

What Employers Want in Monterey County  
A REVIEW OF LITERATURE – April 2006  
by Ling Liang

**Literacy in Monterey County**

According to the Monterey County Business and Workforce Study, businesses in Monterey County are disappointed in the level of literacy and English speaking skills in their employees. Employers report a lack of appropriate skills as well as low levels of secondary and postsecondary educational attainment in their employees. On top of that, the business community is completely dissatisfied with the quality of the region's K-12 system.

The top four skills required by the mainstay industries in Monterey County include: a high school degree or GED, basic computer skills, a professional license or certificate, and customer service or sales skills.

**General: Literacy in the Workplace**

There are three suggested models for workplace literacy: workplace-specific (which focuses on language and literacy skills needed for specific jobs at a specific site), workplace-general (which focuses on general employment skills such as seeking clarification, complaining about unfair treatment, or organizing a committee, or on issues such as cross-cultural communication), and workplace clusters (where a number of jobs or vocations are clustered together according to the functions or skills they have in common).<sup>1</sup> While some programs advocate the need to focus on long-term processes rather than quick-fix solutions, some businesses prefer short term programs that can garner results quickly.

The following four categories of skills were developed by focusing on the question: "What are the skills employers want?": (1) individual competence including communication, comprehension, computation, and culture; (2) personal reliability including personal management, ethics, and vocabulary maturity; (3) economic adaptability including problem solving, learning, employability, and career development; and (4) group and organizational effectiveness including interpersonal skills, organizational skills, negotiation skills, creativity, and leadership.<sup>2</sup>

Few employers are looking for much more than basic literacy, but they do want workers who are "quick learners" and who have a "willingness to adapt and learn." Nevertheless, employers often cite inadequacies in basic skills, including: writing, reading, listening, the ability to

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<sup>1</sup> Isserlis, Janet. "Workplace Literacy Programs for Nonnative English Speakers."

<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9220/speakers.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Imel, Susan. "Workplace Literacy Programs." Eric Digest No. 70. <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-928/literacy.htm>

communicate, and mathematics, noting that these inadequacies appear as causes for poor worker morale and high turnover.<sup>3</sup>

**What Employers Want**

Employers want employees who can: <sup>4</sup>

- Read, write, and communicate in English.
- Do simple mathematics.
- Follow directions as well as "the rules" (policies/procedures) of the business.
- Be on time and ready to work.
- Dress appropriately for that job.
- Be respectful to your supervisor and fellow employees.
- Be productive and complete assignments.
- Maintain a good attitude with customers.
- Get along with other employees.
- Work as a team member.

**SECTORAL INFORMATION**

**Hospitality**

Of the 10,000 hospitality industry workers in Monterey County surveyed in the Hospitality Industry Labor Market Study, hotels employ 41%, restaurants employ 37%, lodging facilities employ 14%, golf courses employ 4%, and the wine industry employ 4%.<sup>5</sup> Around 41% of the jobs require no prior work experience.

There will be approximately 3,500 to 4,000 employees hired in the next 12 months, with 2,400 of these jobs requiring little or no experience. The three top basic employment skills required by employers are a positive willing attitude, the ability to work on a team, and customer service skills. English language skills were ranked sixth, behind willingness to work different shifts, and the ability to work independently. Out of the 209 hospitality industry businesses that were surveyed, 64 (32 % overall) provide tuition reimbursement for employees.

The following table is compiled for California and is only for food preparation and serving related occupations.

<u>Occupation Title</u>	<u>Recommended Education Level</u>	<u>2002 Estimated Employment</u>	<u>2012 Projected Employment</u>	<u>Total Annual Percent Change</u>	<u>2005 Mean Wage</u>
<u>Cooks, Short Order</u>	Short-term on-the-job training	26,600	29,700	1.1 %	\$ 9.23
<u>Food Preparation Workers</u>	Short-term on-the-job training	91,000	111,900	2.1 %	\$ 9.23
<u>Bartenders</u>	Short-term on-the-job training	45,700	49,700	0.8 %	\$ 8.85

<sup>3</sup> Ascher, Carol. "High School Graduates in Entry Level Jobs: What Do Employers Want?" Eric Digest No. 40. <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-928/high.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Workforce Development Center. <http://wdc.imperial.edu/EmployerWants.html>

<sup>5</sup> Information for this paragraph compiled from the Hospitality Industry Labor Market Study for Fall 2005, a study by the Monterey County Workforce Investment Board.

<a href="#">Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Inc</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	215,100	277,300	2.6 %	\$ 8.64
<a href="#">Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	86,800	103,800	1.8 %	\$ 8.81
<a href="#">Waiters and Waitresses</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	214,000	264,900	2.2 %	\$ 8.43
<a href="#">Food Servers, Nonrestaurant</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	17,400	19,000	0.9 %	\$ 10.01
<a href="#">Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	65,200	78,300	1.8 %	\$ 8.16
<a href="#">Dishwashers</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	59,700	67,600	1.3 %	\$ 8.22
<a href="#">Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	35,000	43,100	2.1 %	\$ 8.48
<a href="#">Cooks, Fast Food</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	59,100	64,700	0.9 %	\$ 8.18
<a href="#">Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria</a>	Long-term on-the-job training	25,300	25,300	0.0 %	\$ 12.65
<a href="#">Cooks, Private Household</a>	Long-term on-the-job training	200	200	0.0 %	\$ 13.69
<a href="#">Cooks, Restaurant</a>	Long-term on-the-job training	97,000	118,200	2.0 %	\$ 10.58
<a href="#">First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Food Preparation</a>	Work experience in a related occupation	73,600	88,600	1.9 %	\$ 13.73
<a href="#">Chefs and Head Cooks</a>	Post-secondary vocational training	11,100	13,600	2.1 %	\$ 19.69

\* Wage data represents California (No data available for Monterey County)<sup>6</sup>

\* Projection data represents California (No data available for Monterey County)

## **Agriculture**

Agriculture is a major employer in Monterey County, and there is a remarkable stability in farm-related employment data. Since 1983, employment on farms averaged 22 percent of the county's employment, and farm services (custom harvesters and labor contractors) accounted for an average 56 percent of the county's farm employment.<sup>7</sup>

<a href="#">Occupation Title</a>	<a href="#">Recommended Education Level</a>	<a href="#">2002 Estimated Employment</a>	<a href="#">2012 Projected Employment</a>	<a href="#">Total Annual Percent Change</a>	<a href="#">2005 Mean Wage</a>
<a href="#">First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Farming, Fishing</a>	Moderate-term on-the-job training	1,700	1,900	1.1 %	\$ 16.70
<a href="#">Agricultural Equipment Operators</a>	Moderate-term on-the-job training	1,100	1,400	2.4 %	\$ 9.75
<a href="#">Farmworkers, Farm and Ranch Animals</a>	Moderate-term on-the-job training	2,200	2,400	0.9 %	\$ 9.38
<a href="#">Forest and Conservation Workers</a>	Moderate-term on-the-job training	2,400	2,400	0.0 %	\$ 11.50
<a href="#">Fallers</a>	Moderate-term on-the-job training	600	600	0.0 %	\$ 24.50
<a href="#">Logging Equipment</a>	Moderate-term on-the-job	1,200	1,100	-0.9 %	\$ 16.70

<sup>6</sup> Monterey County Virtual One Stop.

[https://www.onestopmonterey.org/occanalyzerresults\\_onet.asp?session=occanalyzer&geo=0604000053](https://www.onestopmonterey.org/occanalyzerresults_onet.asp?session=occanalyzer&geo=0604000053)

<sup>7</sup> Philip Martin. "The Changing face of Central Coast Counties."

[http://migration.ucdavis.edu/cf/more.php?id=3\\_0\\_2\\_0](http://migration.ucdavis.edu/cf/more.php?id=3_0_2_0)

<a href="#">Operators</a>	training				
<a href="#">Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Green</a>	Long-term on-the-job training	10,900	13,700	2.3 %	\$ 8.39
<a href="#">Agricultural Inspectors</a>	Work experience in a related occupation	3,300	3,800	1.4 %	\$ 18.22
<a href="#">Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products</a>	Work experience in a related occupation	4,900	5,600	1.3 %	\$ 8.54

*\*Wage data represents California (No data available for Monterey County)<sup>8</sup>*

*\*Projection data represents California (No data available for Monterey County)*

## **Healthcare**

<b><u>Occupation Title</u></b>	<b><u>Recommended Education Level</u></b>	<b><u>2002 Estimated Employment</u></b>	<b><u>2012 Projected Employment</u></b>	<b><u>Total Annual Percent Change</u></b>	<b><u>2005 Mean Wage</u></b>
<a href="#">Home Health Aides</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	38,300	55,300	3.7 %	\$ 9.64
<a href="#">Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	100,200	121,100	1.9 %	\$ 11.69
<a href="#">Psychiatric Aides</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	1,700	2,000	1.6 %	\$ 11.78
<a href="#">Occupational Therapist Aides</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	400	600	4.1 %	\$ 14.88
<a href="#">Physical Therapist Aides</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	4,200	6,800	4.9 %	\$ 12.83
<a href="#">Medical Equipment Preparers</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	2,900	3,600	2.2 %	\$ 14.36
<a href="#">Pharmacy Aides</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	8,200	10,000	2.0 %	\$ 11.26
<a href="#">Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretaker</a>	Short-term on-the-job training	6,600	7,500	1.3 %	\$ 10.94
<a href="#">Dental Assistants</a>	Moderate-term on-the-job training	42,700	67,100	4.6 %	\$ 15.52
<a href="#">Medical Assistants</a>	Moderate-term on-the-job training	50,700	74,000	3.9 %	\$ 14.25
<a href="#">Medical Transcriptionists</a>	Post-secondary vocational training	8,100	9,400	1.5 %	\$ 17.92
<a href="#">Massage Therapists</a>	Post-secondary vocational training	5,900	7,300	2.2 %	\$ 15.53
<a href="#">Physical Therapist Assistants</a>	Associate degree	3,900	6,000	4.4 %	\$ 20.98
<a href="#">Occupational Therapist Assistants</a>	Associate degree	1,300	2,000	4.4 %	\$ 22.34

*\* Wage data represents California (No data available for Monterey County)<sup>9</sup>*

*\* Projection data represents California (No data available for Monterey County)*

## **Science/Technology**<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Monterey County Virtual One Stop.

[https://www.onestopmonterey.org/occanalyzerresults\\_onet.asp?session=occanalyzer&geo=0604000053](https://www.onestopmonterey.org/occanalyzerresults_onet.asp?session=occanalyzer&geo=0604000053)

<sup>9</sup> Monterey County Virtual One Stop.

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<sup>10</sup> Was not able to find similar information for Monterey County. Information for section taken from: Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division. "Preliminary Findings of the New Technicians Study." June 2001. <http://www.itiep.org/Reports/IT%20Technicians%20Labor%20Market%20Study.pdf>

The Employment Development Department (EDD), in conjunction with a consortium of 26 California Community Colleges located in the Bay Area and the Local Workforce Investment Boards of 12 Bay Area counties have partnered on a project to study the unmet needs of Bay Area employers for workers in “new technician” occupations. New technician occupations are based on relatively low-tech computer-related skill sets that can be found not only in high-tech firms, but also in all industries operating in today’s economy. New technician jobs typically require a high school education or some college, and pay in the range of \$12 to \$15 per hour. New technician occupations can include:

- Computer Support Specialist
- Computer and Software Support Technician
- Computer Network Technician
- Graphic Designer (Using Computer Graphics)
- Computer Aided Design Technician/Drafter

Each new technician position has its own set of education requirements in addition to a high school education or some college.

### **Non-Profit**

Nonprofits employed nearly 8,000 people in 2001 according to a study by the California Association of Nonprofits. This is similar in size to both the construction and manufacturing sectors in Monterey County.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> “For the Common Good: The Economic Impact of Monterey County’s Nonprofit Industry.”  
[http://www.alliancemonterey.org/images/econ\\_report\\_32pgs.pdf](http://www.alliancemonterey.org/images/econ_report_32pgs.pdf)

## **Bibliography**

### Websites:

Agland Investment Services. "Monterey County Agricultural Resource Guide." December 2002. [http://www.mcbusiness.org/file\\_depot/0-10000000/10000-20000/16786/conman/AgResourceGuide\\_2002.pdf](http://www.mcbusiness.org/file_depot/0-10000000/10000-20000/16786/conman/AgResourceGuide_2002.pdf)

The purpose of this guide is to identify the key research institutions, business support services, and education resources, within the greater Monterey region, that provide programs and/or services to the agricultural industry. Key activities and contact information are listed for each of the organizations included.

Ascher, Carol. "High School Graduates in Entry Level Jobs: What Do Employers Want?" Eric Digest No. 40. February 1988. <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-928/high.htm>

Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division. "Help Wanted: Making a Difference in Healthcare." May 2003. <http://www.calmis.ca.gov/file/occmisc/HelpWanted-Part1.pdf>

This report focuses on occupational and labor market information for health industry administrators, educators, and government policy makers.

Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division. "Preliminary Findings of the New Technicians Study." June 2001. <http://www.itiep.org/Reports/IT%20Technicians%20Labor%20Market%20Study.pdf>

The New Technicians Study is a collaborative effort to research the unmet needs of employers for workers to fill information technology jobs. The occupations included in this study are newly emerging or evolving from older occupations as a result of technological advances. The study includes a survey of employers in the Bay Area to obtain data related to wages, benefits, skills, required education and training, and other occupation-specific detail.

Imel, Susan. "Workplace Literacy Programs." Eric Digest No. 70. 1988. <http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-928/literacy.htm>

By focusing on the question "What are the skills employers want?," ASTD (Gainer 1988) has developed the following four categories of skills: (1) individual competence including communication, comprehension, computation, and culture; (2) personal reliability including personal management, ethics, and vocabulary maturity; (3) economic adaptability including problem solving, learning, employability, and career development; and (4) group and organizational effectiveness including interpersonal skills, organizational skills, negotiation skills, creativity, and leadership.

Isserlis, Janet. "Workplace Literacy Programs for Nonnative English Speakers." October 1991.

<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9220/speakers.htm>

Because of the growing numbers of nonnative English speakers in the U.S. workforce and their educational needs, some companies are beginning to provide training in literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills on the job. Employers' stated need for their employees' education is often related to specific skills, and expectations and stakes are often high.

National Alliance of Business. "Workplace Literacy Interview Guide."  
<http://literacy.kent.edu/illinois/wkplaceimages06/intervw.pdf>

This guide can be used to determine whether a workplace education provider has the skills to develop and deliver a successful workplace literacy program that meets company training needs. The guide was developed from a list of Workplace Literacy Best Practice Guidelines constructed by nationally recognized workplace literacy professionals, business people, and union representatives.