

Employer Vacancy Feedback Questionnaire: Analysis of January - June 2004 Data

Introduction

The National Call Centre in Edenderry commenced, in June 2003, a process of making follow-up telephone contacts with a sample of employers that had earlier notified them of vacancies. The aim was to contact 100 employers a month on a random sample basis and to obtain feedback on the service provided by FÁS Employment Services, and whether employers had filled their vacancies. It was agreed at a meeting between Planning and Research and Employment Services in January 2004 that the survey would be continued on an on-going basis and analysed by Planning and Research. This would form an important source of customer feedback for the Employment Services quality system. A short report was produced in March 2004 which analysed the data collected in 2003. This report continues the process for the first half of 2004.

Data

An Excel file of the results of the survey for January to June 2004 was provided by Ms Margaret Toale to Planning and Research in July 2004. The file contained 387 completed questionnaires. All of the companies interviewed were selected via random sampling using a research randomizer available online at www.randomizer.org.

Customer Feedback

Companies were asked four questions in relation to their satisfaction with the Call Centre. In each case they were asked to score the service on a scale from one (low) to five (high). Table 1 shows the results. (Note that questions two to four in the table related to customers that had contacted the Call Centre by telephone, so excluded FAX or internet contacts.) The overall service question was meant to be completed for all contacts, but there were a number of non-respondents.

Table 1
Summary of Customer Feedback Scores

	1	2	3	4
Score	Overall Service	Useful Guidance	Courteous, Professional Operator	Prompt Telephone Answering
1 (low)	1	1	1	4
2	1	5	1	3
3	36	30	12	10
4	127	86	69	70
5 (high)	153	140	188	178
Total Responses	318	262	271	265
Average Score	4.35	4.37	4.63	4.56

The results show a very positive level of satisfaction with the service provided by the Call Centre. Against all four measures, the highest number of companies gave a five rating. The average score was over four, and there were very few low ratings.

Vacancy Filling

There were three questions asked about vacancy filling. These were: number of applications, was the vacancy successfully filled, and did the selected candidate come through FÁS. Table 2 shows the number of applications made (companies were asked to specify in a range).

**Table 2
No. of Applications Received**

Range	No.
0-3	311
4-10	46
11-19	12
20+	18

Of the 387 companies that responded, 226 had successfully filled their vacancies (58%), while the other 161 (42%) had not. A cross-analysis of these vacancies with whether they were flagged as Work Permits is presented in Table 3. The analysis shows that Work Permit vacancies were much more difficult to fill (28% filled) compared to other vacancies (58% filled).

**Table 3
Vacancy Filling and Work Permits**

Vacancy Filled	Work Permit Flagged		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	17	209	226
No	44	117	161
Total	61	326	387

Nearly one fifth (17%) of companies did not know if the selected candidate was referred by FÁS. Of the remainder, a third of the companies had filled their vacancies with FÁS-referred candidates.

Other Questions

All companies were asked if they would use the FÁS service again, and 380 out of 387 said that they would. This is a very positive response. They were also invited to make any comments on the telephone service provided by FÁS. About 100 respondents made some comment – mostly positive, but with a mixture of other comments including negative ones regarding the use of the website, the quality of applicants etc. As stated in the previous report, it is not possible to analyse these comments statistically.

Comparison with previous survey

As the surveys continue to be carried out over time, long-term trends in customer feedback and vacancy filling can be monitored. Table 4 compares the average customer feedback scores from the last report (which covered the last six months of 2003) with the scores from this report (on the first six months of 2004). The high positive scores found in 2003 were maintained in the first half of 2004. In each of the indicators (overall service, guidance, promptness and courtesy), the average scores have increased.

Table 4
Customer Feedback Comparison

	Average score 2003	Average score 2004
Overall service	4.23	4.35
Guidance	4.21	4.37
Promptness	4.54	4.56
Courtesy	4.60	4.63

Table 5 compares the percentage of vacancies that were filled, how many were filled by FÁS candidates (where known), the proportion of vacancies that were flagged for work permits and the percentage of work permit vacancies that were filled. The percentage of vacancies filled has decreased from 67% to 58%. The percentage of vacancies filled by a FÁS client has decreased from 60% to 33%, which is a significant drop. This can perhaps be attributed to sampling error - the absolute number of vacancies filled by a FÁS candidate in 2004 was 54. Future surveys can determine whether this is a trend.

The percentage of vacancies which were flagged for work permits declined from 21% to 16%. This reflects the overall trend in all vacancies. The percentage of work permit vacancies filled has also declined from 43% to 28%.

Table 5
Vacancy Filling and Work Permits Comparison

	June – Dec 2003	Jan – June 2004
% all vacancies filled	67	58
% filled by FÁS candidate	60	33
% work permit flagged	21	16
% work permit flagged filled	43	28

Next Steps

Some modifications to the questionnaire are being made. For instance, the question on the number of applications received is being altered to allow for the identification of companies who received no applications for a vacancy. The next report will include this and any other modification.

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