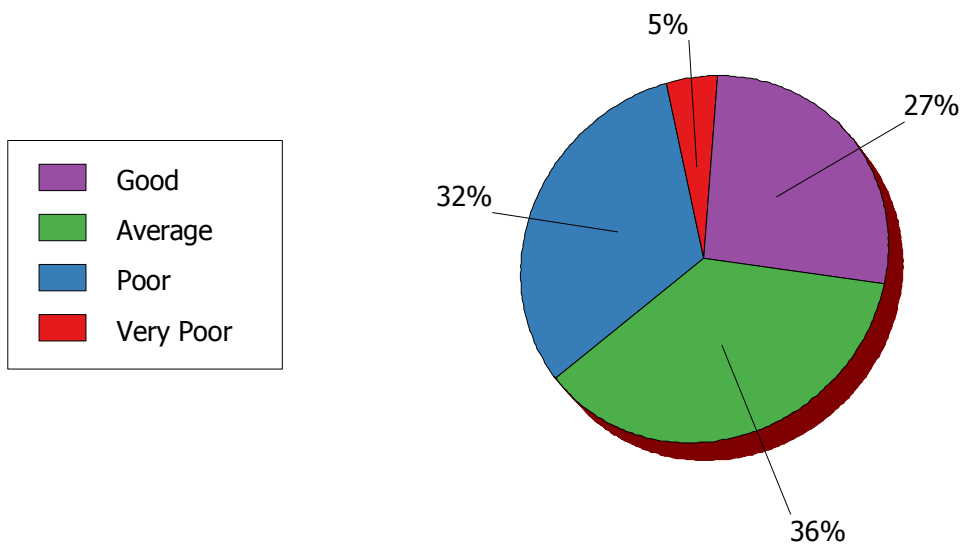
33. Shopping



34. Hotel facilities

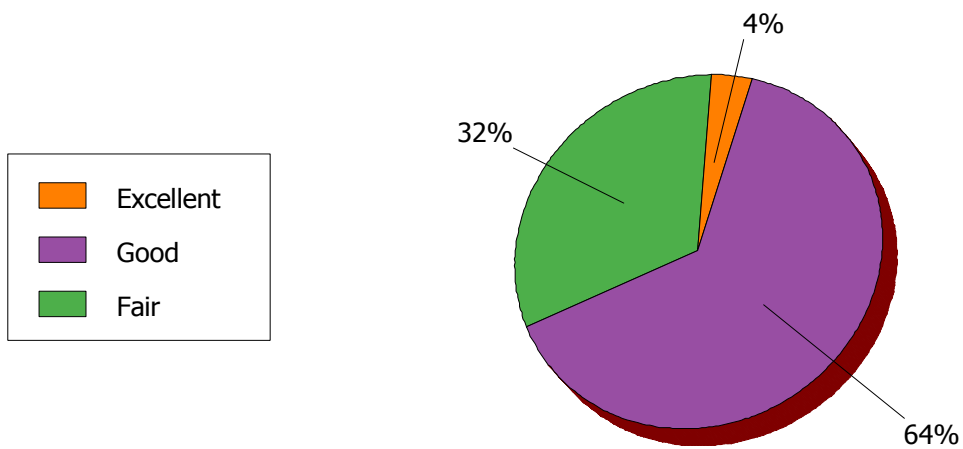


35. Conference Facilities



SECTION - STATE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

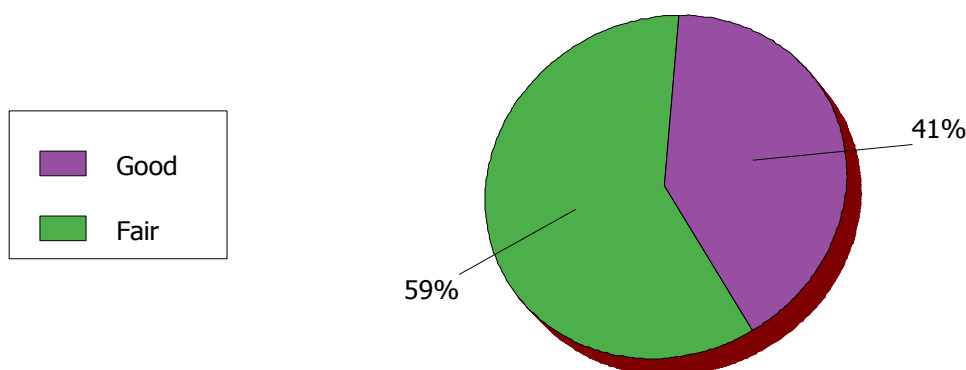
36. Please rate the overall State Business Climate:



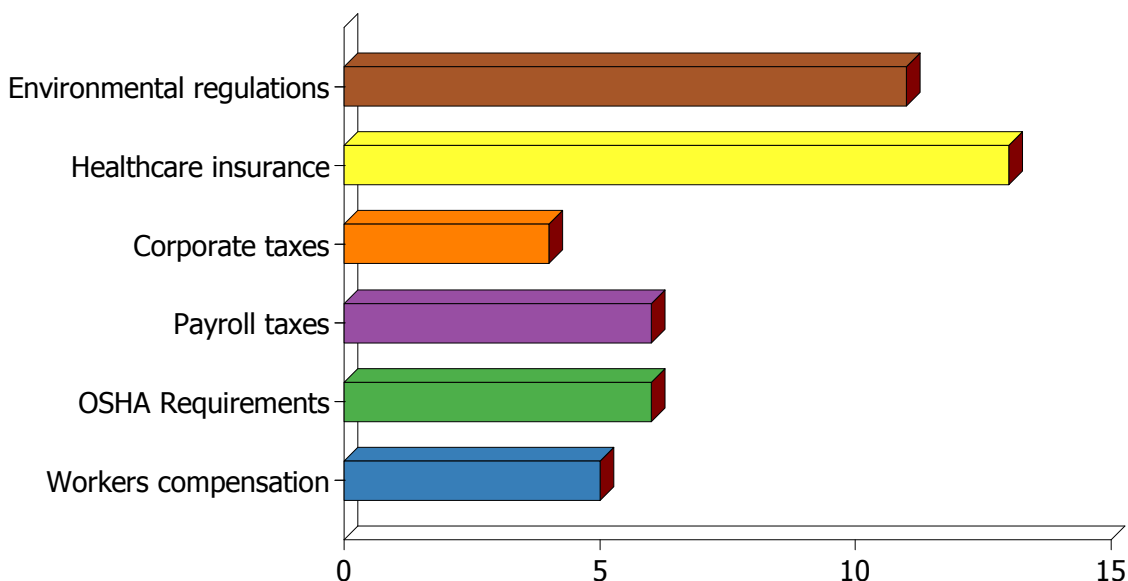
37. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages to doing business in Ohio.

- Advantages; ease of travel, good amount of businesses to work with, low cost of living. Disadvantages; taxes
- Close to customers and suppliers.
- Disadvantage: OH EPA. Compared to other states, OEPA requires us to complete daily spreadsheets for air compliance standards that tedious and prohibit business.
- Governmental control; OSHA, BWC, Department of Commerce, etc.
- Interfacing from one business to another for sustainability.
- It is our are of doing service in by Charter
- Labor rates are higher when compared to southern states where we do business.
- Location and good response from legislators when called upon.
- Location is an advantage.
- Ohio has an overall fair to good tax climate. Estate, business, property, etc. Income tax levels are high. Ohio is highly rated for legal innovation- business entities and liability protection. I am uncomfortable, however, for the long term effects of Medicaid expansion for Ohioans after the federal cost shift to the states.
- Ohio ranked in the top 5 for businesses in our industry.
- Ohio's geographic location is an advantage.
- State could make their businesses feel more valued.
- taxes and regulations are bad
- Well located for our customer base. Strong employee work ethic

38. Please rate the cost of doing business in Ohio:



39. Please select the areas where you believe the cost of doing business in the State of Ohio is high.



40. What are the key policy issues (legislative and/or regulatory) that have the potential to adversely impact your business?

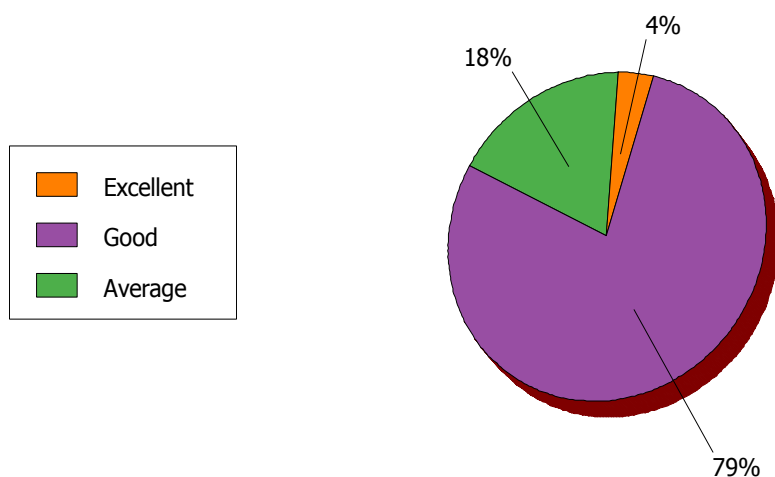
- As stated above, Medicaid remains a large concern as does "recovery" by the Ohio Attorney General and the expansive definitions in the Administrative and Revised Code(s).
- banking regulations
- Excessive government regulation and taxes as well as entitlement programs.
- health care
- Legislation that increases utility costs, workman's comp, or raw material costs
- National Healthcare
- New trucking regulations but those are federal issues.
- NLS Environmental Department handles this area.
- OSHA.
- Tax legislation that impacts income tax, capital gains, trusts and estates, IRA's etc. Medicaid law.
- Taxes (excise)
- There have been increasing reporting requirements over the years that take more time away from doing other things.

SECTION - LOCAL WORKFORCE

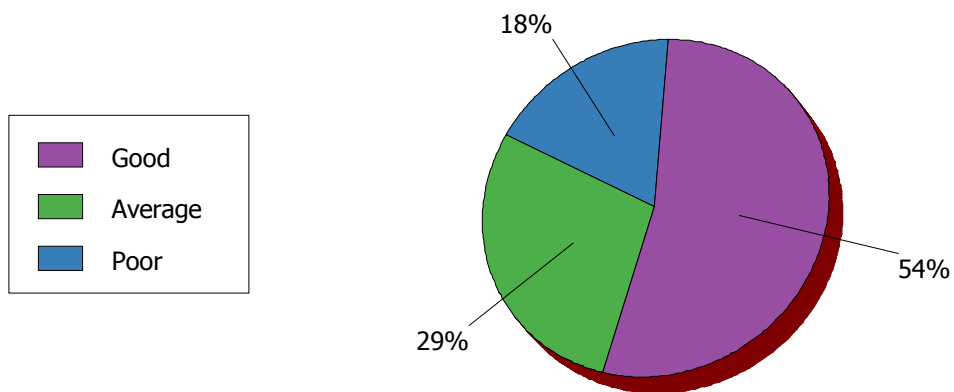
Instructions Provided To Respondents

Please rate the following aspects of the Hourly and Salaried labor force in Wyandot County:

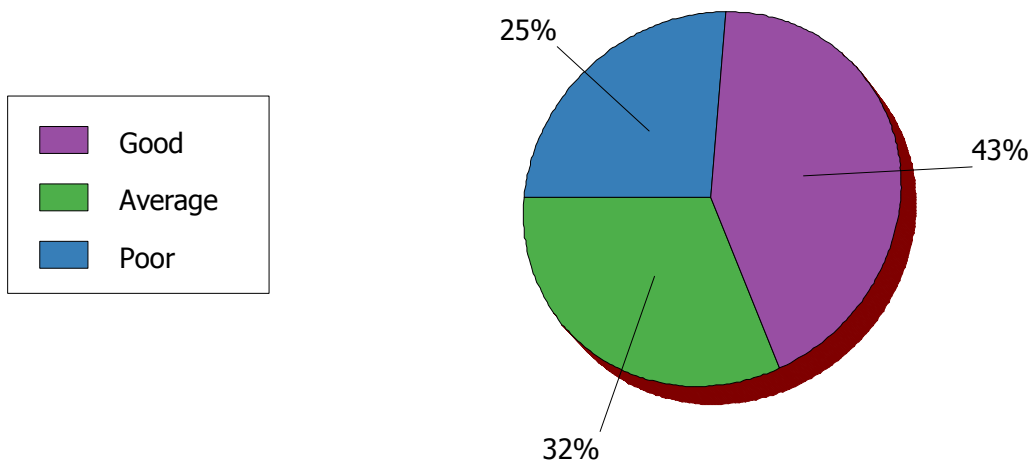
41. How would you rate the QUALITY of the local management and staff (SALARIED) labor force?



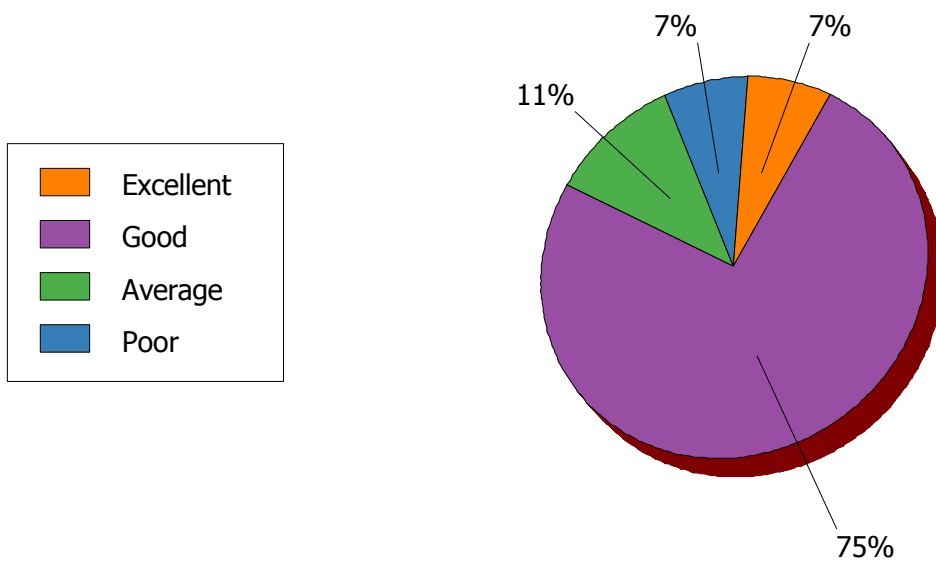
42. How would you rate the QUANTITY of the local management and staff (SALARIED) labor force?



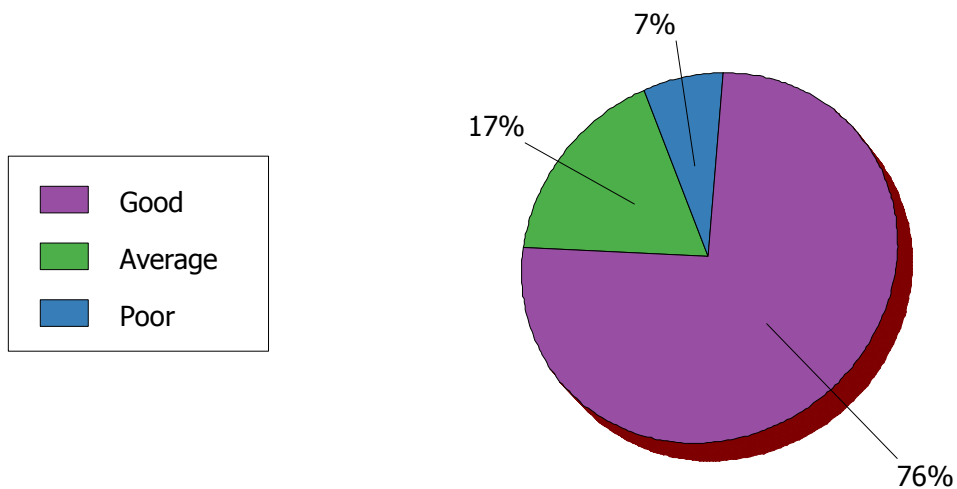
43. How would you rate the AVAILABILITY of the local management and staff (SALARIED) labor force?



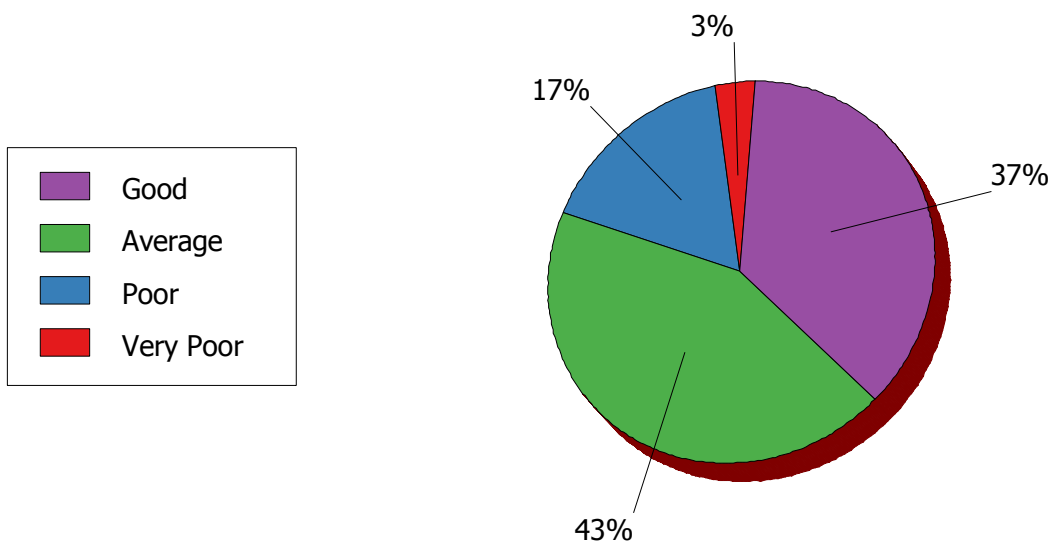
44. How would you rate the STABILITY of the local management and staff (SALARIED) labor force?



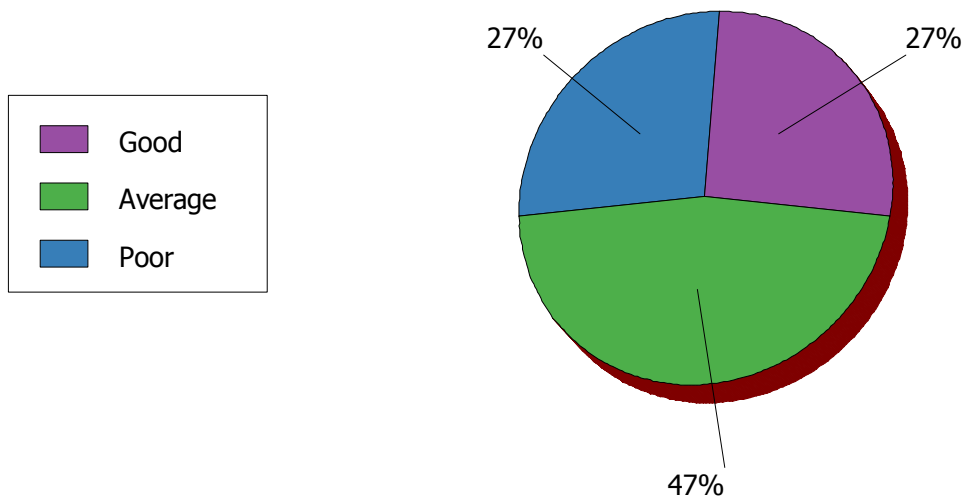
45. How would you rate the QUALITY of the local HOURLY labor force?



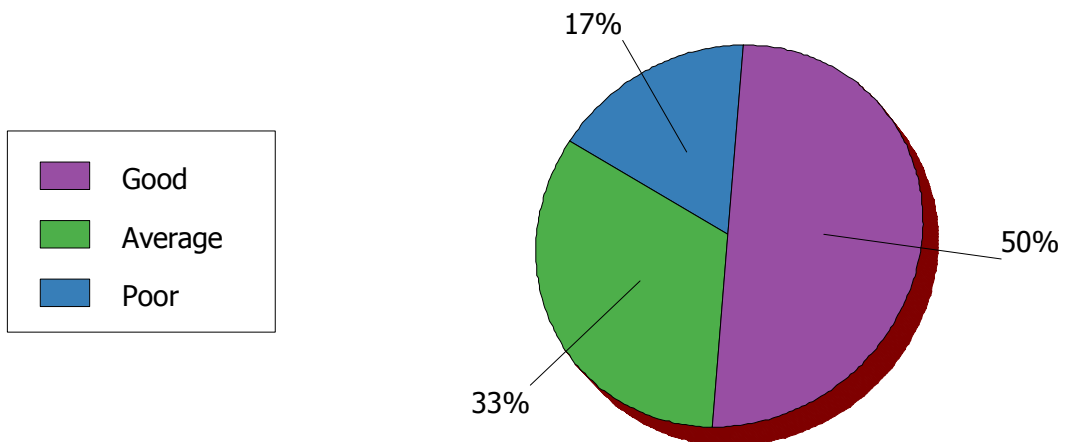
46. How would you rate the QUANTITY of the local HOURLY labor force?



47. How would you rate the AVAILABILITY of the local HOURLY labor force?



48. How would you rate the STABILITY of the local HOURLY labor force?

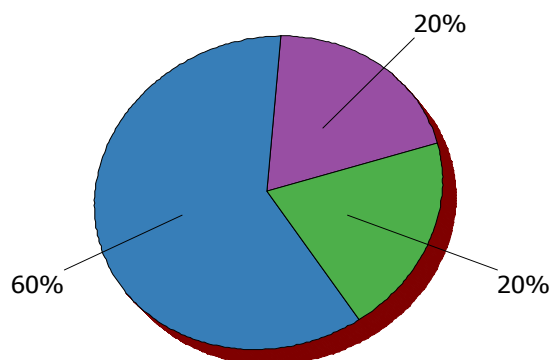
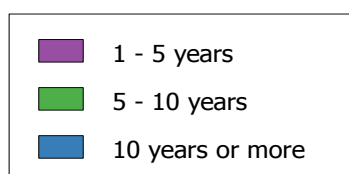


SECTION - LOCAL WORKFORCE (CONT.)

49. How many employees work at your Wyandot County business location? If you have part-time employees, please break out the number of part-time vs. full-time employees.

- 11 FTE; 5 PTE
- 15
- 15 & we do employ seasonal employees
- 150
- 16 FTEs
- 25 (2 responses tallied)
- 277
- 3
- 30 FTE; 2 PTE
- 30 salaried; 70 hourly & 2 office temporary workers
- 32
- 34
- 35 FT 5 PT
- 4 (2 responses tallied)
- 5 (2 responses tallied)
- 500
- 55 (10 Salary; 45 hourly)
- 59 FTEs and 12 PTEs (temps)
- 6 FTE; 2 PT
- 60
- 660
- 725: 125 Temps & 600 direct FTEs
- 798 FTE; 40 Temps
- 80
- two full and two part time

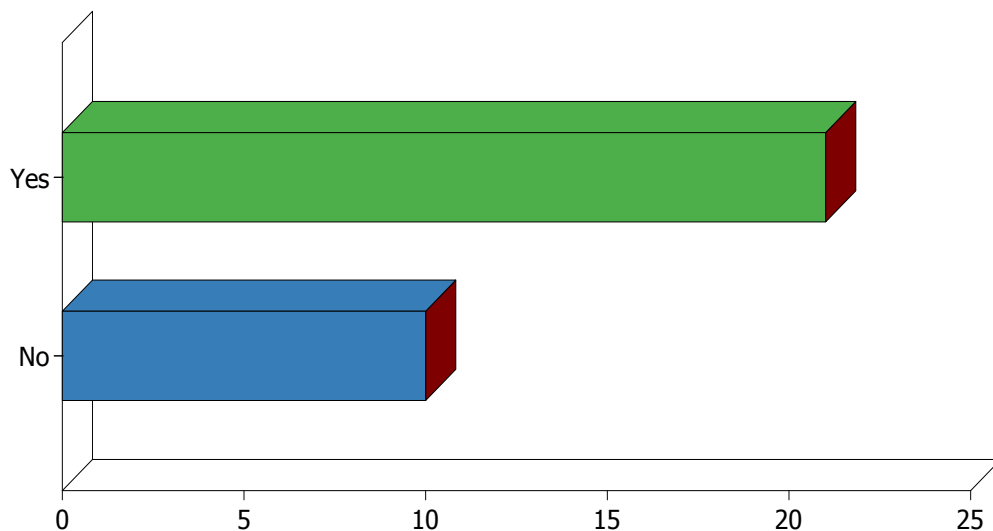
50. What is the average length of employment?



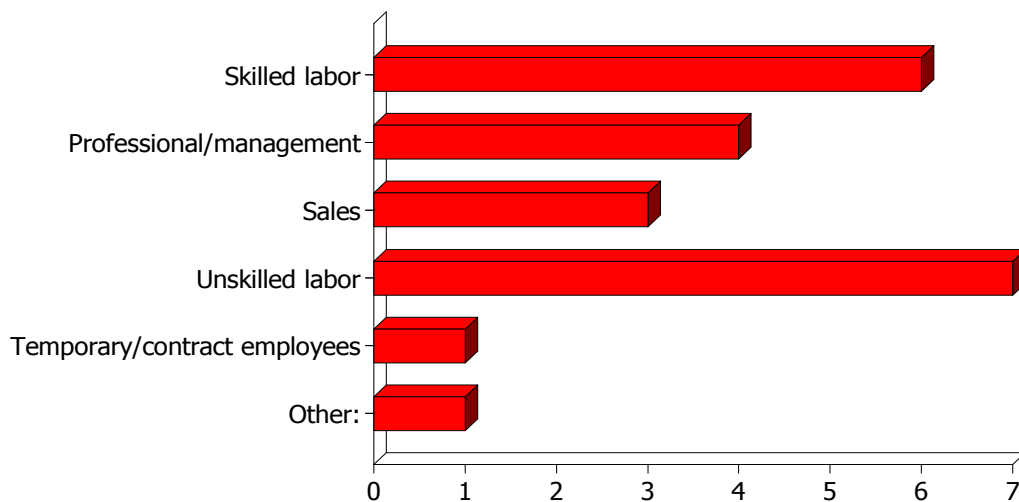
Comments/Notes for "10 years or more":

15 - 20 years

51. Does your business have difficulty recruiting employees?

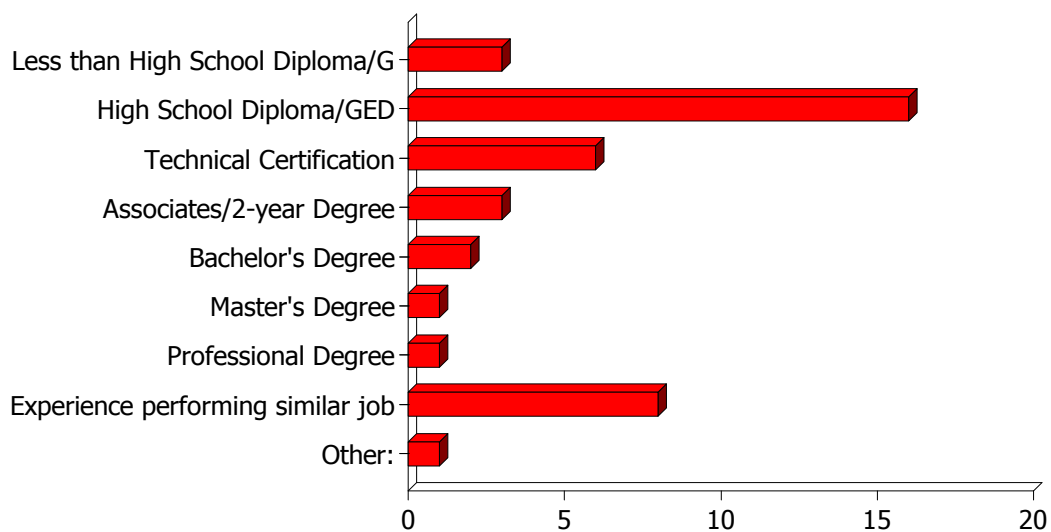


52. If so, with which types of labor categories are you experiencing recruiting problems?



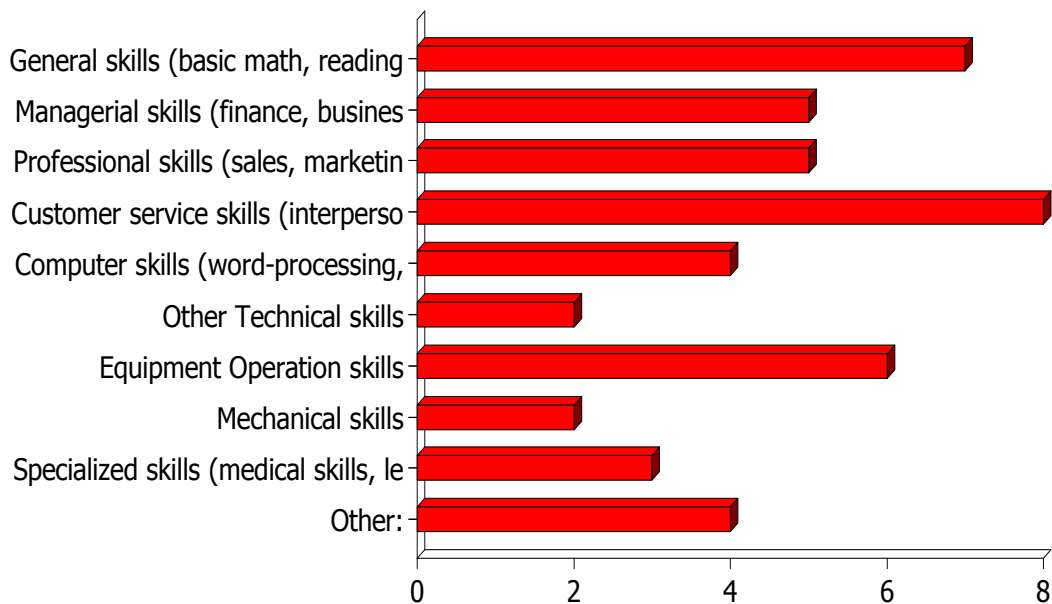
Comments/Notes for "Other:": Truck Drivers

53. What are the minimum requirements needed for these positions (select all that apply)?



Comments/Notes: Haz-Mat CDL

54. Please select the skills your find are lacking in potential employees you have interviewed (select all that apply):



Comments/Notes:

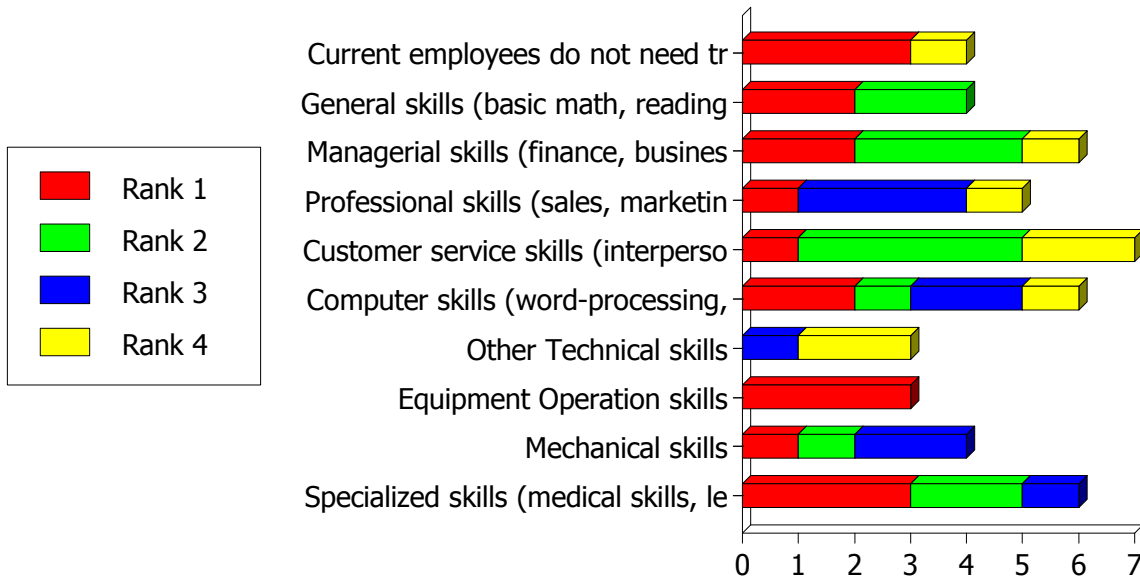
Interview skills, being dressed professionally, speaking professionally

Showing up for work; passing drug tests (2 comments tallied)

Unable to pass drug screen

Work ethic, fundamentals

55. Please rank in order the top four (4) areas in which your CURRENT employees need training (most needed area first).



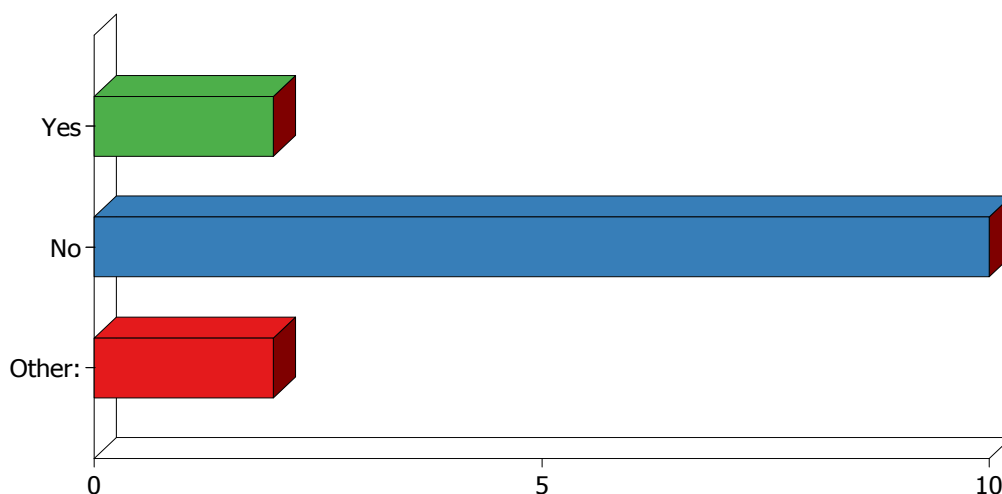
56. Does your company currently have any relationships with area colleges/universities/vocational schools, and if so, who?

- have delt with n/w ohio diesel at lima
- Most of the universities across the state
- No (2 responses tallied)
- no
- No. (4 responses tallied)
- Owens CC
- Owens Community College
- Possibly
- WE have a relationship with Marion Tech. We utilize a few of their programs for maintenance and our tooling group.
- We have had relationships with various schools. Owens and Northwestern
- Yes - Marion Technical College
- yes, Marion Tech, OSU, Owens, Tri rivers, Sentenal
- Yes, we work with the local DECA programs often.

57. Does your organization currently utilize a workplace wellness program and/or safety program that offers direct incentives to your employees or business? If so, please explain:

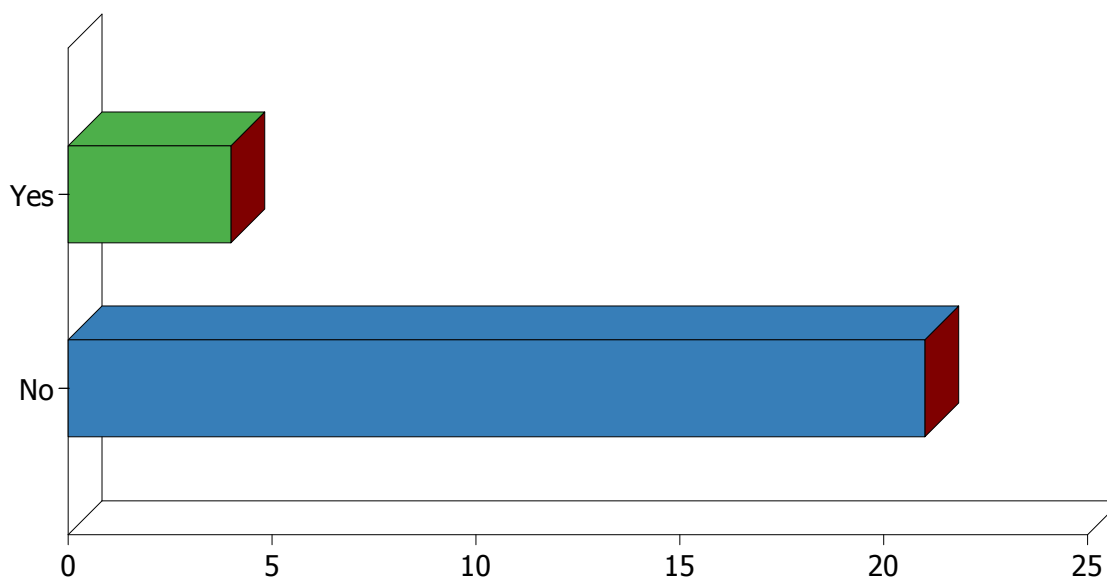
- Corporate safety program
- no
- No
- No. (3 responses tallied)
- Only required minimum safety programs.
- Quarterly bonuses are directly impacted.
- Yes
- Yes - safety program
- yes, annual wellness check ups. intense safety program - partner with OSHA
- Yes, both. Our wellness program is called "HealthGuard" and is highly utilized and prevalent in our workplace. Our safety program and direct incentives is also a cornerstone of our business. Both programs are continually becoming more robust.
- Yes, employees are required to have an annual wellness checkup. Discounts can be earned based on biometric results.
- Yes, wellness fairs and safety training & recognition.

58. If your business does not have a similar program; are you interested in learning about wellness or safety programs that may provide benefits or incentives to your employees?



SECTION - SUPPLY CHAIN

59. Your business likely buys some materials, supplies, and services from suppliers outside this area. In your opinion, could some of these items be produced profitably in this locality?



60. If yes, please help us identify materials, supplies, or services that could be produced profitably here rather than shipped into the area.

- All of our supplies (office) are unavailable from local providers.
- Locally grown produce and other food.
- Our primary purchases are raw glass, vinyl, and ceramic frit.
- Paper goods, printer maintenance, Staples office supplies
- The area could use a diesel mechanic so we and our customers do not have to use providers in Toledo or Columbus.
- Various manufacturing parts and supplies
- we buy what we can locally some stuff is very specialized

SECTION - FUTURE PLANS

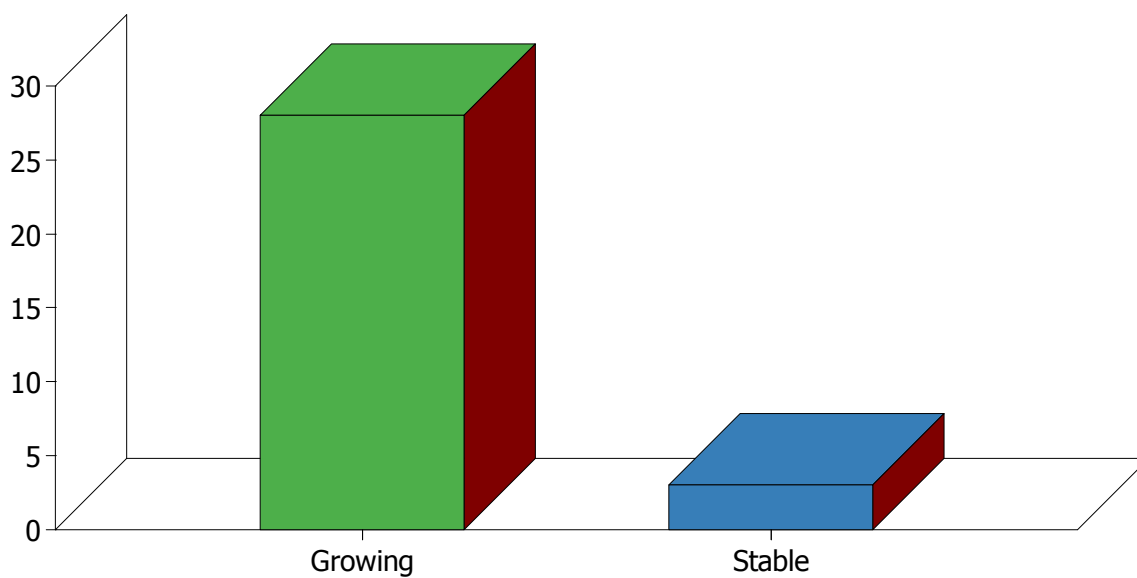
62. If you have any plans to modernize, renovate, or expand your present building(s) or equipment in the near future; please describe the type of plans, time frame, and any constraints faced:

- Current expansion project underway - facing issues with building permit.
- Currently adding a new fertilizer building and will be adding new office space.
- Currently renovating one location, and future modernization plans are in place for another location.
- Currently undergoing an expansion. Increased electrical capacity is needed.
- Just added 2 satellite facilities, and looking to add some more on-site storage.
- Just completed a new building.
- Location is being consolidated with a nearby local in a couple of months.
- No.
- On-going
- Plan to move to a new location within the city; more than likely into an existing facility.
- Plans to purchase new machinery in the future. If we need to expand we have adjacent land available.
- Possibly. Space is a constraint.
- Potential plans for capital investment, but none that have been approved as of yet.
- Replacing a bin, and potentially adding a new scale and office space.
- Some plans for further expansion.
- We intend to add some additional equipment to the facility in the next year to keep up with our customer's needs.
- We plan to move locations.
- yes
- yes- we need to redo the interior/cosmetic changes

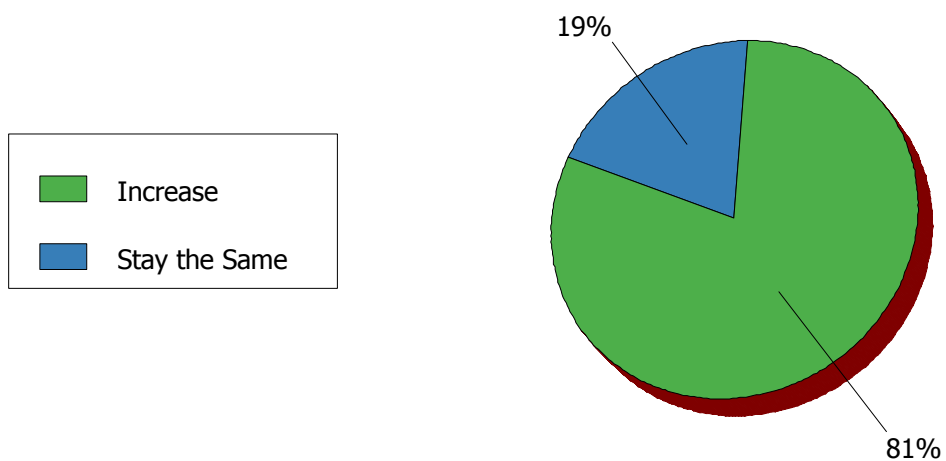
63. If you are considering moving, closing, or selling this business; please describe where and when this would happen:

- Cost savings for the company, and there is no room to expand at this location.
- Moving within the community within the next 2 years.
- No
- No plans to move, close, or sell the business.
- Within the next 6 months.

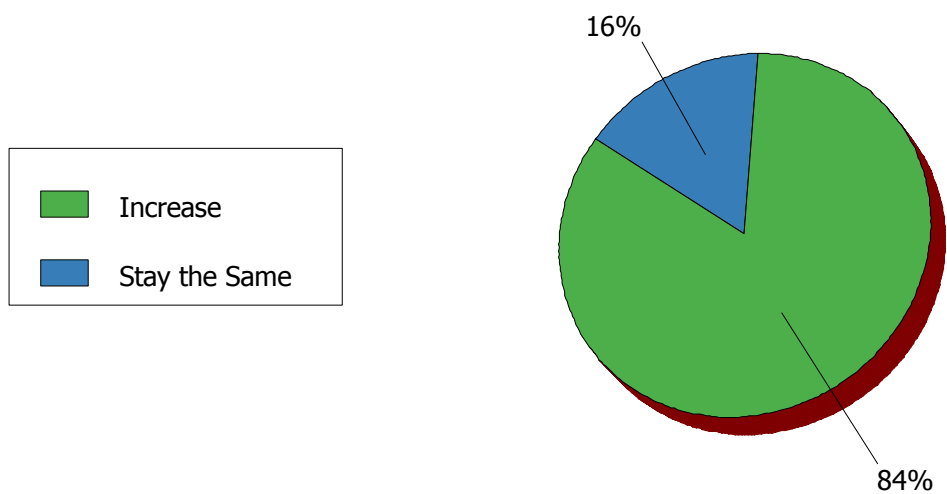
64. Does your company have plans for growth over the next 3 years?



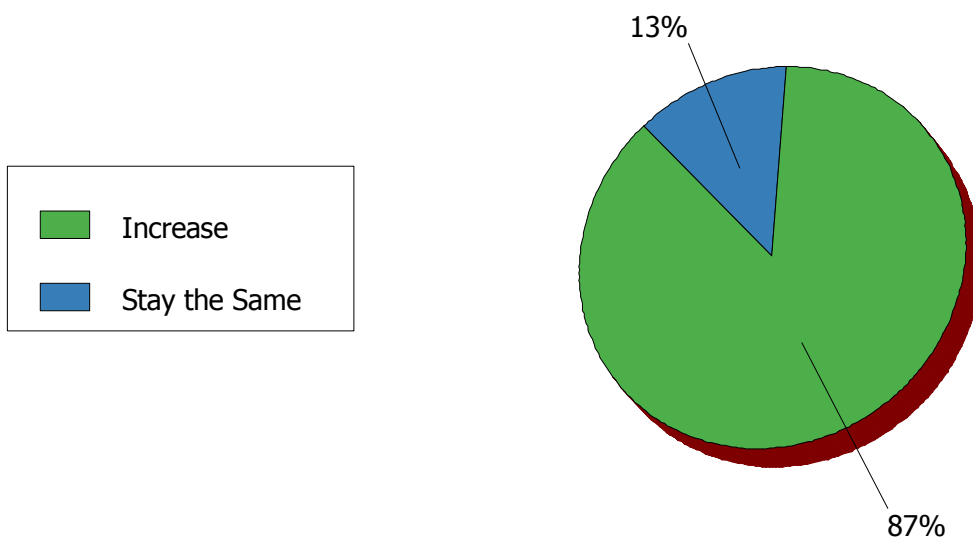
65. Will your number of customers be changing?



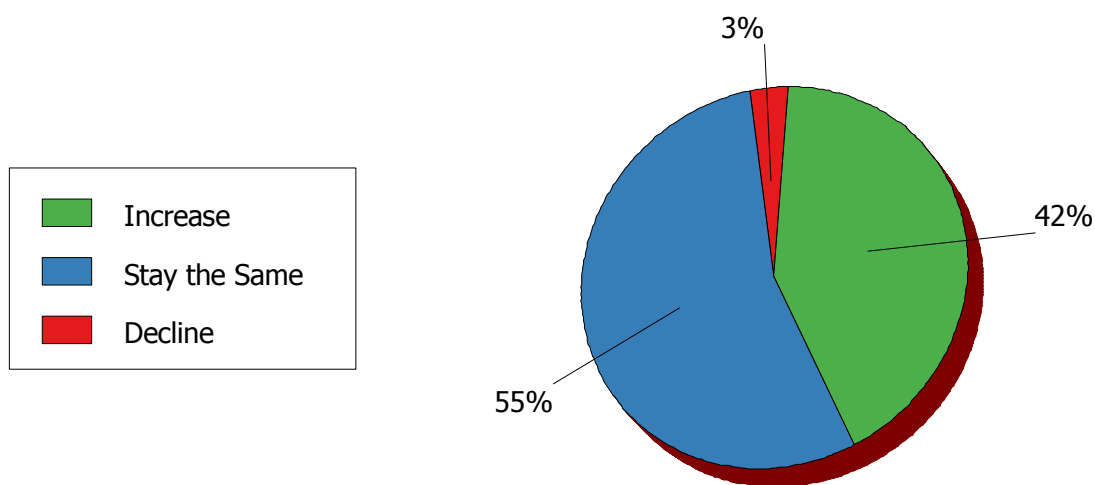
66. Will your Sales - Total revenue change?



67. Will your Profits change?



68. Will the company's employment level be changing at this location?



69. If you expect any of these business factors to change over the next 3 years, what are the principal reasons for the changes?

- Economy is better. We are doing more Marketing
- Expanding sales into new geographic areas. Recently established a sales office in Knoxville, TN.
- Expansion of service market.
- General growth since 2009 downturn.
- Growth (2 responses tallied)
- Increase in customers.
- Increase in volume
- Increased demand from current customers and new customers coming online.
- Increased demand.
- Increased efficiency and speed of our facility will be key to growth.
- Increasing sales has led to increased production and expansion.
- Increasing sales in recent months.
- Increasing business with existing and new customers.
- Industry conditions.
- Insurance costs on the rise in OH.

- More customers.
- Moving to a new location.
- Picking up customers from a larger geographic area.
- The company has growth projections in the new location.
- The increasing number of clients will lead to gains across the board. The amount of employees will not change unless we see double digit growth.
- Uncertain landscape with legislation.
- We have an aggressive growth plan. The biggest thing that could alter our plans is if we find that the markets we are trying to grow in are not as large as we think they are.

70. Is there anything the Wyandot County Office of Economic Development could do to help your business remain profitable and continue growing in the Wyandot County community?

- Appreciate the services provided.
- bring in the people :)
- Decrease government regulations
- Help to market our current facility.
- N/A
- Possibly assist in local growth.
- Potential assistance when the company moves locations.
- Potential assistance with future projects.
- Potential future assistance if expansion occurs.
- Potentially help when the time comes to make capital expenditures.
- We need to be able to attract and retain skilled professionals to this area. We have had some success recruiting professionals from the general area but we have had almost no success in getting professionals to relocate to this area.

SECTION - THANK YOU!

Instructions Provided To Respondents

Thank you again for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your responses are greatly valued. Please click the SUBMIT YOUR RESPONSES button below to complete the questionnaire. They will travel over a secure connection to our server. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 419-294-4931, or visit our website at www.wcoed.com.



Wyandot County Office of Economic Development

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Email gmoon@wcoed.com

URL www.wyandotcountyeconomicdevelopment.com

The Wyandot County Office of Economic Development is a 501(c)(6) non-profit organization. The WCOED partners with the Wyandot County Board of Commissioners to fund a full-time Economic Development Director in Wyandot County. As such, the WCOED Executive Director also serves in a leadership capacity for the Wyandot County Regional Planning Commission.