

# SOUTHEAST OVERVIEW

The 2008 Missouri Job Vacancy Survey (JVS) revealed that there were an estimated 2,636 job vacancies in the Southeast Region during the survey period. These results were taken from 400 employers in the region responding that most vacancies could be found in the Accommodation & Food Services and Health Care & Social Assistance industries.

INDUSTRY	VACANCIES
ACCOMMODATION & FOOD SERV.	891
HEALTH CARE & SOCIAL ASSIST.	608
RETAIL TRADE	319
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	133
WHOLESALE TRADE	105

Applicants for over fifty percent (54%) of vacancies met job requirements either *very well* or *well*. This was a significant increase in the region from the previous survey. In the 2007 survey, job candidates met requirements either *very well* or *well* for just 36 percent of vacancies.

Vacancies in the Accommodation & Food Services and Health Care & Social Assistance industries largely consisted of occupations such as waiters & waitresses (399), cashiers (150), registered nurses (137), food preparation & serving workers (130), and emergency medical technicians & paramedics (106).

## HAVE APPLICANTS MET JOB REQUIREMENTS?

RESPONSE	VACANCIES	PERCENT
MATCHED VERY WELL	170	8%
MATCHED WELL	988	46%
MATCHED SOMEWHAT	892	41%
MATCHED VERY LITTLE	70	3%
MATCHED NOT AT ALL	46	2%
RESPONDENT TOTAL	2,166	100%

## WHAT IS THE MINIMUM LEVEL OF EDUCATION REQUIRED?

RESPONSE	VACANCIES	PERCENT
NONE	546	21%
SOME HIGH SCHOOL	685	27%
HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	722	28%
2-YEAR ASSOCIATE DEGREE	72	3%
4-YEAR COLLEGE DEGREE	137	5%
PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION	333	13%
TECHNICAL CERTIFICATION	11	0%
SPECIAL CERTIFICATION	0	0%
GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	37	1%
RESPONDENT TOTAL	2,543	100%

Though the region lags behind all but one other in proportion of applicants with either a 2- or 4-year degree (8%), the Southeast region did have the second highest percentage of applicants with professional certification (13%).

Occupations with vacancies requiring professional certification included emergency medical technicians & paramedics (122), registered nurses (105), nursing aides, orderlies, & attendants (26), and radiologic technologists (22).

# SKILL GAPS

The difference between skills needed for a job and those possessed by applicants are referred to as skill gaps. The Job Vacancy Survey addresses skill gaps when distinguishing between competencies (skills needed for a job) and shortcomings (skills possessed by applicants).

In the Southeast region, respondents indicated those “skills needed for a job” focused on social related skill sets. As with most regions, the Southeast region had a significant proportion of vacancies in which *interpersonal skills* were important.

## WHAT COMPETENCIES ARE IMPORTANT TO THIS POSITION?

RESPONSE	VACANCIES	PERCENT
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	2,363	94%
ACQUIRING/USING INFORMATION	2,229	89%
HABITS (PUNCTUALITY/GOOD HYGIENE)	2,205	88%
MANAGING TIME WISELY	2,196	88%
LEADERSHIP	1,757	70%
SPECIFIC TECHNICAL SKILLS	1,501	60%
COMPUTER LITERACY	1,407	56%
OTHER COMPETENCIES	433	17%

Unlike most regions, however, employers in the southeast said that *acquiring/using information* (89%) was highly important to fill vacancies. The average for all other regions indicated that *acquiring/using information* was an important competency for just 77 percent of vacancies. Conversely, *specific technical skills* (60%) were not viewed as nearly important by employers in the region compared to other regions. All other regions averaged 80 percent.

Employer results about competencies and shortcomings reveal that skills gaps in the Southeast region exist for certain social related skill sets.

## WHAT ARE THE SHORTCOMINGS OF APPLICANTS?

RESPONSE	VACANCIES	PERCENT
LACK OF POSITIVE ATTITUDE	1,693	78%
POOR WORK ETHIC	1,664	77%
POOR CUSTOMER SERVICE SKILLS	1,437	66%
POOR COMMUNICATION SKILLS	1,038	48%
POOR BASIC MATH SKILLS	756	35%
LACK OF INDUSTRY KNOWLEDGE	606	28%
POOR WRITING SKILLS	543	25%
INABILITY TO UNDERSTAND WRITTEN INFORMATION	541	25%
POOR TECHNICAL SKILLS	450	21%
LACK OF COMPUTER SKILLS	380	18%
OTHER SHORTCOMINGS	244	11%
NO SHORTCOMINGS	68	3%

*Interpersonal skills* (94%) were considered the most important competency by employers. These social skills were also the most common responses about shortcomings of applicants.

For example, 3 of the top 4 shortcomings in the region were *lack of positive attitude* (78%), *poor customer service skills* (66%), and *poor communication skills* (48%) – all social or “interpersonal” skills.