

JOB VACANCIES

in Philippine industry and services sectors

... a closer look at hard-to-fill occupations
(2nd of a three-part series)

This LABSTAT Updates is the second in a three-part series that presents the highlights of the 2009/2010 BLES Integrated Survey (BITS) module entitled Occupational Shortages and Surpluses. The BITS is a nationwide sample survey covering 6,780 establishments with 20 or more employed persons in the industry and services sectors. The reference period covered the months from January 2009 to June 2010.

This issue presents: (1) top hard-to-fill vacancies by occupation groups sorted by number of vacancies; (2) reasons why vacancies were difficult to fill; and (3) duration of recruitment. In this survey, **hard-to-fill vacancies** were defined as vacancies for which establishments found difficulties in recruitment.

Number of vacancies went up by 34.1%...

- As noted in Part I of this three-part series, two-fifths (40.6% or 9,637) of the total 23,723 establishments covered in the survey had job openings at any point in time between January 2009 and June 2010. More specifically, the total number of vacancies available for placements stood at 276,940.

This figure represents an increase of 35.8% from the 203,972 vacancies reported in the 2007/2008 BITS (See LABSTAT Updates Vol. 14 No. 24, April 2010).

One in every five vacancies was hard to fill...

- Of the total vacancies reported, nearly one-fifth (19.0% or 52,595) were perceived by the respondents as hard to fill while the majority (81.0% or 224,345) were considered as easy to fill.
- It is significant to note that the proportion of hard-to-fill vacancies in the 2009/2010 BITS was considerably lower compared with the figure in the 2007/2008 BITS which stood at more than one-third (35.3% or 72,060) of total vacancies. This suggests that labor market adjustments have occurred either on the supply or demand side which made some hard-to-fill vacancies now easier to fill up.

Item	Number	Percent
Total Vacancies	276,940	100.0
- Hard-to-fill vacancies	52,595	19.0
- Easy-to-fill vacancies	224,345	81.0

Source: BLES, 2009/2010 BITS.

Fewer hard-to-fill vacancies noted in all major occupation groups...

- Results of the 2009/2010 BITS revealed a shorter list of occupations in the “top hard-to-fill vacancy” in all occupation groups as compared with the results of the previous survey.

Top 5 Hard-to-Fill Vacancies (Managers and Supervisors)	
1. Sales and marketing managers	774
2. Production supervisors	542
3. Finance and administration managers	515
4. Production and operations managers – hotels and restaurants	291
5. Production and operations managers in business services	162

Major Occupation Group	Number	Percent
All Occupations	52,595	100.0
Corporate executives, managers, managing proprietors and supervisors	4,538	8.6
Professionals	18,040	34.3
Technical and associate professionals	10,215	19.4
Clerks	6,304	12.0
Service workers and shop market sales workers	2,886	5.5
Farmers, forestry workers and fishermen	-	-
Craft and related trades workers	6,699	12.7
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	1,313	2.5
Laborers	2,599	4.9

*Note: Details do not add up to total due to rounding.
Source: BLES, 2009/2010 BITS.*

Managers and Supervisors

- Managerial and supervisory positions comprised only a small proportion (8.6% or 4,538) of total hard-to-fill vacancies – nevertheless, these vacancies were among the hardest to fill in terms of the number of qualified applicants. The top five in the list is shown below.

Professionals

- Professional workers comprised the biggest category of occupations in the hard-to-fill list at 34.3% or 18,040. The top ten hardest-to-fill vacancies were dominated by engineering professionals from various fields.
- Of the ten occupations included in the list, seven (7) were found in the 2007/2008 BITS while the other three (3) were new entries. Those that were dropped out of the list were computer programmers, computer engineers and HRD professionals. On the other hand, the new entries were medical technologists, pharmacists, and teaching professionals for the handicapped and the disabled.
- Accountants remained at the top of the list while electronics and communications engineers ranked second – a big leap from its 9th position in the previous survey. Systems analysts and designers which previously ranked second fell to the third place.

Note: In this report, occupations in the “top hard-to-fill vacancies” list refer to occupations where the number of hard-to-fill vacancies outnumbered the easy-to-fill ones. For example, accountant and auditor are part of the “top hard-to-fill” list because there were more respondents who regarded the occupations as hard to fill (2,421) than those who considered the same as easy to fill (1,653). On the other hand, computer programmer is not part of the “top hard-to-fill” list since there were far more easy-to-fill vacancies (2,881) than hard-to-fill ones (995).

Top 10 Hard-to-Fill Vacancies <i>(Professionals)</i>	
1. Accountants and auditors	2,421
2. Electronics and communications engineers	1,774
3. Systems analysts and designers	1,513
4. Mechanical engineers	927
5. Electrical engineers	798
6. Industrial engineers	696
7. Medical technologists	645
8. Pharmacists	455
9. Teaching professionals for the handicapped and disabled	186
10. Chemical engineers	138

Technicians and Associate Professionals

- Technicians and associate professionals accounted for the second biggest number of occupations in the hard-to-fill list (19.4% or 10,215).
- Technical and commercial sales representative was the most difficult to recruit and with the biggest demand at 4,684.
- Two occupations in the top five list - estate agents and decorators and commercial designers - came from the booming real estate industry.

Top 5 Hard-to-Fill Vacancies <i>(Technicians and Associate Professionals)</i>	
1. Technical and commercial sales representatives	4,684
2. Buyers	344
3. Electrical engineering technicians	337
4. Estate agents	177
5. Decorators and commercial designers	79

Clerks

- Of the total 72,860 job openings for clerks, only 8.7% (6,304) were considered as hard to fill.
- Also, only two occupations entered the top hard-to-fill vacancy list – coding, proof-reading and related clerks, and calculating machine operators.

- Call-center agents who accounted for the biggest share of the hard-to-fill vacancies in the 2007/2008 BITS were now out of the list. This is so because the great majority of total openings were perceived as easy to fill (95.2% or 38,635) with only a handful considered as hard to fill (4.8% or 1,929).

Top 2 Hard-to-Fill Vacancies <i>(Clerks)</i>	
1. Coding, proof reading and related clerks	77
2. Calculating machine operators	4

Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers

- This occupation group accounted for only a small proportion (5.5% or 2,886) of the total hard-to-fill vacancies.
- Of this number, only three made it to the top hard-to-fill vacancies list: travel attendants and travel stewards; stall and market salespersons; and travel guides.

Top 3 Hard-to-Fill Vacancies <i>(Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers)</i>	
1. Travel attendants and travel stewards	431
2. Stall and market salespersons	278
3. Travel guides	9

Craft and Related Trades Workers

- Craft and related trades workers are vital in the industry sector particularly in manufacturing. Largely skill-based, recruitment difficulties were moderately high for this occupation - with more than one-third (34.6% or 6,699) of the total 19,386 job openings considered as hard to fill by employers.

- The occupations in the top five list were a mixture of occupations consisting of pattern makers and cutters (mainly in textile); building maintenance, scaffolder and demolition men; welders; auto mechanics; and handicraft workers.

Top 5 Hard-to-Fill Vacancies <i>(Craft and Related Trades Workers)</i>	
1. Textile, leather, and related pattern makers and cutters	779
2. Building maintenance, scaffolder and demolition men	332
3. Welders and flamecutters	319
4. Motor vehicle mechanics and related trades workers	262
5. Handicraft workers in textile, leather and related materials	215

Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers

- Recruitment for this occupation group was not as difficult compared with craft and related trades workers. Hard-to-fill vacancies numbered only 1,313 or barely 2.4% of the total 39,787 openings for this occupation group.
- The occupations in the top five (5) hard-to-fill vacancies were as follows:

Top 5 Hard-to-Fill Vacancies <i>(Plant and Machine Operators and Assemblers)</i>	
1. Earth moving and related plant operators	122
2. Incinerator, water treatment and related operators	36
3. Industrial-robot operators	13
4. Meat and fish processing operators	11
5. Paper pulp plant operators	6

Reasons for Difficulties in Recruitment

- When asked why vacancies were hard to fill, about one-fifth (43.4%) of total responses cited the shortage of applicants with the right competencies as the biggest recruitment challenge. This was followed by applicant's expectation of high salary (19.5%) and the applicant's lack of work experience (15.4%).
- Other reasons cited were: absence of job applicant (7.3%); location or work schedule problems (4.5%); lack of professional license/TESDA certification (4.0%); competition from overseas employment (2.9%); and other reasons (2.4%).

TABLE 3 - Reasons Why Vacancies were "Hard to Fill", Philippines: January 2009-June 2010		
Reason	Number	Percent
TOTAL	15,920*	100.0
Lack of competency	6,904	43.4
Expectation of high salary	3,104	19.5
Lack of years of experience	2,444	15.4
No applicant	1,156	7.3
Location/work schedule problem	713	4.5
Lack of license/certification	630	4.0
Preference to work abroad	459	2.9
Others	387	2.4
No reason indicated	123	0.8

**Refers to the total number of responses in all occupation titles identified/listed by respondents as hard to fill.
Source: BLES, 2009/2010 BITS.*

Hard-to-fill vacancies took an average of almost four (4) months to fill...

- The average duration of recruitment for hard-to-fill vacancies was computed at 3.7 months for all occupational groups.
- Three (3) of the major occupation groups with hard-to-fill-vacancies reported average recruitment period higher than the overall average.
- The longest average duration was reported for corporate executives, managers, managing proprietors and supervisors at 4.4 months while the shortest was accounted for by clerks at 2.7 months.

TABLE 4 - Average Recruitment Period of "Hard-to-Fill" Vacancies, Philippines: January 2009-June 2010	
Major Occupation Group	Average Duration (In months)
All Occupations	<u>3.7</u>
Corporate executives, managers, managing proprietors and supervisors	4.4
Professionals	4.1
Technical and associate professionals	3.2
Clerks	2.7
Service workers and shop market sales workers	3.4
Farmers, forestry workers and fishermen	-
Craft and related trades workers	3.1
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	3.2
Laborers	3.8

Source: BLES, 2009/2010 BITS.

FOR INQUIRIES:

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