



2016 Employee Survey Results

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Summary

The Brookings Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) recently sent out an Employee Survey to better understand why people choose to live, work and play in Brookings. The survey results will help guide BEDC in developing retention and recruitment strategies.

The survey was sent out in August to Brookings-based companies. Those companies were asked to disperse the survey to their employees. A total of 934 people completed the survey, which represents more than an adequate sample size of the Brookings area workforce of 18,400.

Of the 934 respondents, 66 percent were women and 34 percent were men. The respondents represented a wide range of occupations, industries and income levels. Thirty-four percent classified themselves as an Adult (single or married) with young children; 24 percent were mid to late career with no children or empty nester; 18 percent were early to mid-career with no children; 16 percent were Adults (single or married) with older dependent children; six percent were student/young adult; and one percent were of retirement age.

The respondents were highly educated with 63 percent having a bachelor's, graduate or professional degree; 16 percent have an Associate's degree or other certification, training; 15 percent have some college or technical school, but no degree; and seven percent having a high school diploma only.

Living in or outside Brookings

Most respondents live in Brookings (67%) versus only 33 percent who don't live in the community. Of the 33 percent who don't live in Brookings, the majority live in a smaller community near Brookings including Volga, Elkton, Aurora, Arlington, or on a farm outside of city limits. Five percent live in Sioux Falls.

When asked why those 33 percent don't live in Brookings, 40 percent said they prefer a smaller town or living in the country and 28 percent said because of the high cost of housing/living and lack of housing options.

Of those who don't live in Brookings, but would like to, the majority (85%) said they would need single family homes.

The majority (51%) of those who live in Brookings have lived here for 11 or more years. Nineteen percent have lived here 3 – 5 years; 17 percent have lived here for 6 – 10 years; 10 percent have lived here for 1 – 2 years; and 3 percent have lived here for less than a year.

If respondents moved to Brookings within the last five years, 44 percent said they moved here because of a job/career; 43 percent because of SDSU/attended college; and 11 percent said they moved here for family/spouse.

Those who recently moved to Brookings were asked what they liked about their previous community that Brookings is lacking. Twenty-five percent said shopping/Target/retail options; 9 percent said restaurant/dining options; four percent said another grocery store option; and four percent said more affordable housing options.

Affordable Housing

Respondents were asked what they considered to be an affordable range of monthly rent or mortgage payments. Thirty-nine percent said between \$501 - \$800 per month; and 31 percent said between \$801 - \$1,100 per month.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under \$500/month	15.72%	139
\$501 - \$800/month	38.57%	341
\$801 - \$1,100/month	31.11%	275
\$1,101 - \$1,400/month	12.33%	109
\$1,401 - \$1,700	1.58%	14
\$1,701+	0.68%	6
Total		884

Seventy-one percent believe Brookings does not have enough affordable housing options. Many commented that housing prices are much higher in Brookings than other larger cities in South Dakota. Other comments included the level of income doesn't match the cost of living in Brookings.

Daycare

Respondents were asked if they think there are enough daycare options in Brookings. Fifty-four percent said there are not enough daycare options in Brookings. Many commented that they would like to see additional childcare centers with extended hours. Other comments included that there aren't enough daycare options for infants.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	45.92%	180
No	54.08%	212
Total		392

Employment

Most Brookings workers have a short commute with 56 percent having ten minutes or less commute, and 24 percent having a commute time between 11 and 20 minutes.

Workers in Brookings learned about their current job through a variety of ways, with the most popular being through friends and family, followed by online job search engine, internal job posting and company website. Other comments included the Department of Labor, job fairs, recruiter, and industry specific job board. *Respondents could choose more than one answer.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
Newspaper	12.80%	113
Radio	0.79%	7
Social media	2.60%	23
Online job search engine	17.55%	155
Company website	16.31%	144
Internal job posting	16.65%	147
Networking	11.78%	104
Friends/Family	35.67%	315
Other (please specify)	12.91%	114
Total Respondents: 883		

Seventy-six percent of respondents say there are enough job opportunities in Brookings. Comments included not enough professional-level jobs and wages need to increase.

Those who changed jobs within the last five years say they left their last employer because of a better job opportunity (37%); better pay (14%); poor management (12%); and better benefits (6%).

A whopping 92 percent said they have job security in their current position, while only eight percent said they did not.

Respondents were asked what unique benefits they would like to see their employer offer. Of the 473 respondents, 16 percent said they want an increase in pay/bonus; 14 percent said they were happy with their current benefits; 13 percent said they would like better, more affordable healthcare insurance; and 12 percent said daycare/maternity leave. Other comments included: paid sick leave, gym/wellness membership, more vacation time, discounts, and a flexible schedule.

Why do they stay with their current employer? Top reasons include that they love what they do for work and the people/co-workers. *Respondents could choose more than one answer.*

Answer Choices	Responses	
Company culture / atmosphere	47.16%	423
Flexibility in hours or schedule	49.05%	440
Pay	43.14%	387
Benefits	49.50%	444
People/co-workers	57.41%	515
I love what I do for work!	60.20%	540
I'm looking to leave my current employer	4.24%	38
Total Respondents: 897		

Training

Respondents were asked if they would obtain further education that could advance their career and/or wage. Fifty-seven percent said yes; 25 percent said no; and 18 percent said maybe.

If their employer has funding available for training or continuing education, do they take advantage of this benefit? Fifty-eight percent said yes and 25 percent said no. Eighteen percent said their employer doesn't have funding available for continuing education.

The top types of training or classes that would benefit them include: management, leadership, and accounting.

When asked if they would take advantage of a 2-year technical or community college degree if offered in Brookings, 66 percent said no and 34 percent said yes.

Retirement

Respondents were asked when they see themselves retiring. Thirty-nine percent said they will retire in 26 years or later, followed by 21 percent within 16 – 25 years.

Answer Choices	Responses	
0 - 5 years	10.76%	94
6 - 10 years	10.30%	90
11 - 15 years	10.53%	92
16 - 25 years	20.59%	180
26+ years	39.13%	342
I don't see myself retiring	8.70%	76
Total		874

Respondents were asked if they see themselves working part-time after retirement. Forty-six percent said yes, 43 percent said maybe, and 11 percent said no.

Do they see themselves retiring in Brookings? About Forty-seven percent said maybe; 29 percent said no; 25 percent said yes. Comments included: Depends on where their family is and they to want to move somewhere warmer.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	24.94%	218
No	28.60%	250
Maybe	46.45%	406
Total		874