

Overview of 2026 Recruiting Survey Results

Overall Respondents

3,273 apprentices responded to the survey.

- 2,983 or 91.1 percent of respondents were male
- 164 or 5 percent of respondents were female
- 126 or 3.8 percent declined to answer

Question 1

Responses by Gender

1 st Year Apprentices	728 Male	41 Female	22 Declined to Answer	791
2 nd Year Apprentices	743 Male	37 Female	26 Declined to Answer	806
3 rd Year Apprentices	733 Male	40 Female	31 Declined to Answer	804
Last Year Apprentices	779 Male	46 Female	47 Declined to Answer	872
Totals	2,983	164	126	3,273

Question 2

Responses by Age

	17-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	>35	Decline to Answer	Total
1 st Year Apprentices	172	256	139	98	113	13	786
2 nd Year Apprentices	94	323	159	112	106	12	802
3 rd Year Apprentices	31	284	199	133	137	20	797
Last Year Apprentices	5	235	211	185	207	29	864
Totals	302	1098	708	528	563	74	3,273
Percentage	9.3%	33.8	21.8%	16.3%	17.3%	1.5%	100%

Question 3

Responses by Ethnicity

	European/ White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	Pacific Islander	Other	Declined to Answer	Total
1 st Year Apprentices	471	57	196	12	5	2	17	31	787
2 nd Year Apprentices	475	39	209	8	18	6	25	26	801
3 rd Year Apprentices	460	39	198	23	12	3	20	49	799
Last Year Apprentices	459	55	233	22	25	1	22	55	866
Totals	1,865	190	836	65	60	12	84	161	3,273
Percentage	57%	5.8%	25.5%	2%	1.8%	0.4%	2.6%	4.9%	100%

Question 4

What region of the country do you attend Apprenticeship at currently?

	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Region 6	Region 7	Declined to Answer	Total
1 st Year Apprentices	98	66	176	96	139	40	173	3	788
2 nd Year Apprentices	84	60	195	89	101	39	236	2	804
3 rd Year Apprentices	98	54	141	140	84	72	210	5	799
Last Year Apprentices	133	58	163	107	70	50	290	1	871
Totals	413	238	675	432	394	201	909	11	3,273
Percentage	12.6%	7.3%	20.6%	13.2%	12%	6.1%	27.8%	0.3%	100.0%

Region 1 - NY, NJ, CT, MD, DE, MA, NH, VT, ME, New Brunswick (Canada)

Region 2 - VA, TN, NC, SC, GA, AL, MS, LA, FL

Region 3 - KY, WV, PA, OH, IN

Region 4 - WI, MI, IL, Manitoba (Canada)

Region 5 - CO, NE, KS, MO, AR, TX, NM, OK

Region 6 - IA, MN, SD, ND, MT, WY, ID, Alberta (Canada), Saskatchewan (Canada)

Region 7 - AZ, AK, British Columbia (Canada), HI, WA, OR, CA, NV, UT

Question 5

How did you hear of the Sheet Metal Trade?

	Friend or Family	School Guidance Counselor	Job Fair	Website/ Internet	Radio Ad	T.V. Ad	Magazine/ Newspaper Ad	Sports Event
1 st Year Apprentices	608	61	31	69	3	1	1	1
2 nd Year Apprentices	633	49	34	61	1	0	0	0
3 rd Year Apprentices	624	50	35	51	0	2	0	0
Last Year Apprentices	716	34	13	32	2	1	1	0
Totals	2,581	194	113	213	6	4	2	1
Percentage	83%	6.2%	3.6%	6.8%	0.19%	0.13%	0.06%	0.03%

(3,114 responses)

Question 6

Why did you decide to enter the Sheet Metal Trade?

	Health Benefits	Retirement	Skilled Craft Training	Wages
1 st Year Apprentices	475	507	575	595
2 nd Year Apprentices	436	446	509	599
3 rd Year Apprentices	456	474	499	614
Last Year Apprentices	501	491	538	681
Totals	1,868	1,918	2,121	2,489
Percentage	22%	23%	25%	30%

(8,396 responses.)

Question 7

How can we improve on trade awareness?

	Websites	Recruiting Materials	Social Media	Media Advertisements	Print Advertisements	School Guidance Counselor
1 st Year Apprentices	251	286	527	333	129	337
2 nd Year Apprentices	266	280	554	335	98	340
3 rd Year Apprentices	299	294	530	346	116	376
Last Year Apprentices	303	323	608	376	130	464
Totals	1119	1183	2219	1390	473	1517
Percentage	14.2%	15.0%	28.1%	17.6%	6.0%	19.2%

(7,901 responses.)

Question 8

How/where could we advertise to recruit applicants your age with similar interests?

The most common responses were:

- Social Media- Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tiktok, YouTube, Reddit, etc.
- Radio Ads – Pandora, Spotify, etc.
- Television Ads – Streaming Services
- High Schools and Community Colleges
- Sporting Events
- Career Fairs
- School Guidance Counselors
- Gyms, Bars
- Billboards
- Newspapers
- Stores

Question 9

What would you liked to have known about the trade before you entered?

	Leadership Opportunities	Ability to Work with Hands	Variety of Work	Ability to Earn College Credits	Ability to Gain Continuing Education	Diversity of the Trade
1 st Year Apprentices	215	144	470	217	234	332
2 nd Year Apprentices	216	140	479	172	191	297
3 rd Year Apprentices	210	138	466	177	209	306
Last Year Apprentices	246	155	520	207	253	332
Totals	887	577	1935	773	887	1267
Percentage	14.0%	9.1%	30.6%	12.2%	14.0%	20.0%

(6,326 responses.)

Question 10

What would have improved your training experience?

	Faster	More technology	More one on one training	More on the job training	Nothing
1 st Year Apprentices	166	107	321	312	168
2 nd Year Apprentices	147	145	327	318	133
3 rd Year Apprentices	156	178	337	309	144
Last Year Apprentices	174	214	329	318	162
Totals	643	644	1,314	1,257	607
Percentage	14.4%	14.4%	29.4%	28.2%	13.6%

(4,465 responses)

Question 11

What attracted you to the Sheet Metal Trade?

	Health Benefits	Retirement	Skilled craft training	Wages	Family	Friend	School Counselor
1 st Year Apprentices	499	491	542	606	268	198	22
2 nd Year Apprentices	475	469	484	613	227	169	25
3 rd Year Apprentices	490	501	484	640	253	165	20
Last Year Apprentices	529	531	503	710	267	179	23
Totals	1,993	1,992	2,013	2,569	1,015	711	90
Percentage	19.19%	19.19%	19.39%	24.74%	9.78%	6.85%	0.87%

(10,383 responses.)

Question 12

Would you recommend a sheet metal apprenticeship to a friend?

	Yes	No	If no, why?	Personal reasons	Work not steady	Lack of mentors	Work environment
1 st Year Apprentices	736	37		18	43	13	27
2 nd Year Apprentices	711	61		17	51	20	29
3 rd Year Apprentices	706	59		18	66	37	46
Last Year Apprentices	736	90		36	86	59	47
Total	2,889	247		89	246	129	149
Percentage	77.06%	6.59%		2.37%	6.56%	3.44%	3.97%

(3,749 responses.)

Question 13

Would you recommend the Sheet Metal Trade to others?

	Yes	No
1 st Year Apprentices	757	32
2 nd Year Apprentices	761	46
3 rd Year Apprentices	749	62
Last Year Apprentices	784	88
Total	3,051	228
Percentage	93.0%	7.0%
<i>(3,279 responses.)</i>		

Question 14

Apprenticeship Year

	Total Responses
1 st Year Apprentices	791
2 nd Year Apprentices	806
3 rd Year Apprentices	804
Last Year Apprentices	872
Blanks	24
<i>Total with blank year</i>	3,297
Total without blank year	3,273

Question 15

What makes it a challenge to be an apprentice in this industry?

	Work environment	Physical requirements	Lack of mentors	Work hours	Lack of childcare	Job perception in community	Discrimination	Language
1 st Year Apprentices	193	223	145	214	77	82	29	24
2 nd Year Apprentices	192	207	188	198	92	80	37	37
3 rd Year Apprentices	210	202	230	207	120	81	57	25
Last Year Apprentices	201	231	275	197	151	90	66	55
Total	796	863	838	816	440	333	189	141
Percentage	18.0%	19.5%	19.0%	18.5%	10.0%	7.5%	4.3%	3.2%
<i>(4,416 responses)</i>								

Question 16

Why would you choose this industry as a career?

	Pay	Benefits	Type of work	Community involvement	Training	Ability to use technology	Career growth/ leadership opportunities	Career diversity	Work hours
1 st Year Apprentices	667	644	466	140	382	164	464	271	277
2 nd Year Apprentices	673	627	389	122	329	152	418	245	269
3 rd Year Apprentices	690	647	430	111	338	134	427	245	270
Last Year Apprentices	757	697	428	113	363	178	435	259	296
Total	2,787	2,615	1,713	486	1,412	628	1,744	1,020	1,112
Percentage	20.6%	19.3%	12.7%	3.6%	10.4%	4.6%	12.9%	7.5%	8.2%

(13,517 responses)

Question 17

Would you recommend the Sheet Metal Trade to females?

	Yes	No
1 st Year Apprentices	676	109
2 nd Year Apprentices	643	158
3 rd Year Apprentices	611	186
Last Year Apprentices	620	246
Total	2,550	699
Percentage	78.5%	21.5%

(3,249 responses.)

Question 18

Would you recommend the Sheet Metal Trade to minorities?

	Yes	No
1 st Year Apprentices	758	28
2 nd Year Apprentices	748	50
3 rd Year Apprentices	722	67
Last Year Apprentices	787	76
Total	3,015	221
Percentage	93.2%	6.8%

(3,236 responses.)