

**THE BLUE RIDGE REGION
OF
SOUTH CAROLINA**

WORKFORCE REPORT

July, 2002

**Compiled and Produced by
THE PATHFINDERS**



Dallas, Texas

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pathfinders has employed its experience in workforce assessments for corporate site-selection clients and assessments of the civilian workforce in locations where military installations were scheduled for closure to produce this evaluation of the Blue Ridge Region of South Carolina workforce. The Pathfinders functions as a site-selection consultant to many of America's largest corporations. Senior human resources executives from among those clients assisted in refining this methodology and report format. Companies making location decisions based upon these surveys have reported that when staffing actually began, the numbers reported proved to be accurate.

The information presented in this report has been developed independently of the client, and the client has not influenced the findings. This report represents the objective and professional view of The Pathfinders with regard to workforce availability, cost, skills, and quality that a new employer can expect in the Blue Ridge Region.

The findings contained herein include the following observations:

- In addition to the unemployed in the Blue Ridge Region, a new employer will be able to attract employees from an additional pool of about 84,000 potentially available workers who have indicated an interest in changing jobs.
- Those workers possess the skills, experience, and education to qualify them for the pay rates at which they would take a new job, and that defines them as “underemployed”. **For the purposes of this report, the term “underemployed” is used herein when referring to those potentially available workers.**
- The pay rates they specify to take a new job are reasonable when compared to their existing pay rates.



- About 25% of those workers would take a new job for \$11.50 per hour or less. At the upper end, the 25% most qualified and experienced will command more than \$21.01 per hour.
- Roughly 10,800 people, neither employed nor seeking work, might re-enter the workforce for the proper job.

To determine the boundaries of the area to be surveyed, The Pathfinders applied the same reasoning that would be used during a site search for a corporate client considering the area as a location to determine the locations from which workers might be drawn to a new employer. The Blue Ridge Region survey area (Anderson, Greenville, Oconee and Pickens Counties in South Carolina, portions of Transylvania and Jackson Counties in North Carolina and portions of Rabun, Stephens, Franklin and Hart Counties in Georgia) has an estimated total civilian labor force of approximately 387,000 people. The survey area, referred to in this report as the “labor shed”, contains approximately 19,000 unemployed people who are seeking work.

While the unemployed may be considered a potentially good source of employees, the type of quality employer that the labor shed is attempting to attract typically does not rely on the unemployed to staff a new operation. As a consequence, The Pathfinders was retained to quantify the extent to which UNDEREMPLOYMENT exists in the area, as well as to document the cost, skills, experience, and education of that hidden workforce.

Published government statistics report wages and employment for the entire workforce of an area, even though most of this workforce has no interest in changing jobs. The report prepared by The Pathfinders, however, includes data only on those people in the area who might change jobs and who would, therefore, be potential candidate workers for a new employer. As opposed to average wages, this report quantifies the number of those workers available for an employer in various wage ranges.



The results of this assessment determined that in addition to the 19,000 unemployed individuals in the labor shed, approximately 84,000 workers could be defined as underemployed: those individuals who would take a better job if offered by a new or existing employer and who possess the skills, education, and experience to qualify them for a better job. Over 18,400 underemployed workers in the labor shed would change jobs for \$10.99 per hour or less, and 50% of the underemployed workers would take a new job for \$15.98 per hour or less.

Over 30% of the 84,000 underemployed individuals have some college experience and another 27% have earned four-year college degrees. As these data relate solely to those individuals in the labor shed who are underemployed, they will vary from data representative of the population as a whole.

The reader, however, should consider that while the number of underemployed workers identified in the area, as well as their skills, experience, education, and costs, is accurate, all of those individuals would not be acceptable candidates for an employer. Their previous work records, stability, integrity, intelligence, appearance, and other factors could not be considered in the report.

Site searches to identify the optimum location for new facilities have been conducted by The Pathfinders for such clients as AT&T, DuPont, Celanese, 3M Corporation, IMC Global, AIG, Ciba-Geigy, and others of a similar stature. The availability of workers is a critical factor in selecting a location for a new operation, and a workforce analysis has been a key component of the site searches conducted for these corporate clients.

The Pathfinders has applied its site-search experience to this assessment of the workforce in the Blue Ridge Region. In instances where similar workforce surveys have been conducted for corporate clients in site-selection projects, the accuracy of the findings has been repeatedly verified as those clients located and began staffing new operations.



WORKFORCE REPORT

In this workforce assessment, The Pathfinders conducted telephone interviews with individuals throughout the labor shed. Those individuals were stratified across age (19 – 54 years), gender, household income (up to \$100,000), local telephone exchanges, and zip codes. The purpose of these interviews was to ascertain availability for work with a new employer; to determine desired pay rates; and, to collect information on age, education, commuting patterns, experience, and skills. Sufficient surveys were completed with individuals to produce results for that entire population group which vary by no more than plus or minus 5 percentage points. At that level of variance, the 84,000 people identified as underemployed might actually be as many as 88,200 (plus 5%) or as few as 79,800 (minus 5%). If the survey were repeated 100 times, 95 times out of 100 the results would be the same as those resulting from a survey of the entire population.

The Pathfinders also applied a proprietary process to the analysis of the data to correct for invalid responses. This process considers that to be counted as underemployed, an individual must be currently employed and willing to take another job at a pay rate commensurate with personal skills, education, and experience. Moreover, persons with fifteen or more years with their present employers are not considered to be true candidates for new jobs for the purposes of this study. Those indicating that they would take a new job but also indicating the desire for increased pay that is unreasonable are also not counted in the results. Similarly, an individual who may be truly underemployed but is within a very few years of qualifying for retirement benefits with an existing employer may state a willingness to change jobs but is not considered likely to do so and is, therefore, not included in these results.

Current pay alone is not the qualifying factor for underemployment status in this study. Individuals, for example, making \$6.50 per hour, possessing no high school degree or skills, and being in the workforce for less than one year may consider themselves to be underemployed but are not considered to be so in this report. On the other hand, education, skills, and experience may qualify the person making \$22.00 per hour as truly underemployed.



As a corporate site-selection consultant, The Pathfinders recognizes that the question which most often drives the search for a new business location is whether the candidate location has the workforce needed. In a poll of its corporate clients, The Pathfinders found that those clients' experiences suggest that less than 10% of the new hires for new operations come from the ranks of the unemployed. Instead, these clients staff a new operation principally with UNDEREMPLOYED people.

The primary source of good employees for employers moving into an area is the category of the underemployed: those individuals who are now working but desire better jobs and who possess the skills, education, and experience to qualify them for those better jobs. In the Blue Ridge Region, approximately 84,000 people can be categorized as underemployed. Reported findings about this group of underemployed workers include:

- About 10% of these individuals would change jobs for under \$9.46 per hour;
- 33⅓% would change jobs for less than \$12.75 per hour; and,
- 50% would change for \$15.98 or less.

Again, the reader is cautioned that, while the number of underemployed workers identified in the region, as well as their skills, experience, education, and costs, is accurate, all of those individuals may not be acceptable candidates for an employer. Their previous work records, stability, integrity, intelligence, appearance, and other factors are not considered in this report.

AVAILABLE WORKERS

The Blue Ridge Region Labor Shed

Number of underemployed workers	84,000
Number of unemployed persons who are seeking work	19,000
Number of persons who are not working, but are contemplating re-entering the workforce	10,800
Total Number of Workers Available for Employers	113,800

These underemployed workers might also be termed upgraders. They desire to move into an upgraded job and appear to possess the skills, education, and experience to enable them to do so. The pay rates they expect to achieve range from under \$7.00 to over \$25.00 per hour.

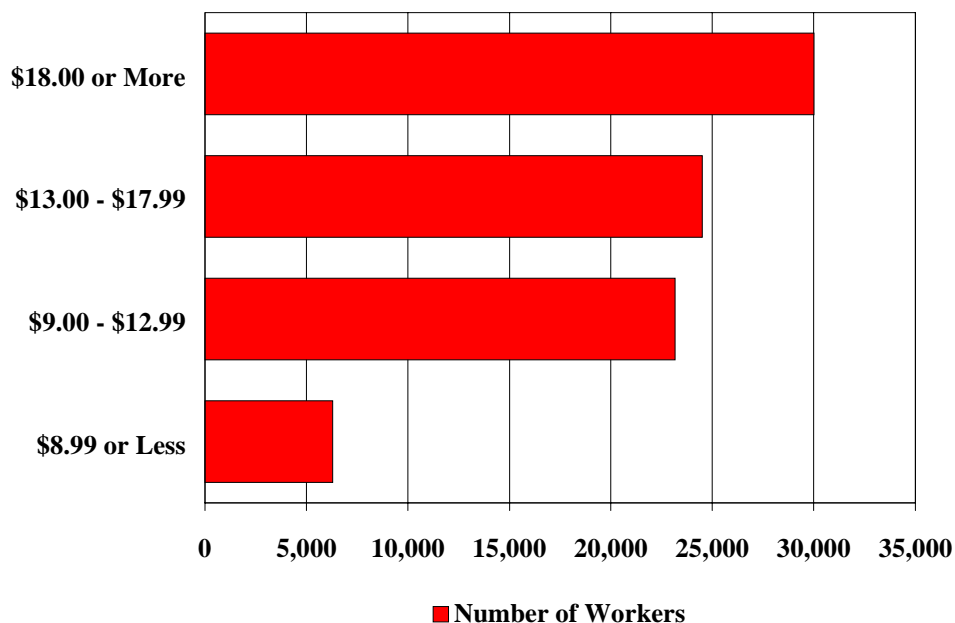
The following data represent the desired pay rates of the underemployed individuals in the labor shed. Many workers expressed their wage requirements in weekly, monthly, or annual terms, but all figures in this report are presented in hourly rates. Selected conversions may add perspective to the hourly rates.

CONVERSION CHART

Hourly	Weekly	Monthly	Annually
\$ 8.00	\$ 320.00	\$ 1,386.00	\$ 16,640.00
\$ 10.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 1,733.00	\$ 20,800.00
\$ 15.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 31,200.00
\$ 20.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 3,466.00	\$ 41,600.00
\$ 25.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 52,000.00



DESIRED WAGE RATES (per hour)
The Blue Ridge Region Labor Shed
84,000 Underemployed Workers



NUMBER OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS AVAILABLE (rounded)
AT SPECIFIC HOURLY PAY RATES
The Blue Ridge Region Labor Shed
84,000 Underemployed Workers

<u>\$ 6.99 or Less</u>	<u>\$ 7.00 - \$ 7.99</u>	<u>\$ 8.00 - \$ 8.99</u>	<u>\$ 9.00 - \$ 9.99</u>
1,430	1,930	2,940	4,540
<u>\$ 10.00 - \$ 10.99</u>	<u>\$ 11.00 - \$ 11.99</u>	<u>\$ 12.00 - \$ 12.99</u>	<u>\$ 13.00 - \$ 13.99</u>
7,630	5,040	5,960	3,530
<u>\$ 14.00 - \$ 14.99</u>	<u>\$ 15.00 - \$ 15.99</u>	<u>\$ 16.00 - \$ 16.99</u>	<u>\$ 17.00 - \$ 17.99</u>
4,540	4,540	7,460	4,440
<u>\$ 18.00 - \$ 18.99</u>	<u>\$ 19.00 - \$ 19.99</u>	<u>\$ 20.00 - \$ 24.99</u>	<u>\$ 25.00 or More</u>
3,430	4,440	5,650	16,500

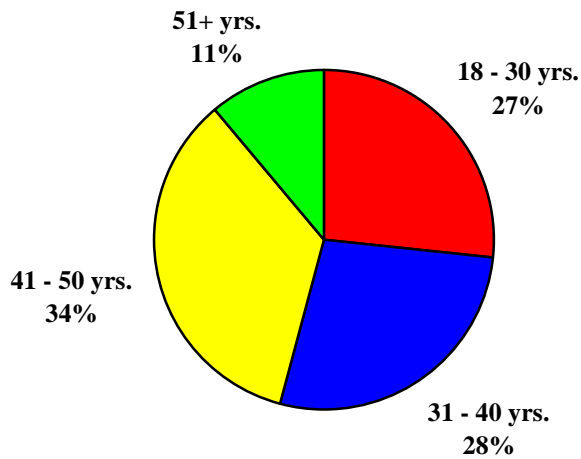


CHARACTERISTICS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

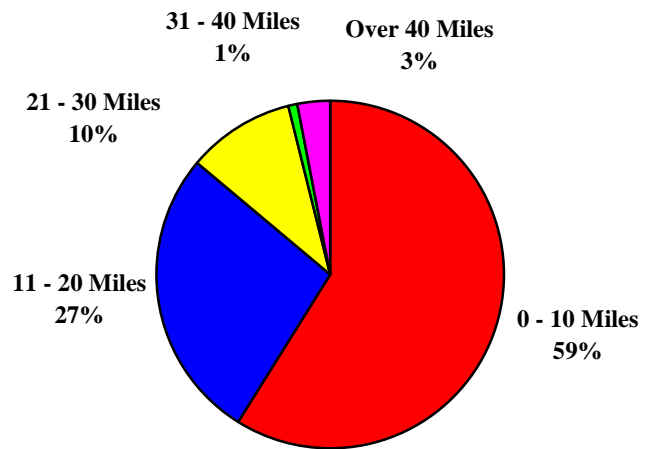
The Blue Ridge Region Labor Shed

The following charts provide information on the characteristics of the underemployed workers in the labor shed.

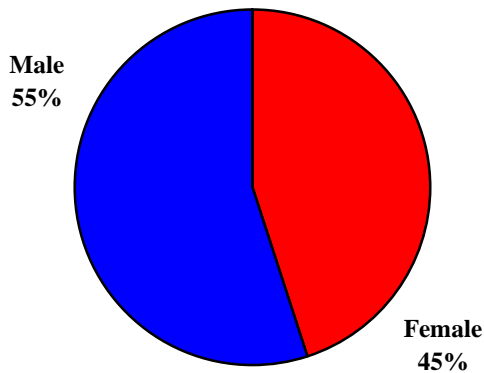
AGE



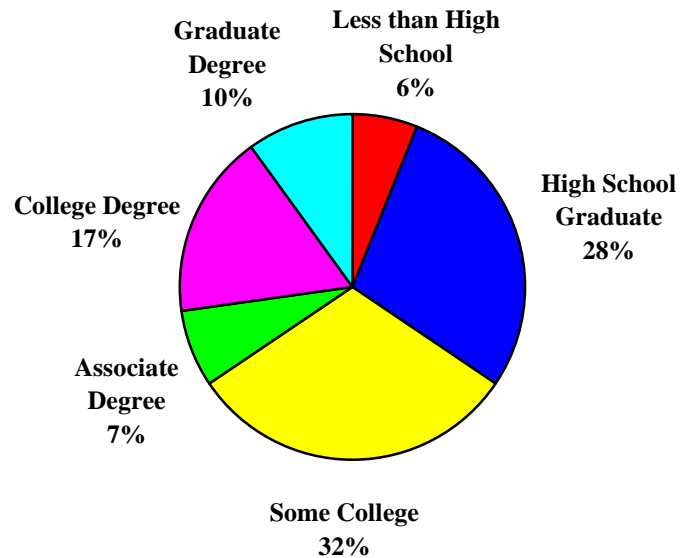
COMMUTING DISTANCES



GENDER



EDUCATION



EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS

The experience and skills categories used in this report are designed to provide accurate workforce data for employers which fall into one or more of the following four broad groups:

- manufacturing, assembly, fabrication or other industrial operations;
- office, data processing, call centers, or other operations which might be “white collar” in nature;
- distribution or transportation operations; and,
- operations related to sales or customer service and other public interface.

The experience and skills categories are purposefully similar in order to present the most accurate worker availability for operations in one of those four groups.

An employee in the front office of a manufacturing operation will be considered to have “manufacturing” experience but may only have “office” skills. Someone with “industrial experience” may not have “industrial machines” skills, but could have “materials handling” skills if they work in shipping or receiving. “Sales” and “customer service” experience cross many other experience and skills categories and ideally would be possessed by anyone with customer contact to any degree.

The similarities between the skills and experience categories are designed to ensure inclusiveness considering the multitude of tasks and job titles present in most business, government and institutional operations. Additionally, what may appear to some observers as redundancy is, in reality, a proven mechanism to cross-check the validity of responses and to identify the degree to which workplace and professional competencies are truly transferable to new positions and employers.



EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS
The Blue Ridge Region Labor Shed

Experience*	Number of Persons	Percentage
Office/Data Processing/Word Processing	47,040	56%
Warehouse/Distribution/Transportation/Logistics	40,320	48%
Manufacturing/Assembly	51,240	61%
Industrial Operations/Industrial Processing	28,560	34%
Computer Operations, including Computer-Controlled Machines	45,360	54%
Information Processing/Communications	41,160	49%
Call Center	11,760	14%
Government/Education	21,840	26%
Sales	42,000	50%
Customer Service	52,920	63%

* **Individuals polled may have experience in more than one job classification.**



EMPLOYMENT SKILLS OF UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS
The Blue Ridge Region Labor Shed

Skills*	Number of Persons	Percentage
Office/Data/Word Processing	49,560	59%
Computer Use	70,560	84%
Computer Programmer	18,480	22%
Warehouse/Materials Handling	44,520	53%
Manufacturing Production/Assembly/Fabrication	52,920	63%
Machining/Welding/Other Industrial Machines	28,560	34%
Telecommunications	22,680	27%
Technician/Quality Assurance	30,240	36%
Maintenance/Installation/Repair	32,760	39%
Electronics/Engineering	21,000	25%

* Individuals polled may have skills in more than one job classification.



While unemployment rates indicate the presence of approximately 19,000 unemployed persons in the labor shed, the results of this workforce assessment suggest that an additional 10,800 people, who are not currently employed or actively seeking work, would re-enter the workforce and take a good job if offered. Approximately 74% of these additional individuals are female, and the group is one-half year younger on average than the underemployed.

The education of this additional group roughly mirrors that of the underemployed members of the workforce, albeit with a somewhat higher concentration of “Some College”. This group exhibits competitive measures of experience and skills in the following areas:

- Government or education
- Computer use
- Telecommunications

The pay rates required by this group to re-enter the workforce appears to be in a range between \$7.00 and \$25.00 per hour, with \$10.20 per hour as the median. The lower quartile would take \$8.26 or less, and the upper quartile desires \$14.26 per hour or more.

The determinations for this segment of the workforce have a larger statistical variance than that for the underemployed.



EMPLOYERS' VIEWS OF THE BLUE RIDGE REGION TOTAL WORKFORCE

In developing a profile of existing workers in the Blue Ridge Region, The Pathfinders considered such factors as labor availability, productivity, unionization, attitudes, costs, and education. The analysis was based upon interviews conducted with senior management and human resources professionals from companies located in the labor shed. Each of these companies operated in the industrial, commercial, or service sectors. The interview sampling was sufficiently large to make valid workforce judgments. Employers interviewed were asked to provide subjective views of their workers, in addition to objective and quantitative measurements of labor productivity, availability, attitudes, and costs. Employers with operations in other regions of the United States were asked to compare their experiences in those other areas with their experiences in the Blue Ridge Region.

The Blue Ridge Region workforce received high marks for productivity. Many of the companies interviewed stated that their local operations compared favorably with operations in other locations in terms of profitability and production, indicative not only of good management but also of a productive workforce. Based upon the experience of The Pathfinders in evaluating labor forces in numerous locations, a definite correlation between productivity, absentee rates, tardiness rates, and turnover appears to exist. That correlation goes beyond the fact that an absent worker is obviously unproductive. Rather, those factors are indicative of an employee's attitude toward the job. The companies in the Blue Ridge Region interviewed judged absenteeism to be low. Most of the companies reported turnover to be low. Most stated that substance abuse incidence is extremely low.

One of the most common employer complaints throughout the nation relates to the basic educational competencies of the workforce. Following are the ratings that employers in the labor shed give employees relative to the basic educational competencies of reading, writing, and calculations.



**PERCENT OF EMPLOYERS RATING
THE BLUE RIDGE REGION TOTAL WORKFORCE**

Category	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Reading/Writing Competency	13%	48%	39%	0%
Calculations Competency	5%	61%	30%	4%

Another common employer complaint relates to the shortage of skilled and technical workers. The availability of these workers in the Blue Ridge Region must be viewed from the perspective of comparative availability when other areas of the state and nation are considered. Skilled and technical workers are in great demand and difficult to find in the vast majority of locations. Of the companies in the labor shed interviewed, over 50% considered skilled worker availability to be “Excellent” or “Good”, while 47% considered it to be “Fair”. Over 40% of the interviewed companies rated the availability of technical workers in the labor shed as “Excellent” or “Good”.

The following table provides a composite portrait of employers’ experiences with and opinions of workers in the Blue Ridge Region. Taken in context with the data gathered and presented in the workforce survey, a balanced profile of the attributes of individuals available to fill the labor needs of new and expanding firms is provided.

Category	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Availability of Skilled Workers	0%	53%	47%	0%
Availability of Unskilled Workers	5%	74%	21%	0%
Availability of Technical Workers	0%	44%	56%	0%
Availability of Professional Workers	4%	49%	43%	4%
Worker Productivity	13%	83%	4%	0%
Worker Reliability and Attitudes	14%	65%	17%	4%



COMPARISONS OF EMPLOYERS RATINGS
TOTAL WORKFORCE
The Blue Ridge Region Labor Shed /
Locations Previously Surveyed

In the course of workforce surveys, local employers are asked to rate their workers on a number of factors. Those factors include: worker productivity; worker reliability and attitudes; reading/writing competency; calculations competency; availability of skilled workers; availability of unskilled workers; availability of technical workers; and, availability of professional workers. Local employers are asked to rate each factor either “Excellent”, “Good”, “Fair”, or “Poor”.

The purpose of these interviews and ratings is not only to determine how local employers rate their workers, but also to provide a means for comparing local ratings to those of all locations surveyed during the past eighteen months. Such comparison will enable you to assess your employers’ ratings of their workers in contrast to the body of thousands of employer ratings recorded in that period.

The following charts present the comparative results for each factor. They compare the percentages of the Blue Ridge Region employers who rated their workers “Excellent”, “Good”, “Fair”, or “Poor” on each factor with the “Highest” rating of that factor in all areas surveyed in the last eighteen months and the “Median” rating for that factor in all areas surveyed during that time. As a result, the “Highest” and “Median” ratings do not add to 100%.

For example, 13% of the Blue Ridge Region employers rated “Worker Productivity” as “Excellent”. Of all the locations surveyed during the last eighteen months, the “Median” for that rating is 19%, and the “Highest” rating recorded in the “Excellent” category is 57%. The same comparison applies for each of the other factors.

In these charts, the Blue Ridge Region is shown as “Labor Shed”.



WORKER PRODUCTIVITY

Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
Highest	57%	Highest	86%	Highest	46%	Highest	13%
Labor Shed	13%	Labor Shed	83%	Labor Shed	4%	Labor Shed	0%
Median	19%	Median	59%	Median	20%	Median	5%

WORKER RELIABILITY AND ATTITUDES

Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
Highest	53%	Highest	83%	Highest	43%	Highest	17%
Labor Shed	14%	Labor Shed	65%	Labor Shed	17%	Labor Shed	4%
Median	17%	Median	56%	Median	26%	Median	6%

READING/WRITING COMPETENCY

Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
Highest	40%	Highest	81%	Highest	70%	Highest	31%
Labor Shed	13%	Labor Shed	48%	Labor Shed	39%	Labor Shed	0%
Median	9%	Median	54%	Median	27%	Median	8%

CALCULATIONS COMPETENCY

Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
Highest	50%	Highest	75%	Highest	68%	Highest	21%
Labor Shed	5%	Labor Shed	61%	Labor Shed	30%	Labor Shed	4%
Median	8%	Median	50%	Median	39%	Median	9%



AVAILABILITY OF SKILLED WORKERS

Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
Highest	26%	Highest	56%	Highest	63%	Highest	37%
Labor Shed	0%	Labor Shed	53%	Labor Shed	47%	Labor Shed	0%
Median	7%	Median	41%	Median	37%	Median	19%

AVAILABILITY OF UNSKILLED WORKERS

Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
Highest	47%	Highest	85%	Highest	55%	Highest	21%
Labor Shed	5%	Labor Shed	74%	Labor Shed	21%	Labor Shed	0%
Median	19%	Median	48%	Median	24%	Median	8%

AVAILABILITY OF TECHNICAL WORKERS

Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
Highest	36%	Highest	70%	Highest	78%	Highest	58%
Labor Shed	0%	Labor Shed	44%	Labor Shed	56%	Labor Shed	0%
Median	7%	Median	30%	Median	46%	Median	22%

AVAILABILITY OF PROFESSIONAL WORKERS

Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor	
Highest	31%	Highest	70%	Highest	69%	Highest	45%
Labor Shed	4%	Labor Shed	49%	Labor Shed	43%	Labor Shed	4%
Median	9%	Median	34%	Median	38%	Median	22%



NATIONAL COMPARATIVE OBSERVATIONS

As a matter of course in site-selection projects, The Pathfinders evaluates published government workforce statistics. Those statistics, however, depict the entire workforce while only a minority segment of those workers will be considered for or have an interest in new jobs with a company. The characteristics of the select, underemployed workforce group represented in this report may vary significantly from the workforce as a whole as reported in published government data.

Accordingly, the information presented in the workforce report for the Blue Ridge Region covers those members of the workforce who are, by virtue of their underemployment, potential candidates for new jobs. Existing employers, or new employers recruited to the Blue Ridge Region, typically will not depend heavily on the unemployed to staff a new operation or to fill vacancies in existing operations caused by turnover or expansions. Companies look to the ranks of people who are already employed but are seeking to better themselves. Those individuals in that category who possess the education, skills, and experience to merit a better job are classified as UNDEREMPLOYED.

The workforce report issued by The Pathfinders documents the availability of underemployed workers as well as the skills, experience, education, and costs of individuals in that hidden workforce in the Blue Ridge Region. This section of the report provides a comparison of the characteristics of the labor shed's underemployed workforce with the underemployed workforces in other communities previously surveyed throughout the nation. A prospect company considering the Blue Ridge Region as a location will judge its workforce on a comparative basis. This section of the report will allow local economic development professionals to view the region's workforce in relation to others across the country.

The comparative data for other locations used in the following charts and tables reflect information accumulated over the past eighteen months. The Pathfinders maintains a continuing database of over 500 surveyed counties and communities and more than 25 million surveyed workers.



Locations Used In Comparative Analysis

In the various charts which follow this page, this labor shed is compared with others for the purpose of making the data meaningful. In the charts, the data for this labor shed are shown alongside the “lowest”, “median” and “highest” from other workforce surveys conducted by The Pathfinders. The comparisons are with communities and counties, representing both large, small and others similar in size to this labor shed. They are also scattered throughout the nation, and a partial listing of locations from which the “low”, “median” and “high” data reported are derived includes:

Albany, NY	Culpeper Co., VA	Lee’s Summit, MO	Richmond, KY
Amarillo, TX	Dallas, TX	Lexington, KY	Rutherford Co., TN
Anderson, IN	Danville, IL	Long Island, NY	Salisbury, MD
Ardmore, OK	Daytona Beach, FL	Louisville, KY	San Angelo, TX
Atascadero, CA	Decatur, AL	Kokomo, IN	San Marcos, TX
Atlanta, GA	Evansville, IN	Eastern Shore, MD	Scranton, PA
Auburn, AL	Fauquier Co., VA	Marion County, KY	Seguin, TX
Baldwin Co., AL	Frankfort, KY	Moberly, MO	Seneca Co., NY
Bay Co., FL	Gillette, WY	Mobile, AL	Shasta Co., CA
Bedford, TX	Grays Harbor, WA	Mohawk Valley, NY	Shelby Co., AL
Bentonville, AR	Greene Co., NY	Montgomery, AL	Shoals, AL
Binghamton, NY	Haskell, TX	Monroe, LA	Shreveport, LA
Birmingham, AL	Hazleton, PA	Morehouse Parish, LA	Sikeston, MO
Bowie, TX	Henderson, KY	Muncie, IN	Spokane, WA
Bryan, TX	Hendricks, IN	New Braunfels, TX	Springfield, IL
Buffalo, NY	Hernando Co., FL	New York City, NY	Syracuse, NY
Bullitt Co., KY	Hudson Valley, NY	Nicholasville, KY	Tallahassee, FL
Cambridge, MD	Huntsville, AL	Ontario Co., NY	Talledega, AL
Campbellsville, KY	Hurst, TX	Paducah, KY	Terre Haute, IN
Cape Girardeau, MO	Indianapolis, IN	Pampa, TX	Tioga Co., NY
Chattanooga, TN	Independence, MO	Panama City, FL	Tipton Co., IN
Cheyenne, WY	Jackson Co., MO	Pensacola, FL	Tuscaloosa, AL
College Station, TX	Lake Havasu, AZ	Prescott Valley, AZ	Tuscon, AZ
Conroe, TX	LaSalle, IL	Reno, NV	Vermillion Co., IN
Corpus Christi, TX	Lea Co., NM	Richland Parish, LA	Warren Co., NY



The workforce report documented the number of underemployed workers in the labor shed who would be available for an employer at various pay rates ranging from \$7.00 per hour or below to \$25.00 per hour or above and who have the skills, experience, and education to justify the desired pay rates. The table below shows that 25% (lower quartile) of the underemployed workers in the labor shed merit and would take a new job for \$11.50 per hour or less. In locations surveyed over the past eighteen months, the lowest desired pay rate in the lower quartile of underemployed workers was \$8.30 per hour or less, the median \$10.15 or less, and the highest desired pay rate was \$11.99 per hour or less.

**DESIRED WAGES (per hour) – LOWER QUARTILE
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS**

Desired Wage Labor Shed	Lowest Desired Wage Locations Surveyed Past 18 Months	Median Desired Wage Locations Surveyed Past 18 Months	Highest Desired Wage Locations Surveyed Past 18 Months
\$11.50 or Less	\$8.30 or Less	\$10.15 or Less	\$11.99 or Less

Those underemployed workers in the upper quartile have more education, better skills, and greater experience. Yet based on current pay rates, they are considered to be underemployed. In the labor shed, the underemployed individuals in the upper 25% can command \$21.01 per hour or more. In locations surveyed over the past eighteen months, the lowest desired pay rate in the upper quartile of underemployed workers was \$15.06 or more, the median \$18.75 or more, and the highest was \$23.90 per hour or more.

**DESIRED WAGES (per hour) – UPPER QUARTILE
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS**

Desired Wage Labor Shed	Lowest Desired Wage Locations Surveyed Past 18 Months	Median Desired Wage Locations Surveyed Past 18 Months	Highest Desired Wage Locations Surveyed Past 18 Months
\$21.01 or More	\$15.06 or More	\$18.75 or More	\$23.90 or More



The following series of charts compares the percentages of underemployed workers in the Blue Ridge Region who have experience in various fields of employment with the percentages of underemployed workers in locations surveyed over the past eighteen months who have the same type of experience. In the charts, the Blue Ridge Region is referred to as “labor shed”.

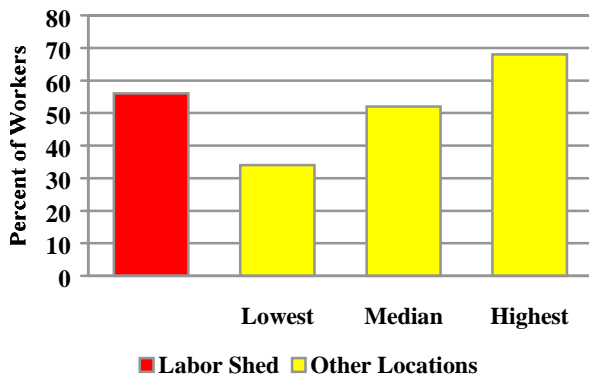
The experience charts are followed by skills charts, which compare the percentages of underemployed workers in the Blue Ridge Region who possess various types of employment skills with the percentages of underemployed workers in locations surveyed over the past eighteen months who possess the same skills. In the charts, the Blue Ridge Region is referred to as “labor shed”.



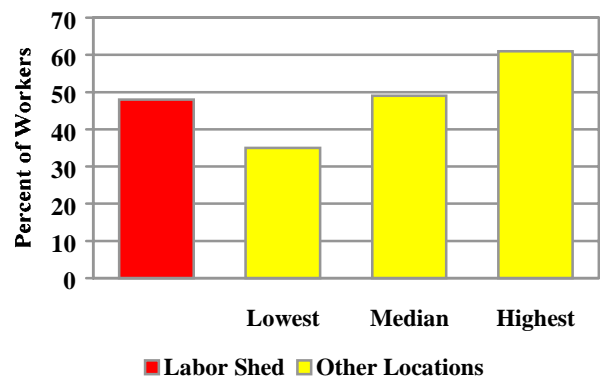
COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

**The Blue Ridge Region /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**

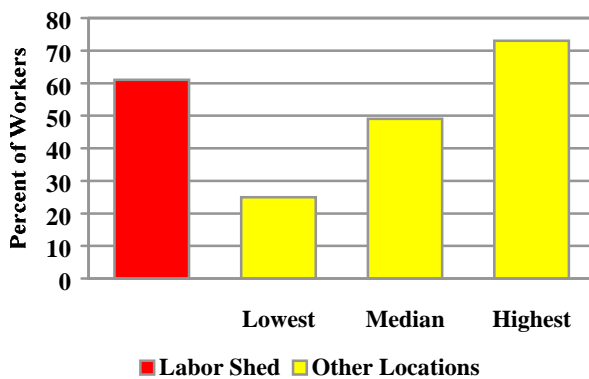
OFFICE / DATA / WORD PROCESSING



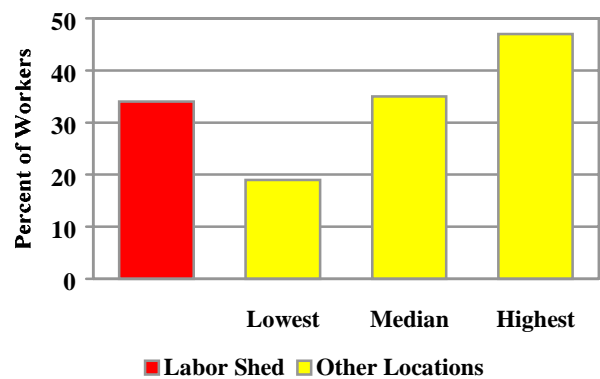
WAREHOUSE / DISTRIBUTION / TRANSPORTATION



MANUFACTURING / ASSEMBLY



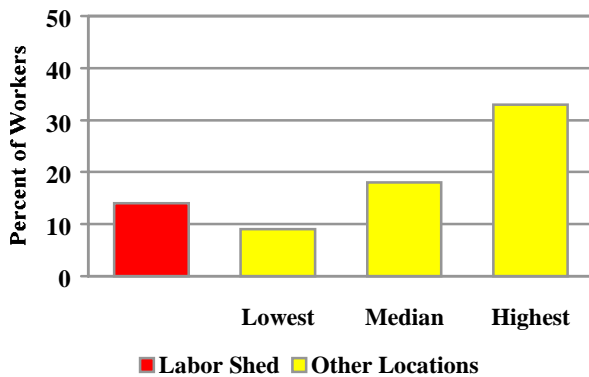
INDUSTRIAL OPERATIONS



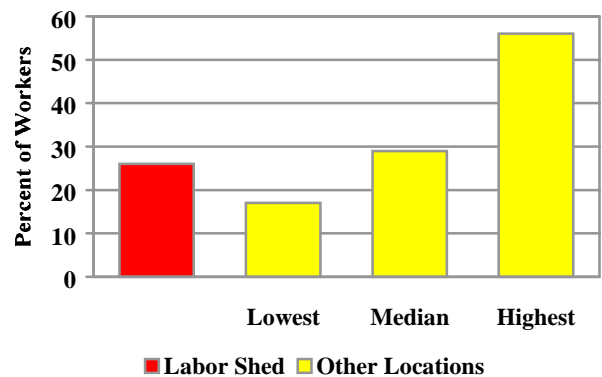
COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

**The Blue Ridge Region /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**

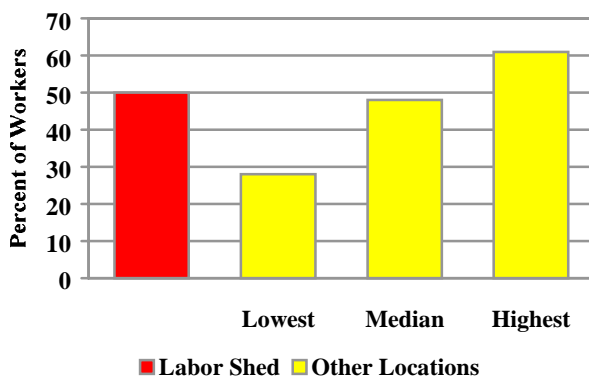
CALL CENTER



GOVERNMENT / EDUCATION



SALES

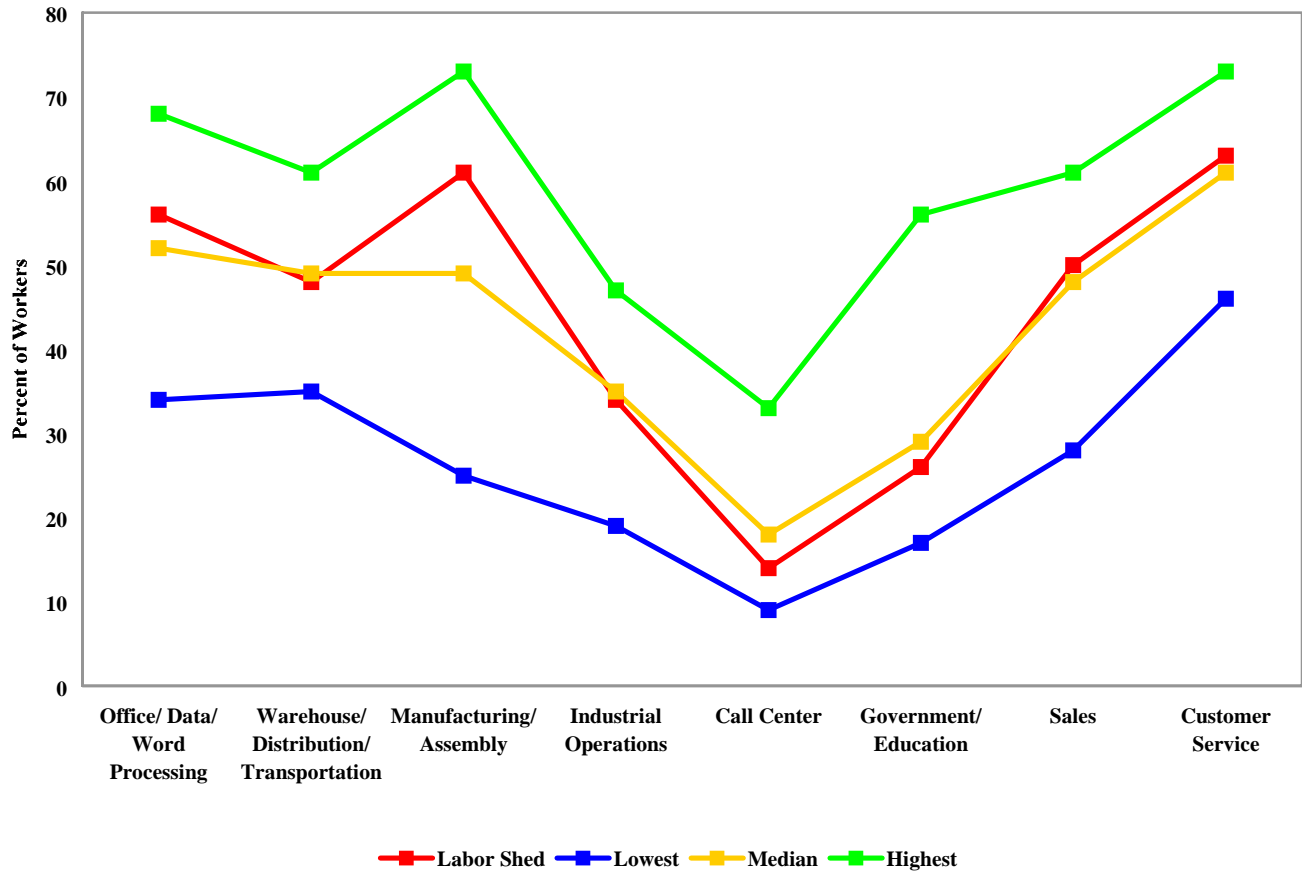


CUSTOMER SERVICE



**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS**

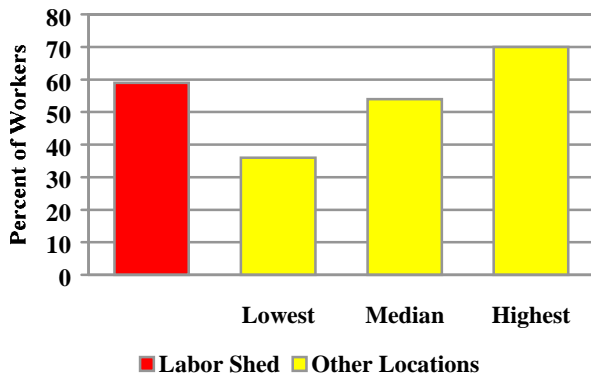
**The Blue Ridge Region /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**



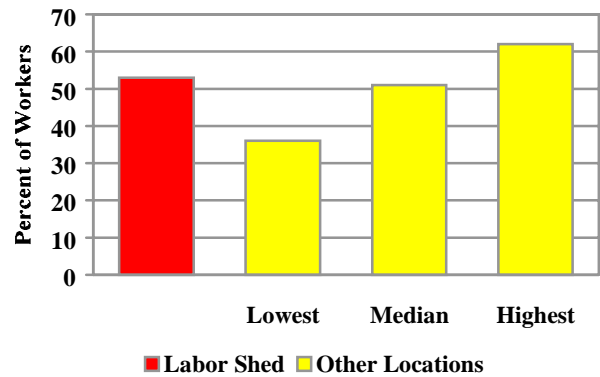
COMPARISON OF SKILLS UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

**The Blue Ridge Region /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**

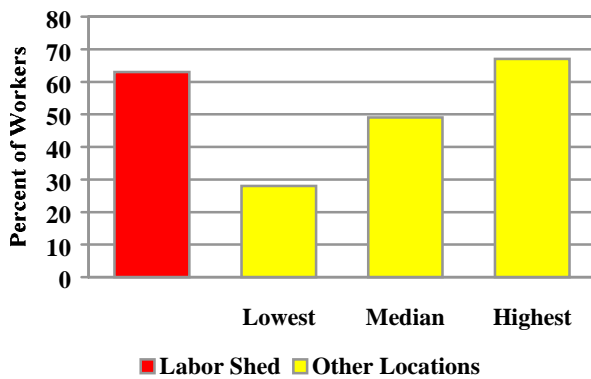
OFFICE / DATA / WORD PROCESSING



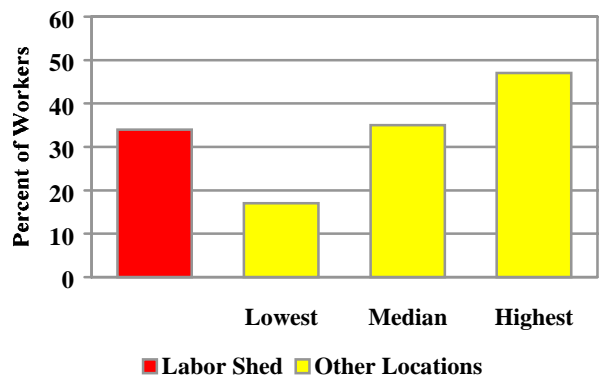
WAREHOUSE / MATERIALS HANDLING



MANUFACTURING / ASSEMBLY / FABRICATION



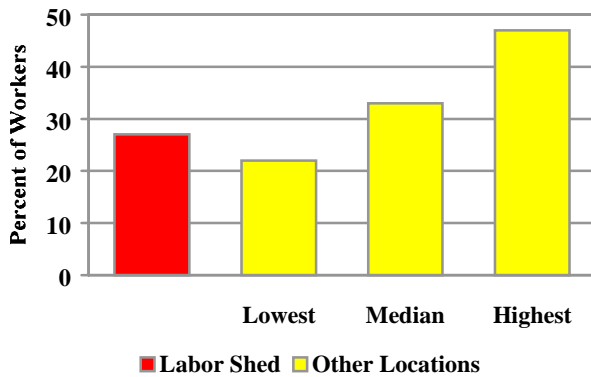
MACHINING / WELDING / OTHER INDUSTRIAL MACHINES



COMPARISON OF SKILLS UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS

The Blue Ridge Region / Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months

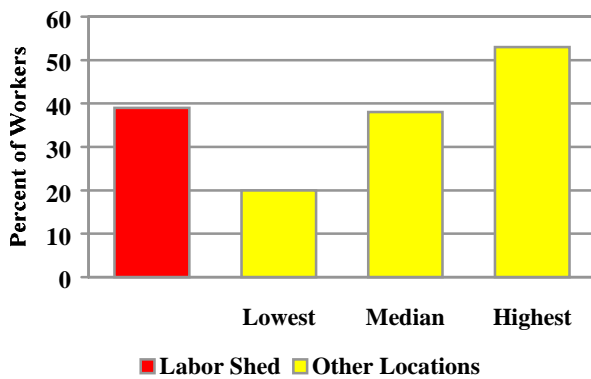
TELECOMMUNICATIONS



TECHNICIAN / QUALITY ASSURANCE



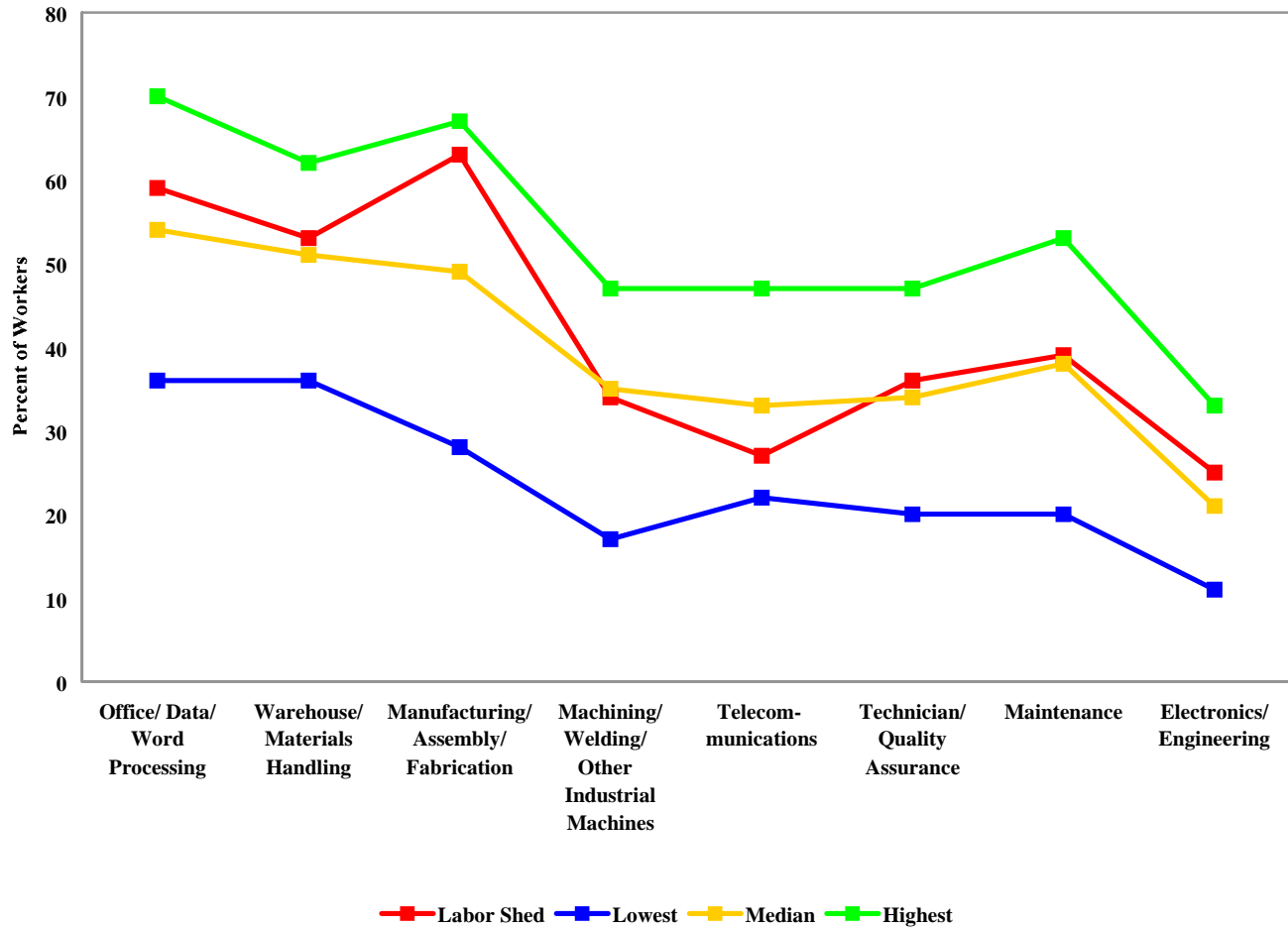
MAINTENANCE



ELECTRONICS / ENGINEERING



**SUMMARY COMPARISON OF SKILLS
UNDEREMPLOYED WORKERS
The Blue Ridge Region /
Locations Surveyed Over the Past 18 Months**



CLOSING REMARKS

The foregoing report represents an assessment of the underemployment that exists in the Blue Ridge Region. It includes a set of important interlocking measurements of the number of underemployed workers, their cost, skills, experience, education, reliability, productivity, and other related factors. The information allows the economic development professional and the site-selection team to view the area in comparison to other locations.

Attention should be given to the “Employers’ Views of the Blue Ridge Region Total Workforce” section of this report in which local employers’ views of the characteristics of local workers are compared with employers’ views in other locations where the identical questions have been asked in identical fashion.

Similarly, attention should be given to the final section of this report, “National Comparative Observations”, which compares, employing an identical methodology, the costs, experience, and skills of local underemployed workers with those underemployed workers in locations surveyed by The Pathfinders over the past eighteen months.

While the number of underemployed workers in the Blue Ridge Region, including their cost, skills, and experience, is the focus of this report, the data should be interpreted in a comparative perspective just as the corporate site selector will in deciding among competing locations.

For Informational Purposes:

The Blue Ridge Region Civilian Workforce	387,000
Largest Workforce Surveyed by The Pathfinders	3,452,000
Median Workforce Surveyed by The Pathfinders	130,650
Smallest Workforce Surveyed by The Pathfinders.....	3,350
Number of Locations Surveyed by The Pathfinders.....	233





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