

CHARTER REVIEW REPORT SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The PIC Board and Workforce Development Committee approve the chartering of the career centers in Boston, in partnership with Mayor Menino. The Employment and Training Systems Committee designs and oversees the annual Charter Review process.

For the re-chartering process conducted in FY'06, which resulted in the granting of new, three-year charters to the career centers (FY'07-FY'09), the Committee asked the centers to prepare Strategic Plans that outlined goals, and activities to achieve those goals over that period. The goals identified by each center in that plan, the progress on those goals in FY'08, and the career centers' progress on Opportunities for Improvement identified by the PIC, formed the basis of this year's Charter Review activities and reports. Career centers also were asked to provide an analysis of their recruitment and engagement activities with their business customers, to set goals for FY'09 and describe the means to achieve them.

SYSTEM THEMES

Through career center Strategic Plans, Site Visit presentations and customers satisfaction measures a variety of themes emerged across the system.

1. **Continuity of focus:** Each career center maintained its focus on goals it identified in its three-year plan and in last year's review.
2. **Expanding external collaborations:** Boston Career Link (BCL) partnered with several new training providers and community based organizations to offer new services; JobNet deepened its relationships with existing community partners to capitalize on economic development opportunities and to provide enhanced services at community sites; The Work Place (TWP) created new relationships with Adult Basic Education providers in an effort to develop more successful referrals for its customers.
3. **Increased use of volunteers:** BCL and TWP expanded and formalized relationships with organizations and businesses that provided volunteers to staff the resource libraries and provide workshops, resume review and other services.
4. **Institutionalization of innovation:** Programs and initiatives at each center that were developed as "innovations" last year and were successful were institutionalized this year.
5. **Utilization of resources of lead organization:** BCL collaborated with Goodwill's development department to secure resources for infrastructure improvements; JobNet used e-learning resources of the Division of Career Services, its lead partner, for staff development; TWP's CQI implemented CQI training in collaboration with Jewish Vocational Service.
6. **Improvements in customer service:** The key job seeker indicators of 1) overall satisfaction, 2) referral of others, 3) how they felt they were treated, 4) opinion of staff and 5) availability of assistance, all showed improvements.

7. **Diversity of customer needs:** Volume has been relatively stable for the last several years (FY'05: 16,372; FY'06: 16,260; FY'07: 16,500). However, the diversity of customer, career center staff must provide services for customers representing the full spectrum of educational attainment, racial and ethnic diversity and English language proficiency. They must also service populations with mental health, substance abuse and other challenges to employment.

SYSTEM RESULTS¹

Customer Satisfaction: PIC staff conducted focus groups and point-of-service interviews with job seekers and focus groups and surveys with business customers. A total of 332 customers provided feedback: 287 job seekers and 45 businesses.

Job seeker customer satisfaction was uniformly high across the system: 97% were either “very satisfied” (55%) or “satisfied” (42%) with their experience; 96% of these customers would recommend the centers to friends or family members.

This is not to say that there were not opportunities for improvement: 15% of customers had had problems with slow or malfunctioning computers and/or internet connections; 10% of participants complained about telephones; 14% wanted more frequent individual contact with counselors and more post-workshop assistance in applying the information and skills learned in workshops to their individual situations.

Business customers were generally pleased with their experiences with the career centers; 86% said they would continue to use the centers and 90% said they would refer colleagues. Customer service and recruitment events were the centers’ greatest strengths according to participating businesses. The only significant opportunity for improvement was better preparation or education of applicants for interviews.

Volume, Demographics, Hires, Wages & Job Quality: The Boston Career Centers served 17,942 customers during FY'07. This represents a 2% increase over FY'06 (+339) when 17,603 customers were served. There were increases of 502 and 115 customers at The Work Place and JobNet respectively, and a decline of 278 customers at BCL. The proportion of unemployed rose slightly from 90.8% to 91.6% and there were virtually no demographic changes.

The centers documented 2,799 hires in FY'07 representing 537 additional positions or a 24% increase over FY'06. This follows an 8% decline between FY'05 and FY'06. This increase was distributed among the centers: BCL, +155; JobNet, +138; The Work Place, +244. The career center follow-up report supplements the state wage match report which does not provide hourly wage or benefit information. The state wage match regularly reports placement rates of approximately 70% for Boston’s career centers.

The proportion of those hired into full-time jobs rose from 80% to 81% across the system with the largest increase coming at JobNet (76% to 80%). Eighty percent (80%) of BCL’s customers also were hired into full time positions. At 83%, The Work Place led the system on this measure.

The proportion of jobs offering benefits rose slightly from 60% to 61% with the largest increase coming at JobNet (70% to 75%) which also led in this category. Boston Career Link increased from 57% to 60% and The Work Place declined from 56% to 51%.

The average wage rose from \$13.08 to \$13.47 and the median wage rose from \$11.00 to \$11.52 per hour. The largest increases in both these categories came at JobNet (average wage: \$13.35 to \$14.17; median wage: \$11.00 to \$12.00). Both Boston Career Link and JobNet posted median wages of \$12.00 with TWP’s median wage at \$11.00.

¹ Charts related to customer satisfaction, volume and hire, wage and job quality data are provided in the Attachment.

INDIVIDUAL CAREER CENTER “BRIEFS”

Boston Career Link

Customer Satisfaction: BCL continued to maintain a strong level of customer satisfaction: 97% of customers described themselves as satisfied (very satisfied: 40%; satisfied: 57%). Ninety eight percent (98%) said that they had or would refer family, friends or colleagues to the center.

Hire & Wage Outcomes: BCL obtained wage and hour information from 704 job placed customers in FY’07, a 28% increase. Based on direct career center follow-up the placement rate rose from 13% to 17%.

Job quality overall increased between FY’06 and FY’07. A slight decline in the proportion of full time hires (81% to 80%) was offset by increases in jobs with benefits offered (57% to 60%), and increases in both the average wage (\$12.07 to \$12.54) and median wage (\$11.25 to \$12.00).

Summary Assessment: BCL’s **strengths** included: 1) its continued capacity building through the use of volunteers, 2) its increasingly sophisticated use of labor market information to target its activities with businesses and guide job seekers; 3) expansion of its services to job seekers including “drop-in” hours for individual assistance with online job applications. Securing the resources for infrastructure improvements, particularly computer upgrades were also important. BCL’s chief **opportunity for improvement** involves the more comprehensive, systematic and formal integration of CQI into career center operations.

JobNet

Customer Satisfaction: Customers continued to rate JobNet highly in 2007: 98% described themselves as satisfied (very satisfied: 66%; satisfied: 32%). Ninety six percent (96%) said they had, or would, refer friends, family or colleagues to the center.

Hire & Wage Outcomes: JobNet obtained wage and hour information from 866 job placed customers in FY’07, a 19% increase. Based on direct career center follow-up the placement rate rose from 22% to 25%.

Job quality was strong in all categories. JobNet increased its proportion of full time hires from 76% to 80%. Seventy five percent (75%) of those jobs offered benefits, leading the system on this measure. The average wage rose from \$13.35 to \$14.17 and the median increased from \$11.00 to \$12.00.

Summary Assessment: JobNet’s **strengths** included: 1) expanded use of data to better understand its programs and operations including staff deployment and standardization of workshop data collection, 2) new program development including services to CORI involved customers and “JobStart,” the integrated, intensive three-day job search skills program it piloted last year, and 3) its expanding engagement and involvement with community based organizations which increase its visibility and extend its sourcing capabilities on behalf of its business customers. JobNet’s chief **opportunity for improvement** involves the identification of sources of funding for its currently unfunded initiatives (in particular its services for CORI involved customers).

The Work Place

Customer Satisfaction: The Work Place maintained a high level of satisfaction in 2007: 96% of customers described themselves as satisfied (very satisfied: 58%; satisfied: 30%) and 94% said they had, or would, refer friends, family or colleagues.

Hire & Wage Outcomes: TWP obtained wage and hour information from 1,229 job placed customers in FY'07, a 25% increase. Based on direct career center follow-up the placement rate rose from 21% to 25%.

Job quality was mixed. TWP increased its proportion of full time hires from 82% to 83%, leading the system on this measure. However, just 51% of those jobs offered benefits. This represents a 5% decline from last year². The average wage increased slightly from \$13.01 to \$13.07 and the median wage was unchanged at \$11.00.

Summary Assessment: TWP's **strengths** included: 1) original and creative program development and integration based on the identified need of its various customer population (youth, ex-offenders, among others) coupled with success at securing grants and other funding to serve these populations; 2) in collaboration with its lead partner, Jewish Vocational Service, a comprehensive roll-out of CQI; 3) consistent and, at times, dramatic recovery in customer service measures; and 4) expanded career center services for youth and system leadership in helping to organize the Boston Youth Workforce Collaborative. TWP's chief **opportunity for improvement** involved incorporating more data into both its Strategic Plan and site visit presentations.

RECOMMENDED VOTES

Vote 1: The Employment & Training Systems Committee recommends to the Workforce Development Committee that Boston Career Link's Charter be continued beginning on July 1, 2008 and ending on June 30, 2009.

Vote 2: The Employment & Training Systems Committee recommends to the Workforce Development Committee that JobNet's Charter be continued beginning on July 1, 2008 and ending on June 30, 2009.

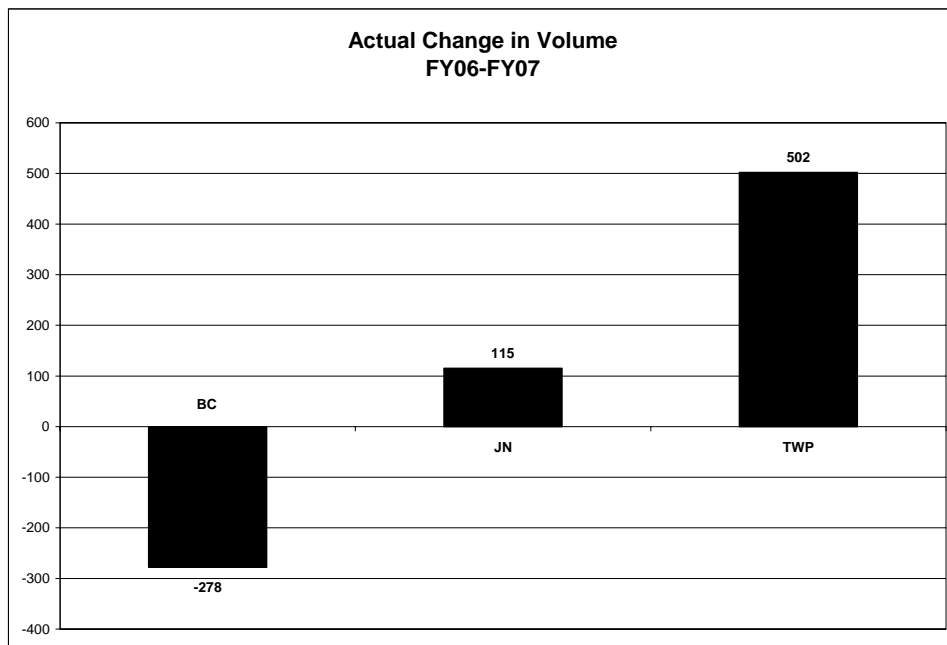
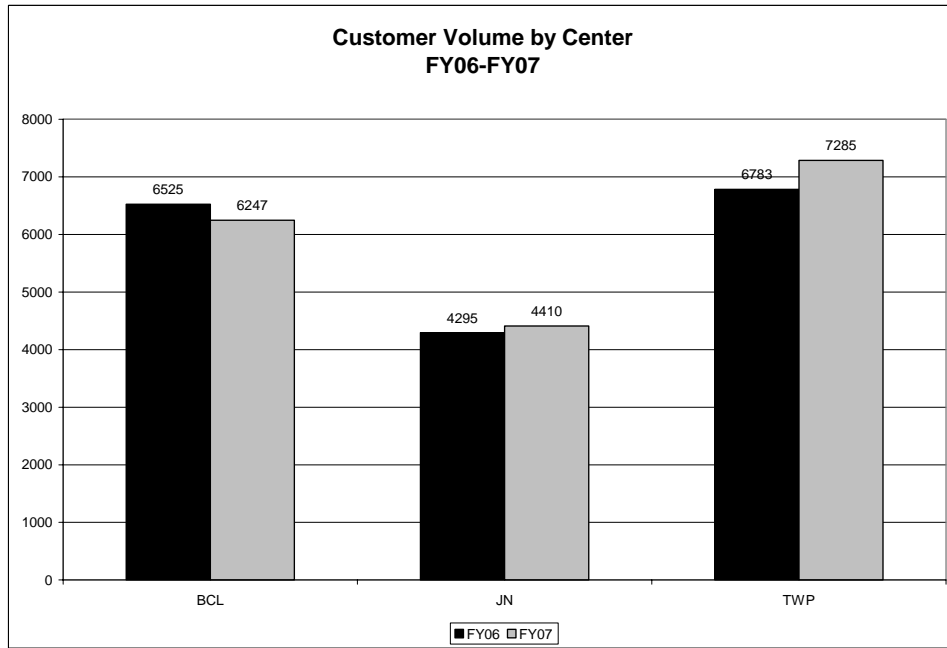
Vote 3: The Employment & Training Systems Committee recommends to the Workforce Development Committee that The Work Charter be continued beginning on July 1, 2008 and ending on June 30, 2009.

² A review of this data in 2006 led to the hypothesis that this number was depressed as a result of the concentration of re-entry customers using TWP many of whom, as a requirement of their program or status, must become employed quickly, thus leading them to accept jobs with staffing agencies or without benefits.

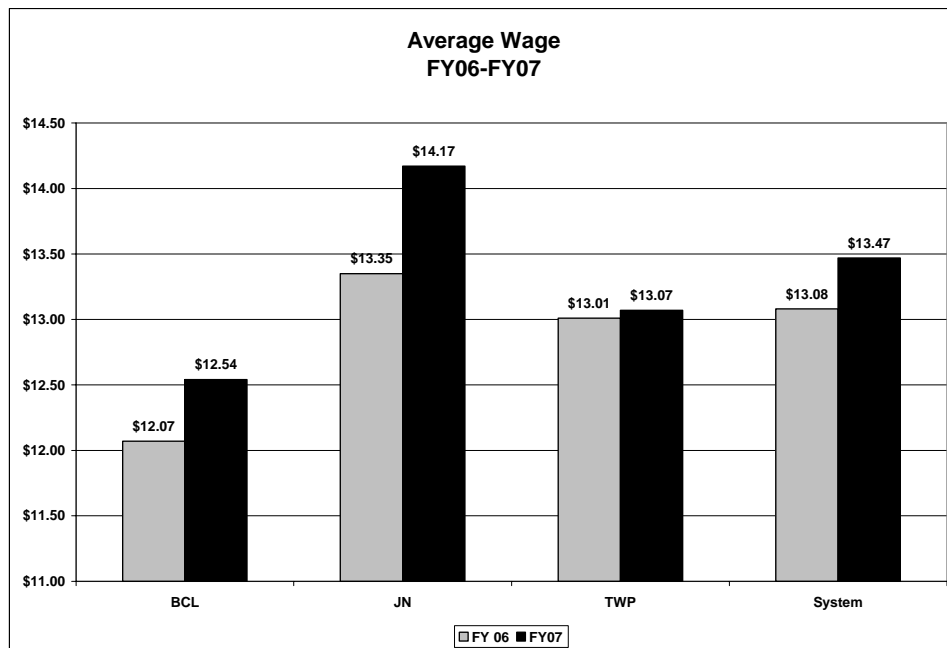
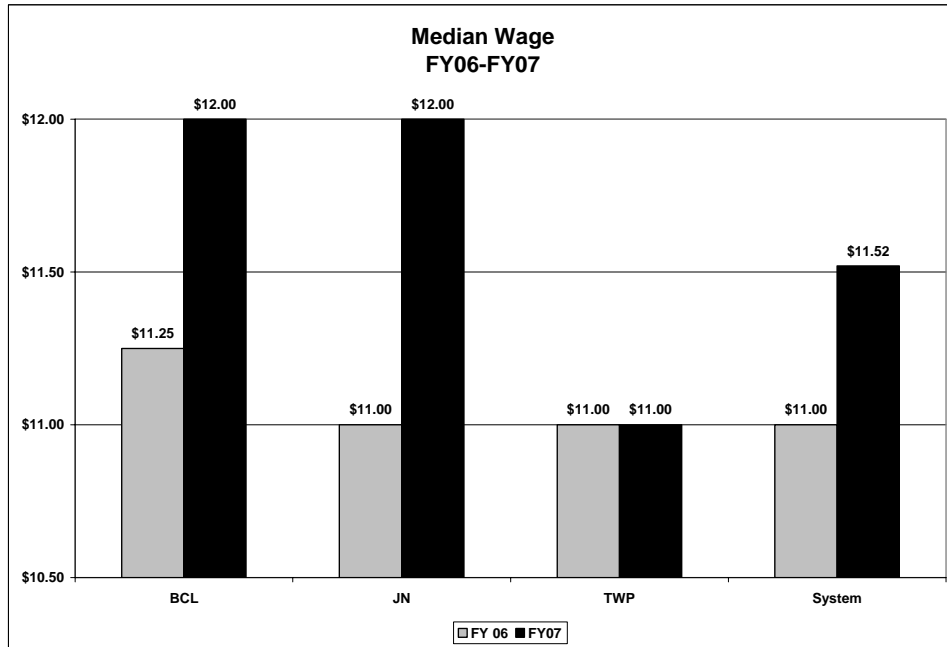
ATTACHMENT

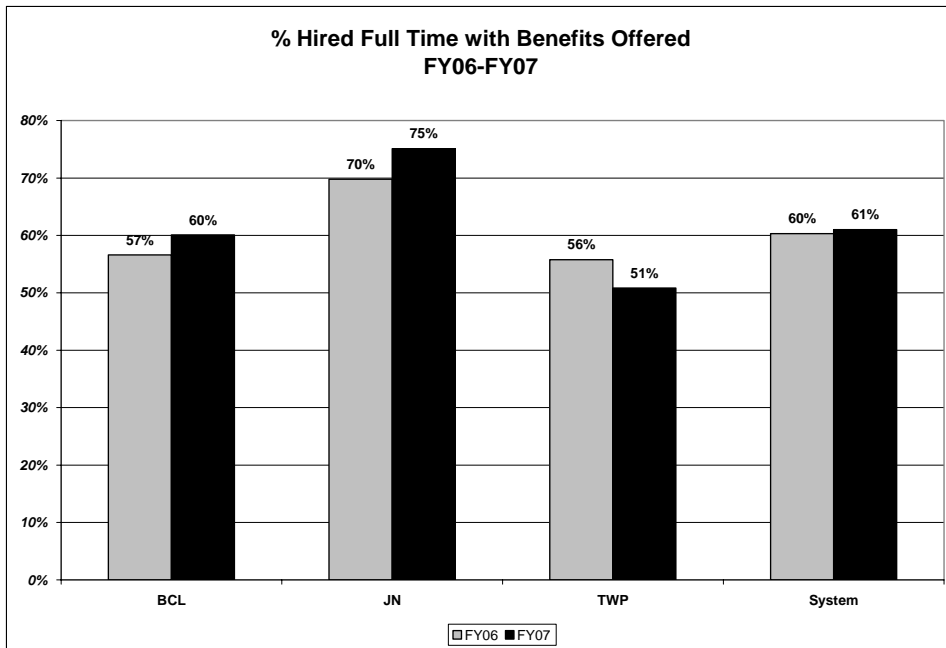
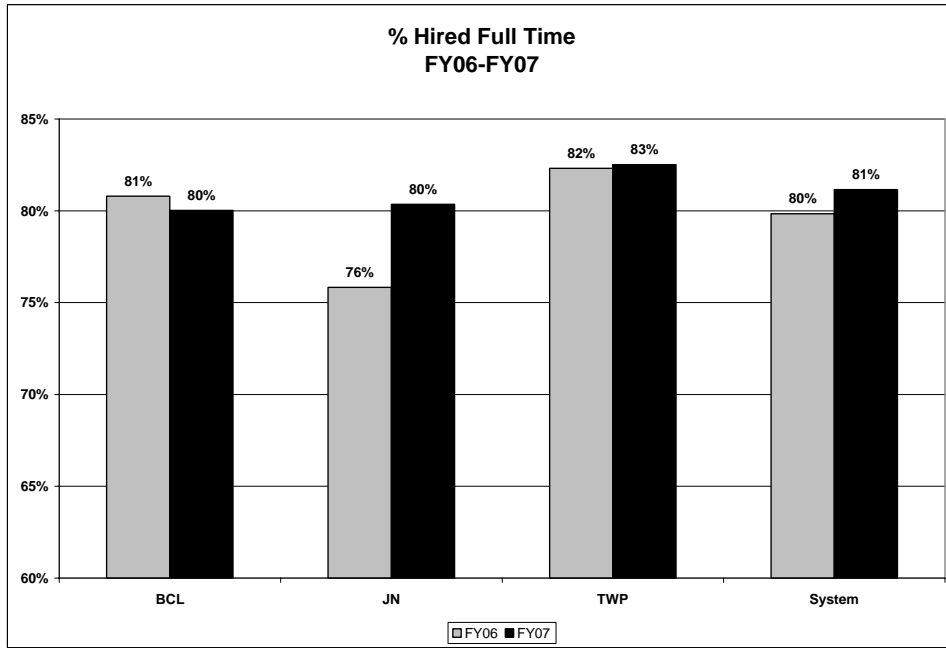
FY09 Charter Review Report Volume, Outcome and Customer Satisfaction Charts

VOLUME

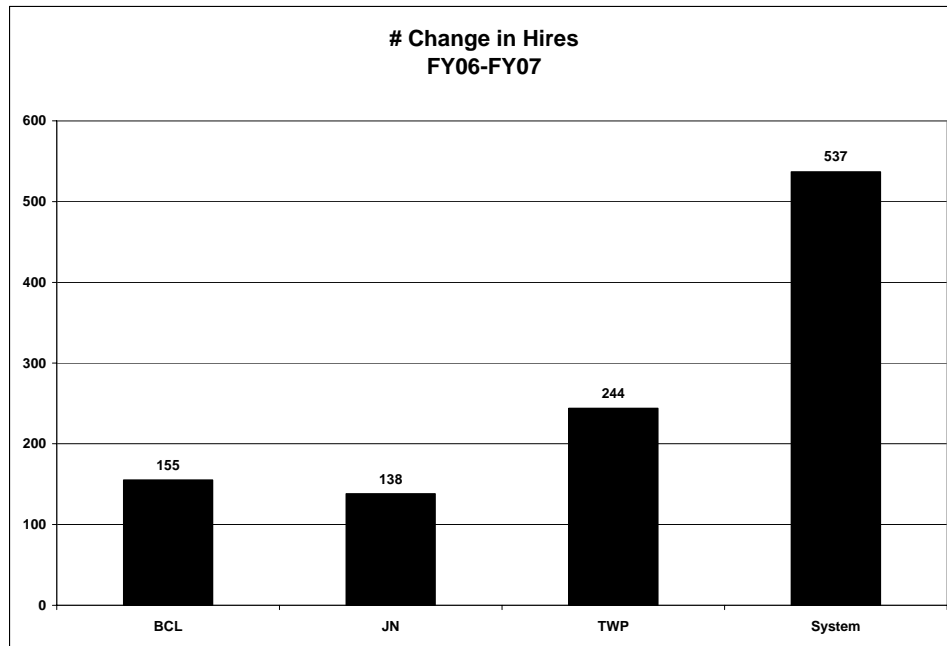
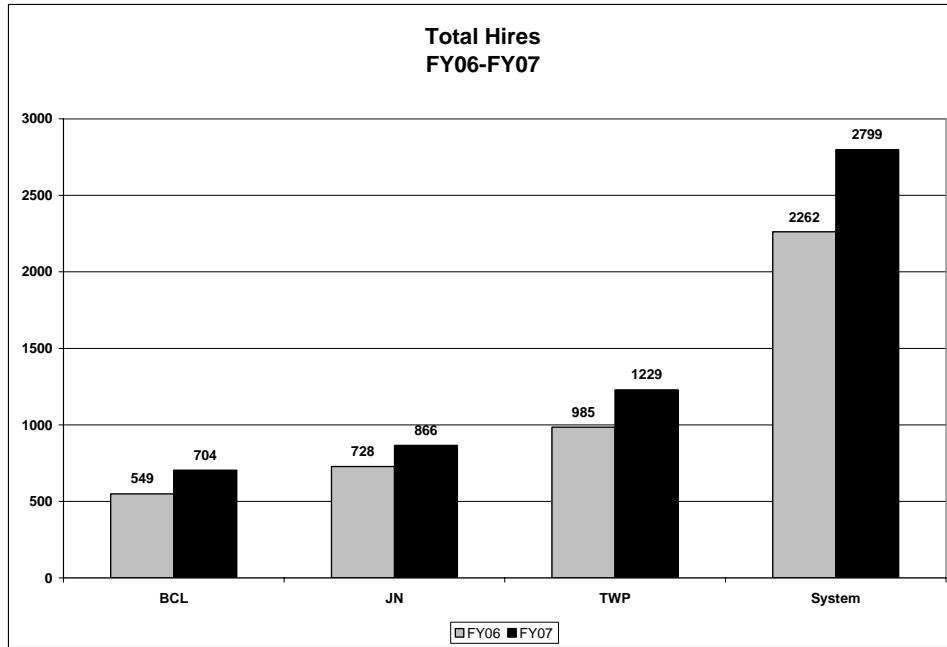


WAGES & JOB QUALITY

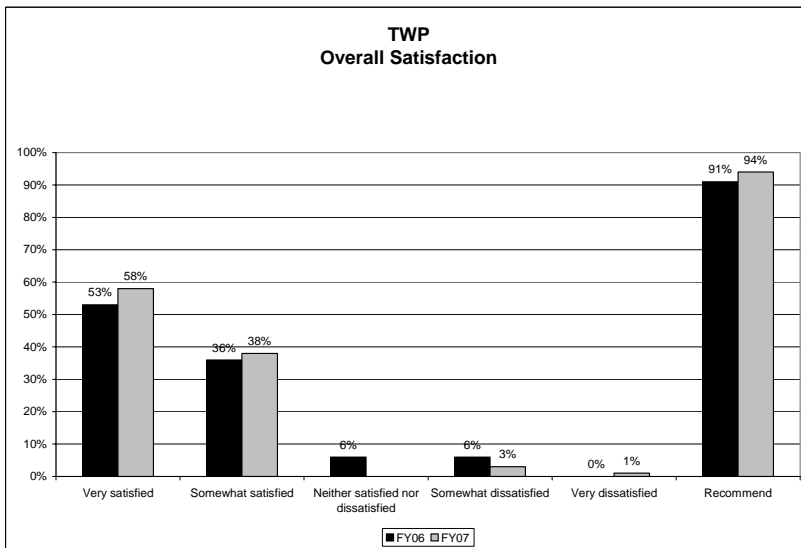
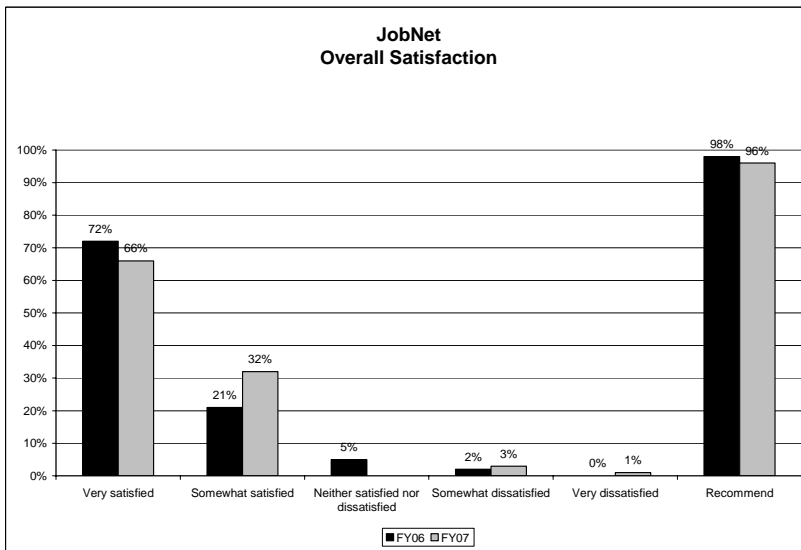
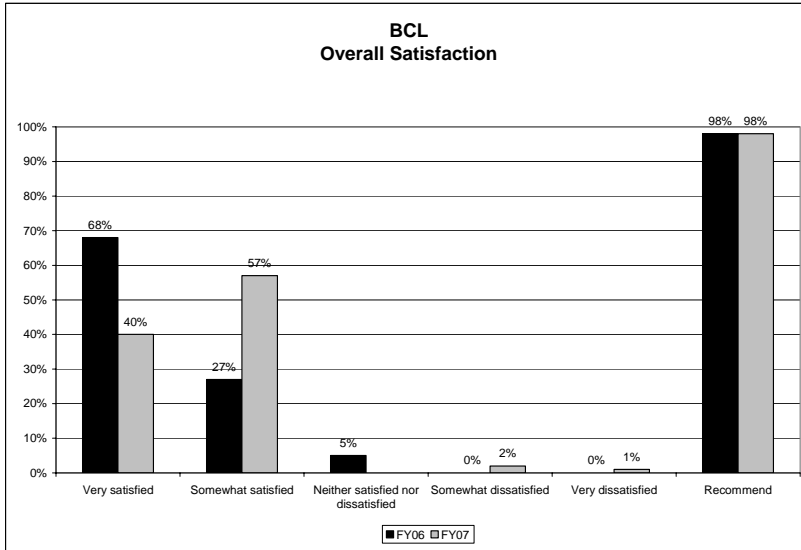




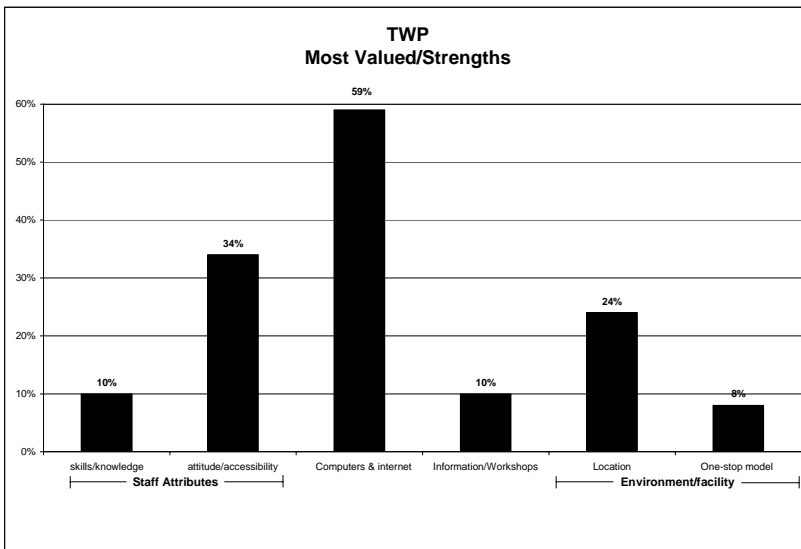
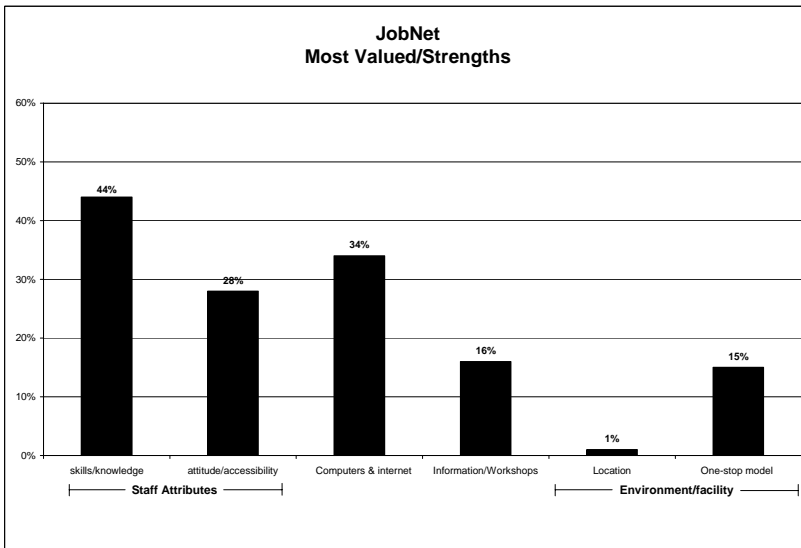
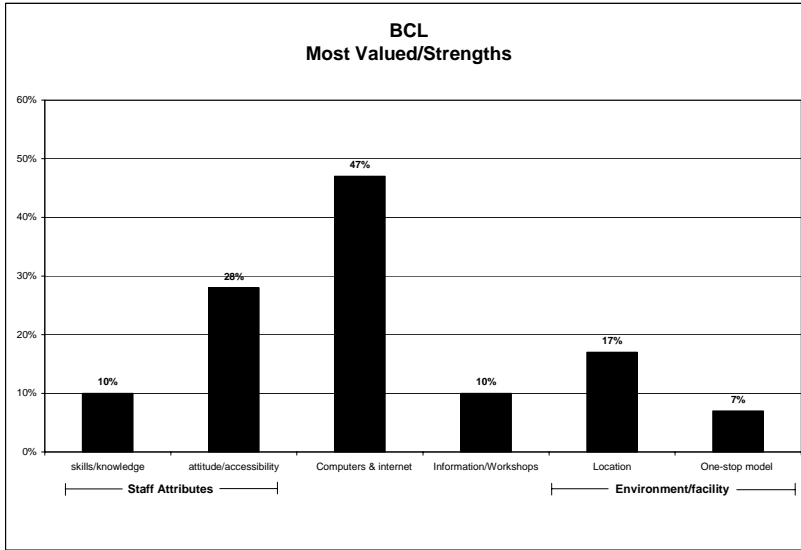
VOLUME HIRES



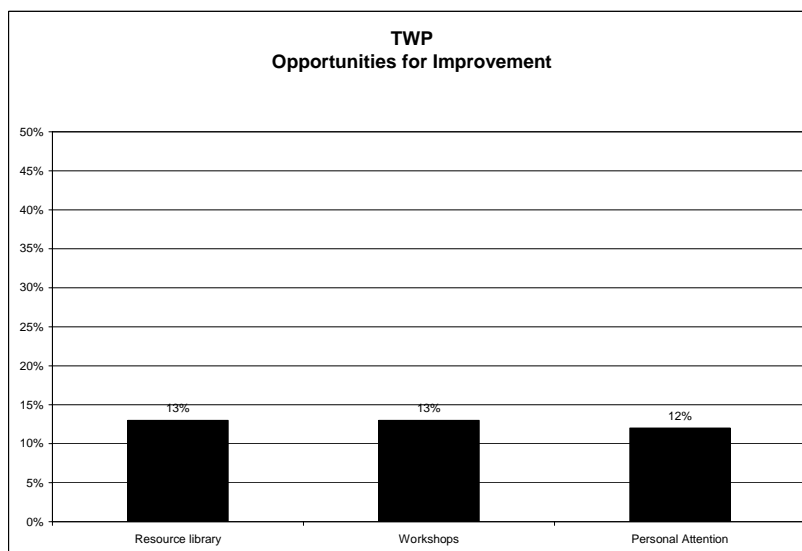
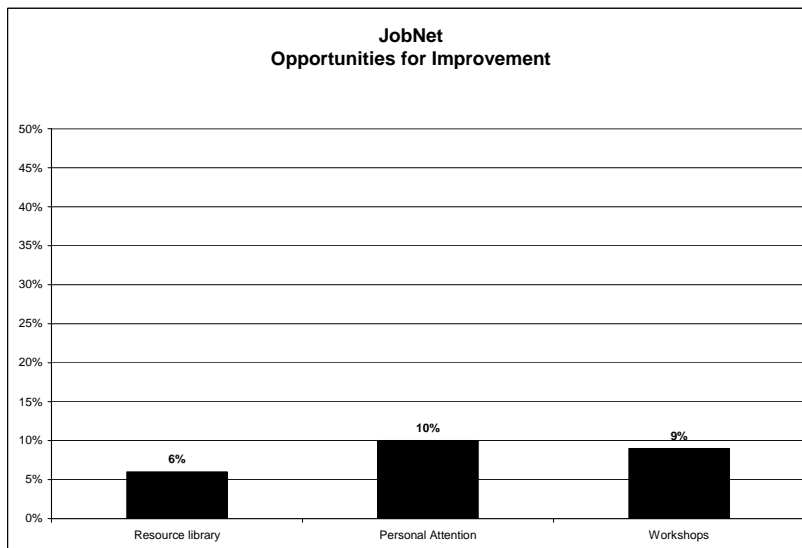
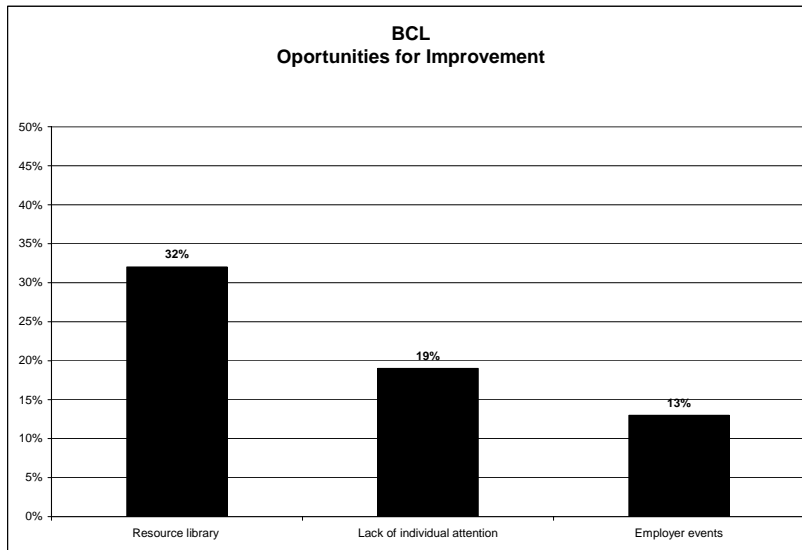
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



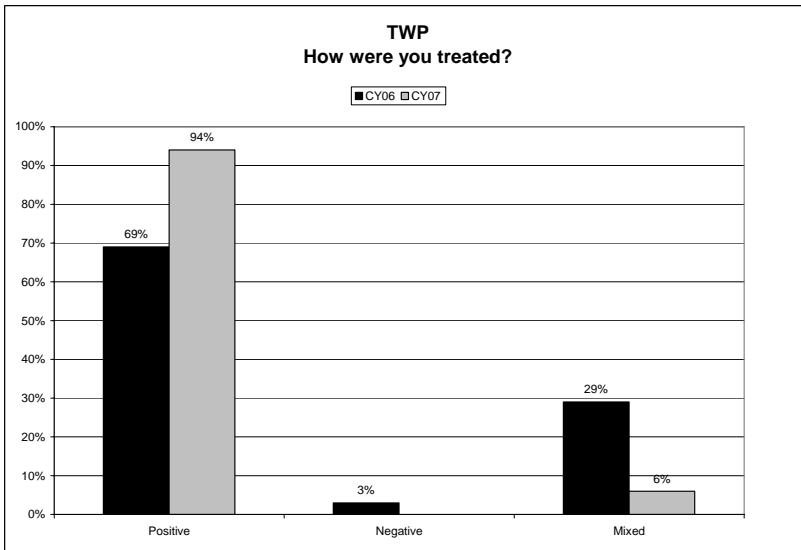
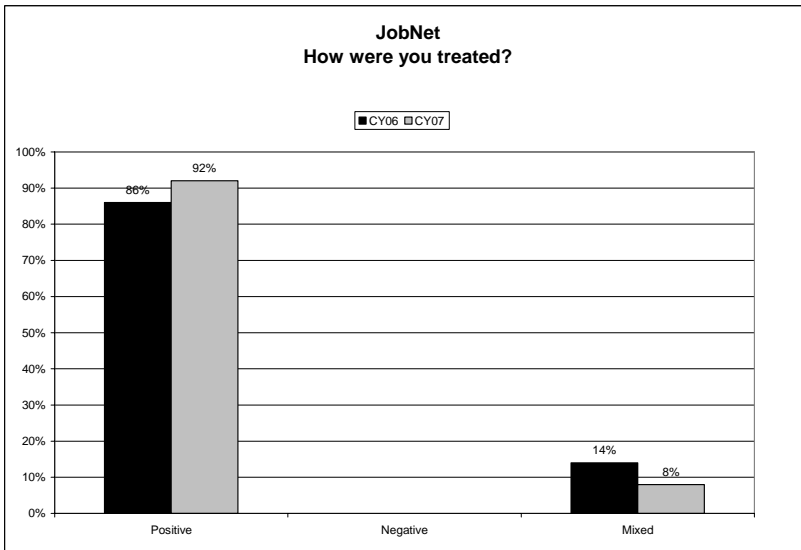
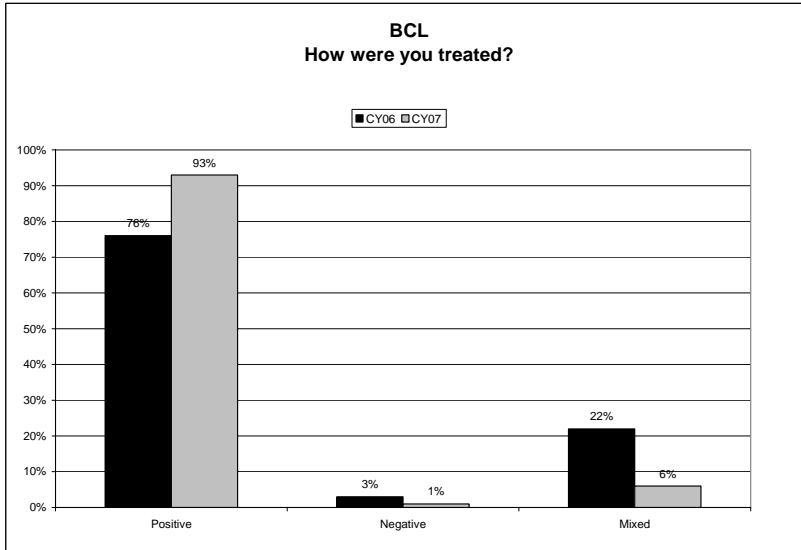
MOST VALUED



OPPORTUNITIES for IMPROVEMENT



CUSTOMER SERVICE



AVAILABILITY OF ASSISTANCE

