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Article: Honesty Most Desirable Employee Attribute

Source: Vancouver Sun, October 28, 2004
Brian Morton

Don't even think about fibbing to your prospective employer or telling a whopper when citing your credentials in an attempt to get a new job.

That's the key finding in a Business Council of B.C. report that found business leaders place honesty and ethical behavior at the top of their lists when searching out new employees.

"That [the preference for honesty] was always there, but it has not had such a high ranking as [it did] this year," Ed Wong, vice-president for education partnerships for the BCBC, said in an interview Wednesday.

"I think there was a lot of bad behavior highlighted by such things as the Enron scandal, and that moved [honesty] to the top of the list. Clearly, they want employees they can trust."

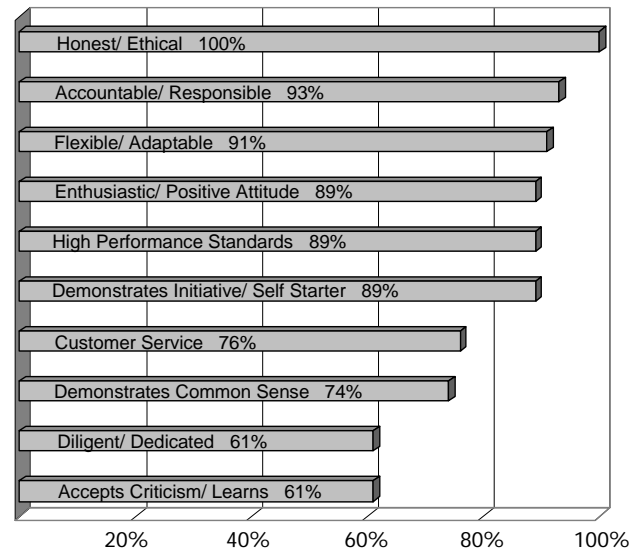
The study, 2004 Biennial Skills and Attributes Survey Report, asked business leaders to identify their key requirements in hiring new personnel over the next 12 months.

The report found that in the current work environment, workers who are honest and ethical with good interpersonal skills are valued most. Not only that, the report found, it held true for every respondent in the survey.

Other top attributes for employees included an enthusiastic attitude, high performance standards, and strong leadership, teamwork and problem-solving skills.

Wong said another thing the survey identified is that employees often don't research the company they want to work with: "The one thing they don't seem to know a lot about is the company or the industry they want to work in. They [companies] want people who have done their homework."

What Employers are Looking For



Source: Business Council of British Columbia, 2004 Biennial Skills & Attributes Survey, October 2004, www.bcbs.com

The survey asked employers to identify their requirements, BCBC said. The findings were then cross-tabulated against five occupational groups, classified by education and training requirements.

BCBC president Jerry Lampert said the council wants British Columbians to capitalize on available positions. "With ... one million jobs becoming available in the coming decade, this informative survey is an invaluable resource for job seekers," he said in a prepared statement.

The survey also found that students should take advantage of co-op, summer work terms and internships to gain work experience, as well as participate in extra-curricular activities and community work to develop leadership skills.