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The Katie School of Insurance and Financial Services

The Katie School NextGen Survey:
What the Insurance Industry Wants from Higher Education

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The Katie School NextGen Survey

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the findings of the Katie School NexGen online survey conducted by The Institutes in October of 2012. The survey queried approximately 1200 individual members of the CPCU Society seeking their opinions and input related to the skills and personal attributes that are highly valued in new hires in the insurance industry. The intent of the survey is to generate 1) a profile as to which skills and attributes in new hires in the insurance industry are most highly valued and 2) identify the degree to which the respondents perceive new hires to possess those skills and attributes. The survey instrument was comprised of four sections:

- Personal profile
- Question I: What skills and attributes are important?
- Question II: How well prepared are new graduates?
- Question III: What skills and/or attributes are m*ost* important?

The questions included in sections two and three (Questions I and II in the survey) employed Likert-scales in collecting respondent results. Question III in our survey asks the respondent to allocate 100 points among the skills and attributes identified in Table 1, allocating more points to items perceived to be more important. Asking for information in this format allows for a cardinal (*relative*) ranking of items based on their value to the respondent. For example, while an ordinal ranking structure may identify attribute A to be more valuable than attribute B, a cardinal ranking will reveal the *extent* to which A is valued over B. This information represents a unique approach in contrast to earlier similar surveys and thus, represents a unique contribution to the literature.

The underlying motivation for this survey is to develop a better understanding of the demands and expectations of the insurance industry so that RMI programs at institutions of higher education might better understand the needs of the insurance industry – a key stakeholder within the educational paradigm of higher education. Our hope is that a better understanding as to what the industry values will aid the faculty and administrators of RMI programs to create more responsive curriculum aimed at better preparing students for entry into the insurance industry upon graduation.

Key findings include:

- Communication skills are highly prized
- Knowledge of insurance by new hires is *not* highly prized
- Ethics are important
- Perceptions as to the value of specific skills and attributes vary depending on the respondent's level of responsibility within the company
- Leadership skills are not highly prized in new hires

The Katie School NextGen Survey

I.   Introduction and Background

While interested parties may debate the "proper" role of the insurance industry as a stakeholder in the education of the next generation of college graduates that will enter the industry's workforce, few can argue that the industry should not at least have a seat at that table of discussion. Any survey of the general population of students as to their motivation will reveal the importance of an education's ability to secure a job upon graduation; that degree of association is likely to be even higher among business students. Given that prospective employers hold the keys to entrance into the workforce, their demands and expectations as to the abilities and predispositions of new graduates hold significant sway in terms of what might be "appropriate" goals for institutions of higher education.

Despite that significance, prospective employers possess significant doubt as to the willingness and/or ability of higher education to listen to industry's needs and respond accordingly.[1] That crisis of confidence comes at a time when academia is experiencing shrinking financial support from governmental sources and technological advances provide the opportunity for a completely new model for education delivery. While higher education has traditionally held an almost untouchable position within our nation's educational framework, the times are changing. This survey comes in response to threats to the traditional academic model. We believe that academia would be well-served at this juncture to critically consider its capabilities in meeting the key goal of its (prospective) student population as a means of ensuring the relevance of the traditional educational model found on the campuses of institutions of higher education.

While academia's need to be more responsive is widespread, this current effort in surveying prospective employers is aimed specifically at a single industry and its needs and expectations - the risk management and insurance industry. We narrow our focus because, in the end, this research is intended for the use of faculty and administrators of programs of risk management and insurance (RMI). It is our hope that the academy of RMI programs might use this information to 1) establish a better dialog with the insurance industry, 2) better align their goals and objectives with the needs of industry (and thereby better serve the goals of its student population), and 3) ensure the continued relevance of traditional RMI programs in a rapidly changing environment.

An exhaustive online search of previous research that has similarly surveyed the insurance industry yielded but a single study that was published in 1998. Bell and Wolverton's article titled, "What Employers Look for in Hiring Insurance Professionals" asked insurance industry constituents what was important to them in terms of skills and attributes of new hires.[2] The study then asked respondents to assess the degree to which those new hires were able to demonstrate proficiency in those highly valued attributes. While certainly informative, given the significantly changing workplace environment, we believe the time is right to revisit the conversation.

This current research adopts Bell and Wolverton's basic approach and asks industry what skills and attributes are important in a new hire today and then goes on to ask to what degree new hires are able to deliver on those skills and attributes. This current study goes further however, and imbeds additional questions aimed at the divining industry's perception as to the value of RMI programs/degrees in particular. In other words, we want to see whether an RMI degree has value to the industry; we want to know whether we are imbuing our graduates with the necessary skills and attributes in order for them to be perceived as being a better match for the

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[1] For a deeper discussion of a survey of industry and academia's attitudes regarding their perceptions of one another please see, *"Spanning the Chasm: Corporate and academic Cooperation to Improve Work-Force Preparation,"* published by the Business-Higher Education Forum (http://www.bhef.com/.

[2] The survey results were published in the *Risk Management and Insurance Review*, volume 1, issue 2, 1998.

insurance industry. Does an RMI degree have value in the current insurance marketplace? If the answer to that question is no then these findings should be a call to arms for our collective academic discipline.

II.   Survey Development

We began our survey development by performing a meta-analysis of the pertinent related literature derived from surveys that queried prospective employers from a broad cross-section of industries. That analysis allowed for the identification of a number of themes that were commonly queried. Additionally, we interviewed three separate focus groups comprised of insurance industry professionals from a variety of functional disciplines, e.g. underwriting, management, human resources, etc. Those interviews helped shape our queries and alerted us to a few specific skills and attributes for which the insurance might possess special interest. Last, given our specific interest in the role RMI higher education, we imbedded two specific queries aimed at capturing the perceived "value" of an RMI degree/education.

As a result, we identified the following list of 13 highly valued skills and attributes for consideration in our current research:

1. Exhibits ethical professional behavior
2. Sociability (works well within a group)
3. Verbal communications skills
4. Written communications skills
5. Analytic/problem solving skills
6. Adaptability
7. Strong computer skills
8. Leadership potential
9. Enthusiasm for learning
10. Initiative
11. Commitment to career path
12. Strong work ethic
13. Discipline specific knowledge

The first eight items in the list were reoccurring queries in the broader literature and also included in Bell and Wolverton's earlier work. The relevance of items 9-12 emerged from our discussions with our focus groups. Worthy of note is the last item on the list, "discipline specific knowledge." The introduction of that query results from our interest in assessing the insurance industry's value of an RMI education. The inclusion of this question represents a departure from much of the earlier research on the subject; the extant literature has seldom sought to include what might be called "technical" knowledge in similar surveys and thus, our inclusion represents a unique addition to the literature on the subject.

The survey data was collected by The Institutes (http://www.theinstitutes.org/) in October, 2012. The title of the survey was "Katie School NextGen Survey" and invitations to participate in the survey were sent out to approximately 1200 CPCU Society members from which 371 usable responses were received. The survey includes four sections:[3]

- Personal profile
- Question I: What skills and attributes are important?
- Question II: How well prepared are new graduates?
- Question III: What skills and/or attributes are m*ost* important?

Both Questions I and II in the survey were framed using Likert-scale questions whose values ranged from 1-7.

III.   Results

A.   Personal Profile

The personal profile section included 11 questions intended to control for potential biases. Based on the results of the survey, about half of the respondents (49%) have had the opportunity to work with recent graduates with

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[3] The survey content is presented in its entirety in the Appendix, section A. The Survey Instrument.

an RMI graduate within the past five years. A significant percentage of respondents (74%) were 45 years of age or older. The average number of years of experience in the industry was 25. A handful of functional disciplines within the insurance industry dominated the respondent pool, including: underwriting (30%), sales/production (15%), and claims (14%). The majority of the respondents (62%) currently hold management positions. The size of the respondents' employer demonstrated a fairly even spread across the potential spectrum. Only 20% of the respondents report a reduction in professional development support within their organization over the past five years.

B. Question I: What skills and attributes are important?

Question I seeks to establish an ordinal ranking of importance among the skills/attributes presented to the respondent. Participants were asked to assign a value to each of the items in the list based on the importance of the specific skill/attribute for recently-graduated new hires and job candidates in the insurance industry. A summary of the descriptive statistics of those responses are presented in their rank order (based on mean values) in Table 1, below. Additionally, histogram graphs of the distribution of the responses to each question are available in the Appendix, section B. What Specific Skills/Attributes are Important: Graphic Presentations of Results. A graphic presentation allows for examination of the results using visual information as opposed to metrics.

The results of Table 1 can be generally described as being very positively predisposed to recognizing our list of skills and attributes as being important to the insurance industry. That finding should be expected as the list of skills and attributes were culled from earlier literature and personal interviews that identified such attributes as having value.

In a somewhat surprising result, the survey identifies ethical predisposition as the most important skill/attribute for a new hire. Making this result even more interesting is the fact that annual Gallup polls consistently find that the general public expresses very little trust in insurance salespeople.[4] While the issue of ethics has become a focal point for many industries in recent years, our findings in this survey may be indicative of a focused and targeted effort on the part of the insurance industry to strengthen this aspect of its pool of employees. Also rating high were the new hire's ability to communicate and employ critical thinking skills. These findings echo the findings of many of the studies that surveyed employers more broadly.

Perhaps the most surprising finding lies with what the respondents perceive to be the *least* important skill/attribute among the list - a new hire's knowledge of the fundamentals of insurance. In an academic environment where funds are threatened and competition for students is increasing, this finding should have special importance to RMI programs at institutions of higher education. A fundamental argument commonly invoked by RMI programs is that they will better prepare students for careers in the insurance field. The fact that the industry seemingly places relatively little value on that preparation should garner the attention of all RMI programs in higher education. One would also be advised to keep in mind that this seeming lack of value is merely relative to the other attributes. In point of fact, the mean value for this item was higher than a neutral value of four and thus, knowledge of insurance does have value for the industry, but not as much as the other attributes on the list.

What cannot be known from these results is whether RMI education specifically suffers from a lack of appreciation by the industry or possibly all discipline specific education would similarly suffer if presented to a broader audience. It is possible, although not clear from these survey results, that while academic degrees have value to employers, discipline specific education lacks significant value. If true, that may bolster claims as to the

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[4] See for example, the results of the 2012 Gallup poll surveying the public's perception of the honesty/ethics among various professions (http://www.gallup.com/poll/1654/honesty-ethics-professions.aspx).

value of liberal arts degrees that focus less on specific disciplines and instead, pursue broader development of personal attributes. That said, the value of an RMI education is indeed called into question by this finding.

Table 1. What Specific Skills/Attributes are Important?

Where: 7 = The utmost importance; 1 = No importance at all

	Skill/Attribute	Mean	Median	Mode	Skew
1.	Predisposition to make ethical decisions	6.5	7	7	2.04
2.	Oral communication skills	6.4	7	7	1.28
3.	Written communication skills	6.3	6	6	0.96
4.	Critical thinking skills	6.2	6	6	1.00
5.	Knows how to manage his/her time	6.1	6	6	0.72
6.	Shows initiative	6.1	6	6	0.74
7.	Interpersonal skills	6.0	6	6	0.81
8.	Analytical/problem solving skills	6.0	6	6	0.87
9.	Adaptability to different business situations	6.0	6	6	0.79
10.	Proficiency in computer skills	5.9	6	6	0.33
11.	Ability to seek out and analyze information that will lead to new insights	5.9	6	6	1.10
12.	Demonstrated teamwork skills	5.7	6	6	0.77
13.	Works well within groups	5.7	6	6	0.62
14.	Organizational skills	5.7	6	6	0.62
15.	Creativity in finding solutions to a problem	5.6	6	6	0.77
16.	Leadership skills	5.0	5	5	0.86
17.	Knowledge of fundamental insurance concepts	4.9	5	4	-0.19

C. Question II: How well prepared are new graduates?

Question II of the survey seeks to assess industry's perception of the preparedness of new hire's to assume work responsibilities in the insurance industry. Respondents are instructed to indicate their agreement with a number of statements related to the skills/attributes of new hires. The results of that survey are presented in rank order in Table 2, below.

The industry would appear to be most impressed (by far) with the computer skills of new hires. The ethical predisposition of new hires and their ability to work in groups were also cited as being strong by the respondents. Conversely, writing and leadership skills were identified as relatively weaker skills.

While a knowledge of insurance was not found to be a relatively important attribute in Question I above, it is interesting to find that the respondents strongly believe students with an insurance degree are better prepared for insurance career versus those with other degrees (item 2). Standing in contrast to that position is the fact that a significant portion of the respondents felt that students with liberal arts degrees were better prepared for insurance career compared with those with other degrees (item 19). While not evident in the information presented here, segmenting the respondents based on their position as manager or not may explain these seemingly contradictory positions. Managerial respondents displayed a significant bias toward new hires with RMI degrees whereas non-managerial respondents displayed a similar bias toward new hires with liberal arts degrees.

Table 2. How Well Prepared are New Graduates?

Where: 7 = Strongly agree; 1 = strongly disagree

	Skill/Attribute	Mean	Median	Mode	Skew
1.	Recent hires and job candidates have excellent computer skills	6.0	6	6	1.16
2.	Students with an insurance degree are better prepared for insurance career vs. those with other degrees	5.3	6	6	0.42
3.	Recent hires and job candidates can be counted on to act ethically in situations	5.2	5	6	0.41
4.	Recent hires work well within groups	5.2	5	5	0.89
5.	Recent hires demonstrate initiative when completing job assignments	5.1	5	5	0.76
6.	Teamwork skills demonstrated by recent hires and job candidates are well developed	5.0	5	5	0.73
7.	Interpersonal skills and the ability to relate well to others are well developed in recent hires and job candidates	4.9	5	5	0.49
8.	A degree in a business discipline better prepares students for an insurance career vs. other degrees	4.9	5	5	0.40
9.	Recent hires and job candidates have excellent oral communication skills	4.8	5	5	0.97
10.	Recent hires and job applicants have excellent analytical/problem-solving skills	4.8	5	4	0.70
11.	Critical thinking skills by recent hires and job candidates are well developed	4.7	5	5	0.55
12.	Seeking out and analyzing information that leads to new insights is a strength of recent hires and job applicants	4.7	5	4	0.61
13.	Recent hires and job applicants have excellent organizational skills	4.7	5	4	0.73
14.	Recent hires and job candidates are able to adapt to different business situations	4.7	5	5	0.47
15.	Knowing how to manage his/her time is a strength of recent hires and job candidates	4.6	4	4	0.15
16.	Creativity in finding solutions to a problem is a strength of recent hires and job applicants	4.6	4	4	0.63
17.	Leadership skills demonstrated by recent hires and job candidates are well developed	4.3	4	4	0.93
18.	Recent hires and job candidates have excellent written communication skills	4.3	4	5	0.15
19.	Students with a liberal arts degree are better prepared for insurance career vs. those with other degrees	4.0	4	4	1.93
20.	Recent hires and job candidates have excellent knowledge of fundamental insurance skills	4.0	4	3	-0.20

D. Aggregated Analyses of Questions I and II

Endeavoring to leverage the information available in Tables 1 and 2, we present a rank ordered comparison of comparable items from those tables below in Table 3.[5] Comparing the respective rank values, a few issues immediately come forward. First, ethics is highly valued by the industry and our respondents believe new hires are strong with respect to that attribute. A second finding that also immediately stands out is the lack of value the respondents place on knowledge of insurance and the correspondingly low assessment of new hires' understanding of insurance. Ironically, it presents itself as a "bad news-good news" scenario. The bad news is that industry doesn't value what RMI programs have to offer. The good news is that it really doesn't matter very much. In all seriousness however, this is an issue of critical importance for the RMI programs of higher education.

Table 3. Comparative Ranking Analysis

Skill/Attribute	Question I: Importance	Question II: Performance
Ethical Decision Maker	1	2
Oral Communication Skills	2	6
Written Communication Skills	3	14
Critical Thinking Skills	4	8
Time Management	5	12
Shows Initiative	6	3
Interpersonal Skills	7	5
Analytical/Problem Solving Skills	8	7
Adaptability	9	10
Computer Skills	10	1
Curiosity/Seeks out Information	11	9
Team Work Skills	12	4
Organizational Skills	13	10
Creative in Solution Finding	14	12
Leadership Skills	15	15
Insurance Concept Knowledge	16	16

One particular item of comparison holds itself out as a significant opportunity due to a mismatch in value and perceptions. While written communication skills are very highly valued by industry, the respondents' perception of new hires to be able to express themselves well in written form is relatively low. In isolation, the respondents' assessment of writing skills is middling (garnering a 4.3 mean value in Table 2). While not poor, it does represent an area where RMI programs could bolster the perceived quality of their graduates; help them become better writers.

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[5] Three questions imbedded in Table 2 that specifically as for comparisons of preparation for careers in insurance were deleted from inclusion in the comparison format in Table 3 as they have no direct counterpart in Table 1.

Other attributes where new hires are perceived to demonstrate strong skills, e.g. computer skills, ability to work in teams, demonstration of initiative, etc., fall relatively far down the list as to what is valued by the insurance industry. So, while a strong suit, those attributes possess relatively less value to the industry.

E. Relative Importance among Identified Skills/Attributes

Question II represents another unique contribution to the related literature. While the earlier questions were aimed at collecting assessment values from which an ordinal ranking could be derived, Question III asks for information that allows for a cardinal ranking of items based on their value to the industry. While an ordinal system does indeed establish a ranking system, it does not ask respondents to identify importance relative to other items of value. A cardinal ranking allows the reader to identify the degree to which one item is valued more or less than other items. In other words, if forced to choose, what would you choose? Question III in our survey asks the respondent to allocate 100 points among the skills and attributes identified in Table 1, allocating more points to items perceived to be more important. The results are presented in Table 3, below.

Written communication skills are identified as the most important skill/attribute while oral communication skills are ranked in the third position – so communication skills are indeed of significant importance to the industry. Interestingly, ethical predisposition falls to the fourth position in this ranking system; it had previously been identified as the most important attribute among the respondents in Question I. one possible interpretation of this finding is that while important, perhaps industry does not believe that academia can significantly influence the ethical system of new hires and thus, can better allocate its resources elsewhere.

Interestingly, the allocation of resources to leadership development is last within this framework. Certainly, leadership within any industry is a critical issue however; it may not serve as a critical issue for new hires. It may be that industry recognizes that a new hire is not expected to serve in a leadership role early on. Instead, industry may be interested in leadership *potential* – an attribute that may exist independently from a current ability to lead.

What does seem to stand out in Table 3 is that industry values the ability of new hires to communicate well and to be guided by ethics, both in their decision making and in terms of their work habits. Those attributes would seem to have significant importance in creating value when seeking employment.

IV. Key Findings

A number of issues come to light based on the assessment of these results. We present the key findings with brief discussions below.

A. Communication Skills Sizzle - RMI Education Fizzles

Being able to express oneself well, both orally and in written form, has significant value in the insurance industry. While many discipline specific subject matter experts, such as insurance professors, may indeed be experts in their field, the professors would be adding relatively more value to their students' opportunities if their insurance curriculum were to intimately contemplate the manner in which the program incorporates communication skill development. This represents a significant departure for most business discipline professors; they typically have very little pedagogical training and virtually none in the development of communication skills. Nonetheless, that is what industry prizes. While RMI programs may lament the fact that students arrive in their major program without sufficiently developed writing skills, it does not lessen the expectations of the industry. A failure to impress industry with the communication abilities of our graduates reflects squarely on our major programs, if not on the broader university. RMI programs pay a price for this "failure to impress."

Figure 1. Relative Importance of Various Skills and Personal Attributes in a New Hire
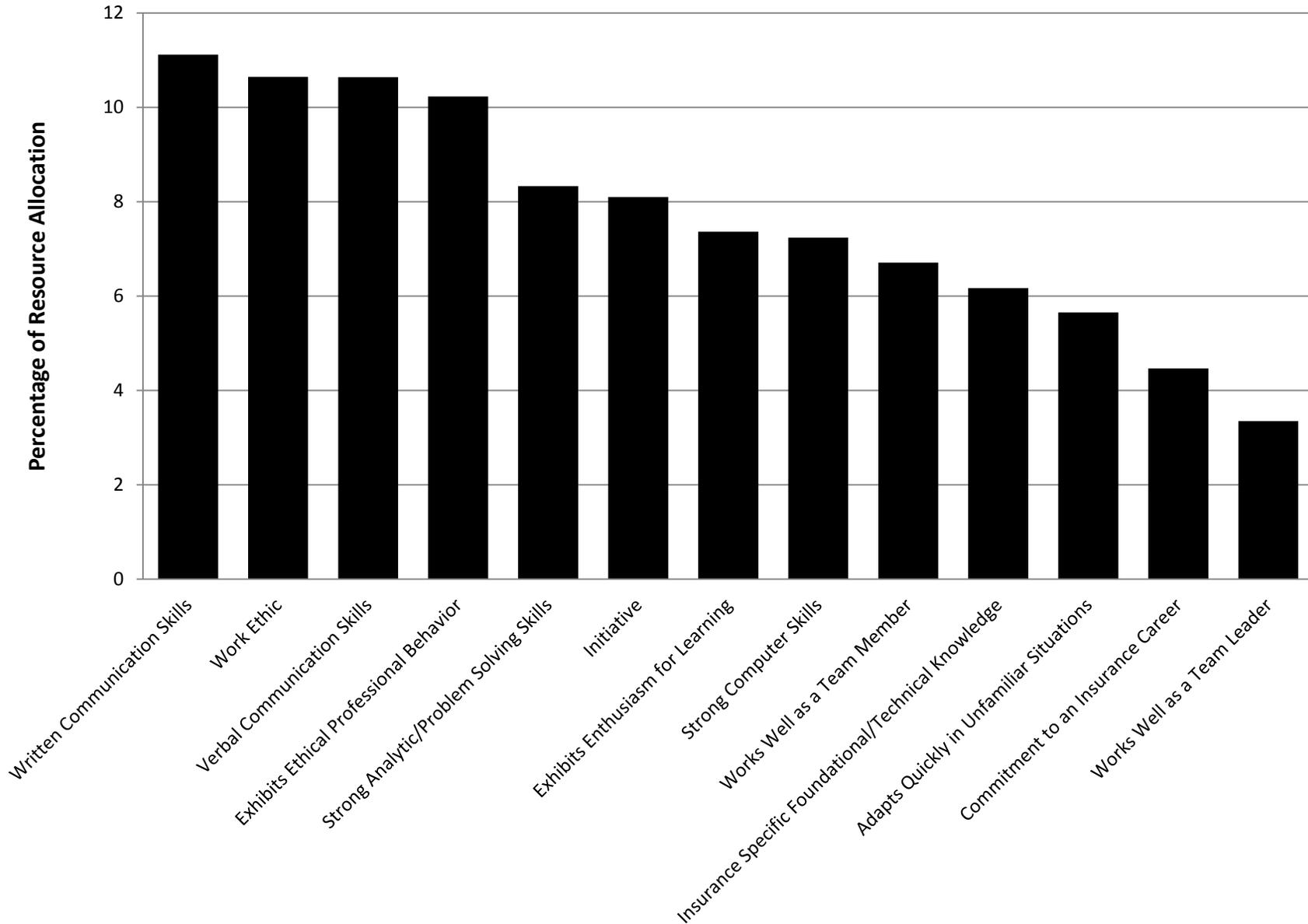
B. Ethics are Hot

The insurance industry (among others) is big on personal ethics. While generally positively predisposed toward the ethical behavior of new hires, the "possession" of ethics is highly ephemeral and arguably, cannot be "taught" in an academic setting. Nonetheless, industry values it highly and thus, RMI programs would be well served to contemplate not only ethics education and experiences, but also contemplate how a student might present "evidence" of an ethical predisposition when seeking employment. While such discussion is beyond the scope of this paper, it should be noted that professional education entities such as The Institutes, offer ethical coursework that can be completed by students and presented as evidence for consideration of an ethical predisposition.

C. Industry Perception is Not Monolithic

The matrix of queries included in these surveys reveals the fact that differing respondent groups possess different perceptions of new hires. For example, respondents who have had the opportunity to work with recent RMI graduates are far more positively predisposed toward the abilities of new hires in general. In contrast, respondents who have not worked with recent RMI graduates are generally less impressed with the abilities of new hires. While the significance for this difference is not readily apparent given this data structure, it is possible that the preparation of RMI graduates to enter the workforce and "hit the ground running" may generate a more positive impression within the industry.

Additionally, management level respondents see relatively more value in an RMI degree than do non-managerial respondents; they actually find new hires with liberal arts degrees to be generally better prepared for work. The implications of these findings are also challenging, but it could be that the expectations of management differ from that of non-management respondents and thus, they may value different attributes.

D. Being a Leader Doesn't Count for Much

The industry isn't too concerned about a young 20 year-old's ability to lead upon entry into the workforce. Indeed, such attempts by a new hire may even be seen as a negative attribute. This awareness calls into question the efforts higher education put into providing leadership opportunities for its students. Yes – it is likely good practice for future opportunities however, such training should be implemented with the understanding that those efforts should be aimed at building appropriate foundations for future leadership roles – which is not the same thing as developing a leader.

V. Summary and Implications

This report summarizes the findings of the Katie School NexGen online survey that collected data from insurance industry respondents that asked about what skills and attributes they valued as insurance industry employees and also to what degree new hires seem to possess those skills and attributes. The underlying motivation for this study was to provide the RMI programs of higher education with a better understanding as to what the insurance industry values so that higher education might better understand how it might choose to meet those needs – if it can. In addition to the collection of respondent profile information, the survey asked three separate queries. The first sought to establish what the industry values. The second asked the respondents to assess the degree to which new hires meet those valued expectations. The last component asked respondents to evaluate the importance of the various skills and attributes given a finite set of resources. These results allowed for a cardinal ranking of the value placed on the various skills and attributes.

The findings shed new light on the current perceptions of the industry as they relate to new hires entering the workforce. The findings come at a critical juncture for higher education and industry. Higher education is experience significant and dynamic changes; the traditional model of education may indeed see radical changes within the next decade. Similarly, the insurance industry will experience a significant departure of talent in the coming years as the baby boomers among them retire. The new hires of today will have significant opportunities

to grow into leadership positions in the near term and thus, their possession of the vital skills necessary to achieve that growth are of significant important to the industry today.

VI. Appendix

A. The Survey Instrument

SECTION 1 - Respondent profile

1. Within the last 5 years have you had the opportunity to work with a recent graduate who has a risk management or insurance degree?
2. How has professional development in your firm changed in the past 5 years?
3. How many years of work experience do you have?
4. Total years of experience
5. Years of insurance experience
6. Please indicate your current functional area:
7. Are you currently in a management position?
8. What is the highest level of education you have attained?
9. What age range are you in?
10. What is your gender?
11. Approximately how many full-time employees are there in your organization?

SECTION 2 - Please respond to the following items regarding the importance of specific skills/attributes of recently-graduated new hires and job candidates in the insurance industry. 1 = No importance at all; 7 = The utmost importance

1. Oral communication skills
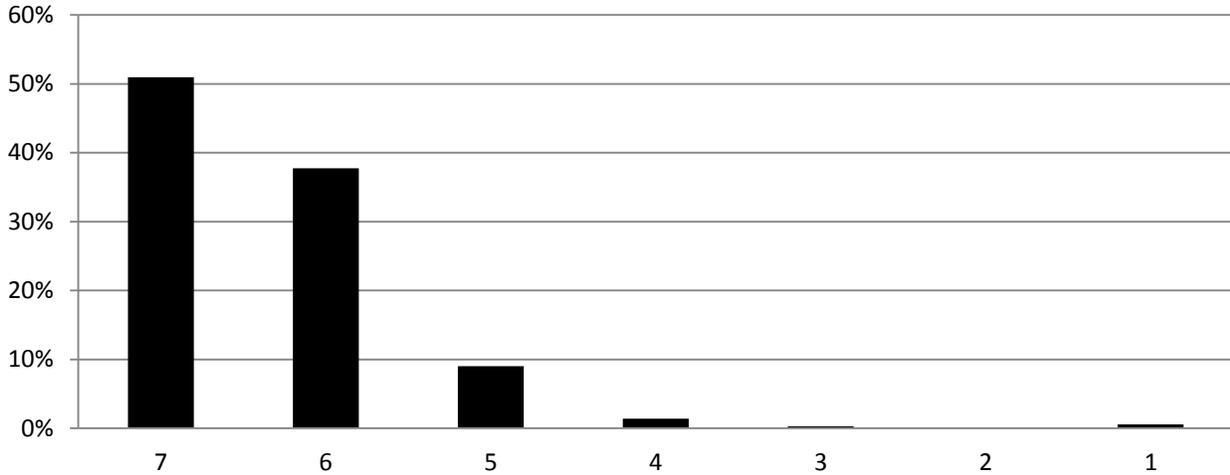2. Written communication skills
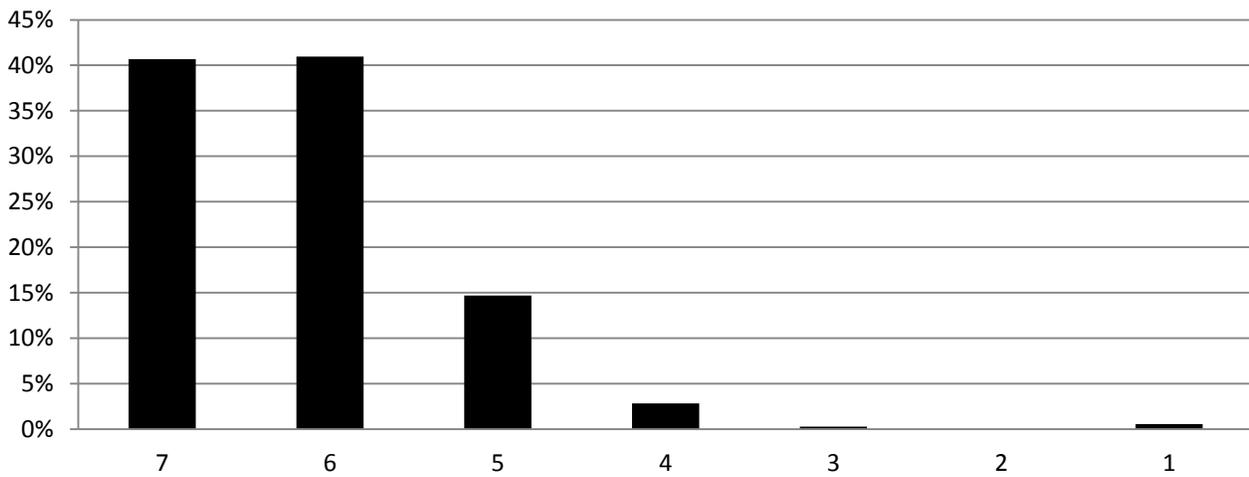3. Adaptability to different business situations
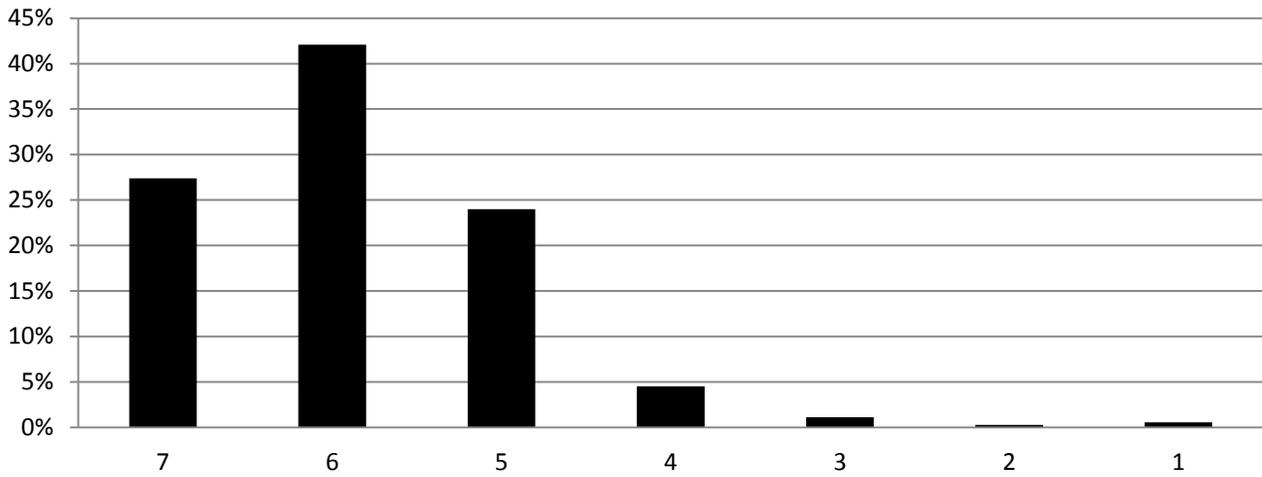4. Knows how to manage his/her time
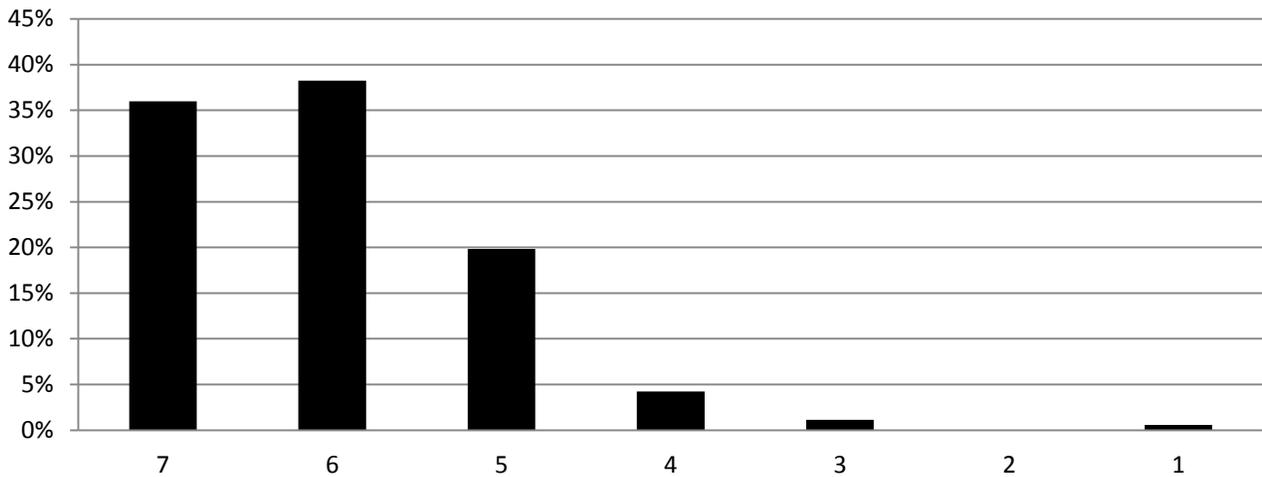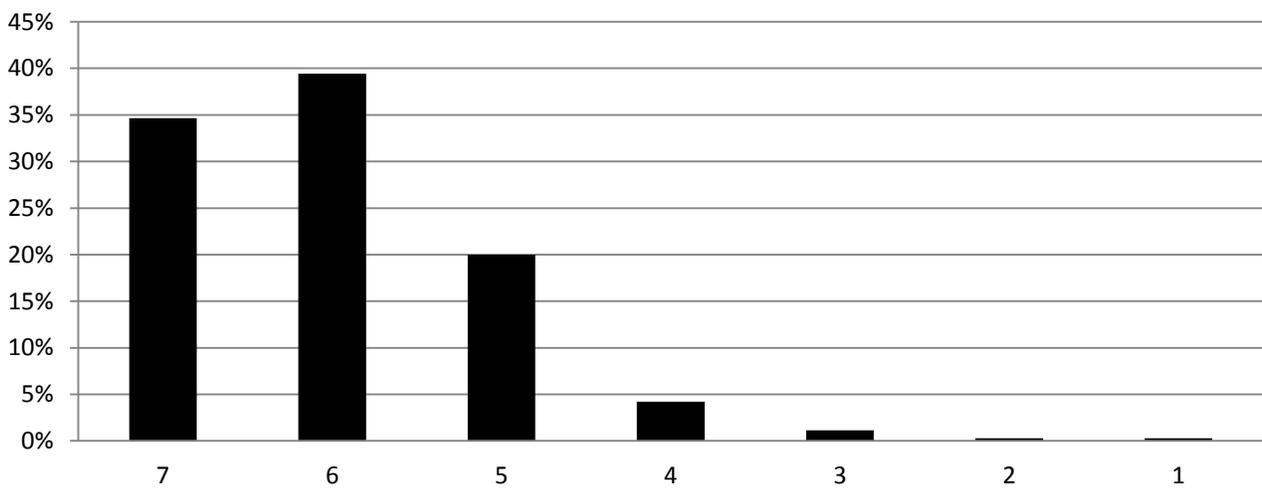5. Shows initiative
6. Predisposition to make ethical decisions
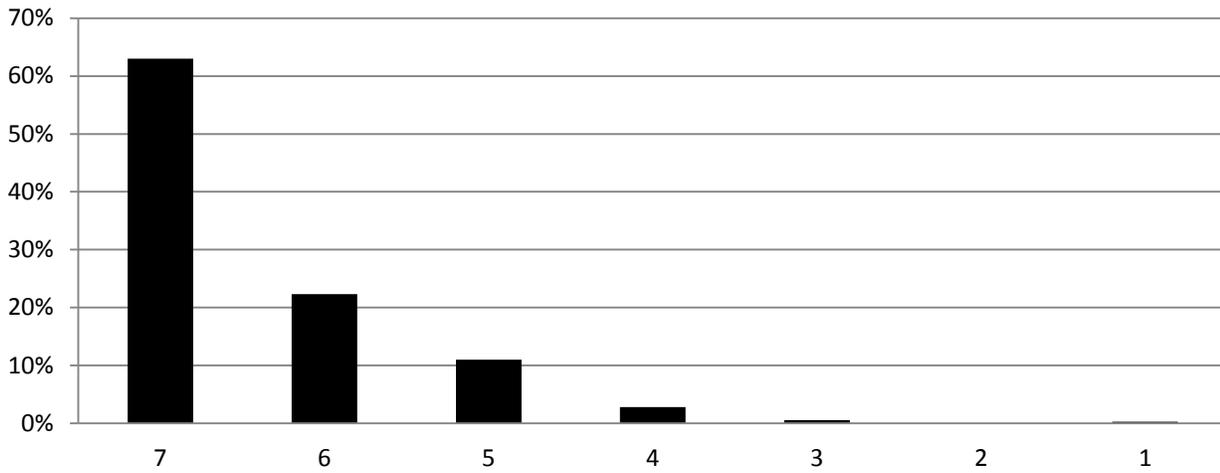7. Leadership skills
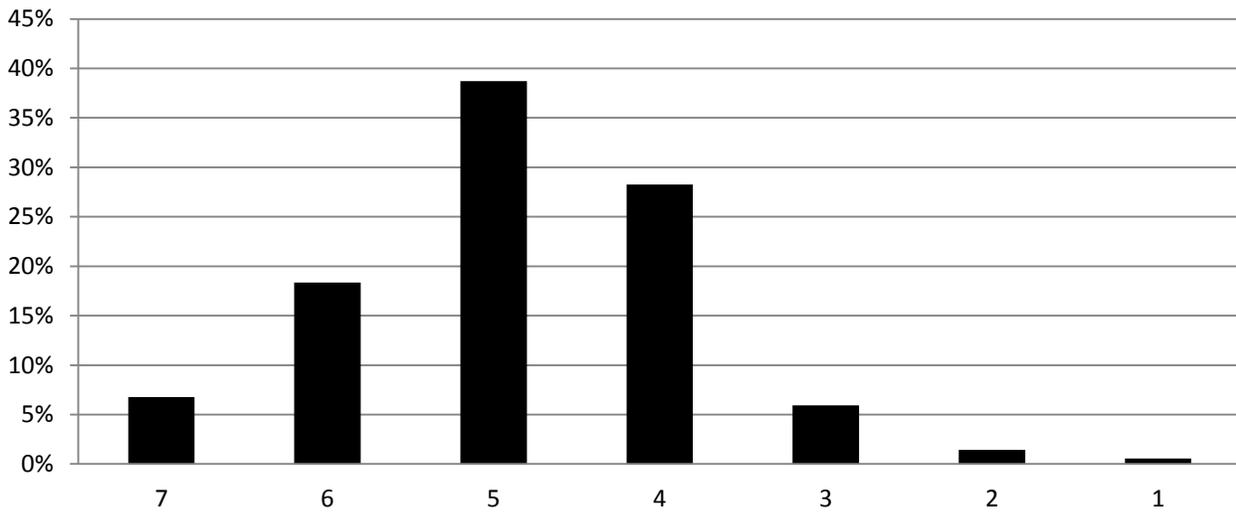8. Works well within groups
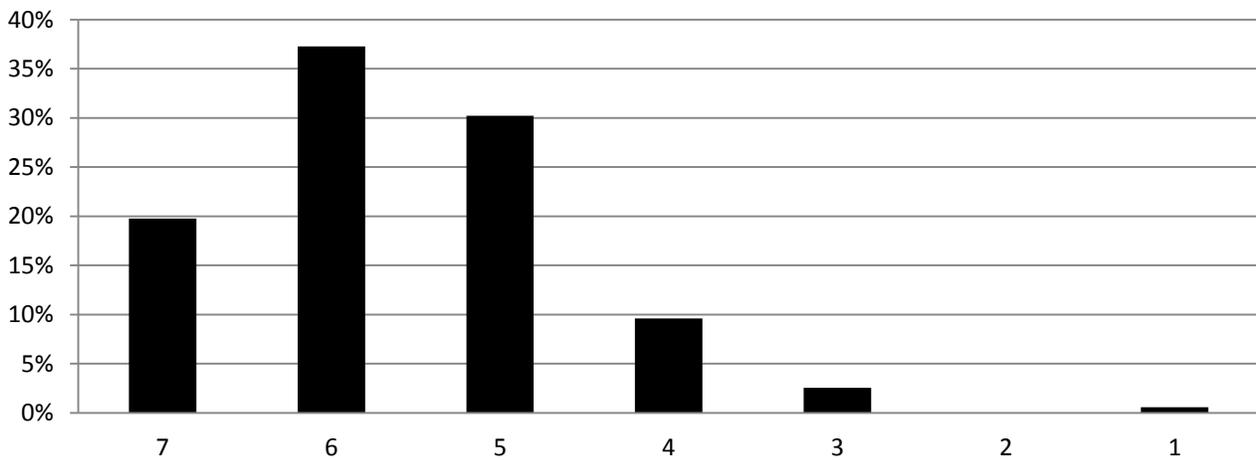9. Demonstrated teamwork skills
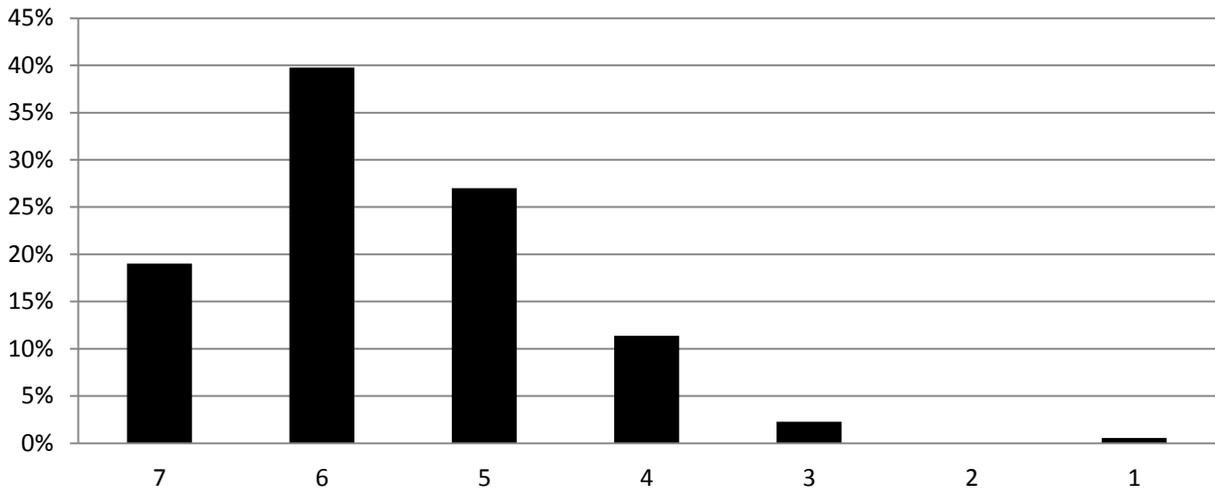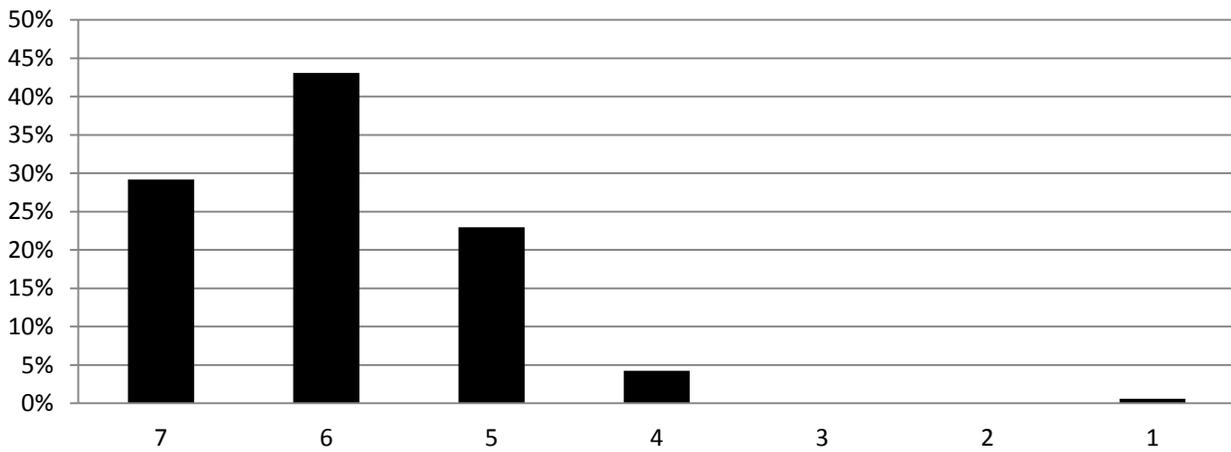10. Interpersonal skills
11. Proficiency in computer skills
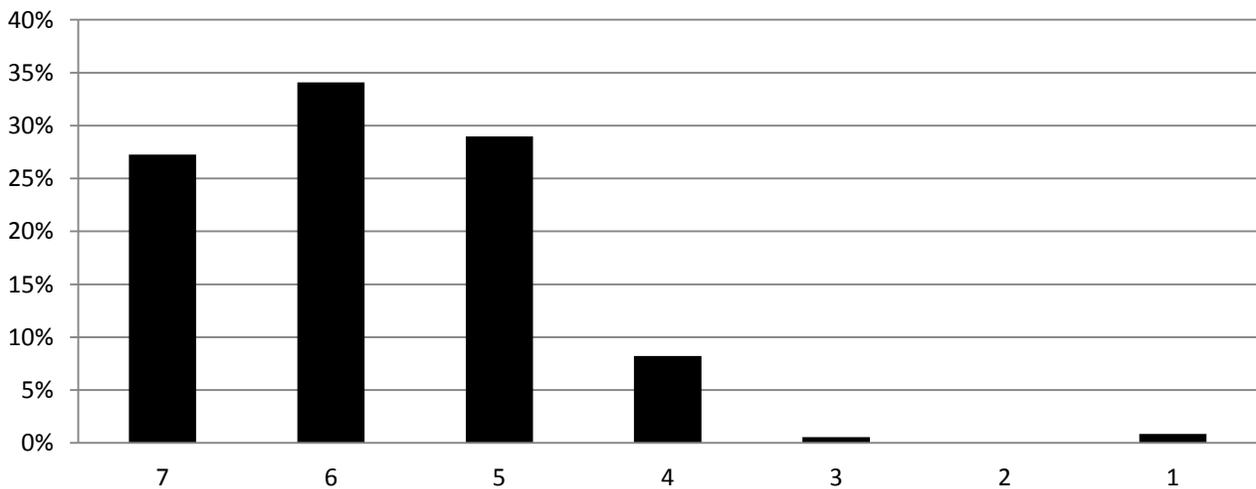12. Critical thinking skills
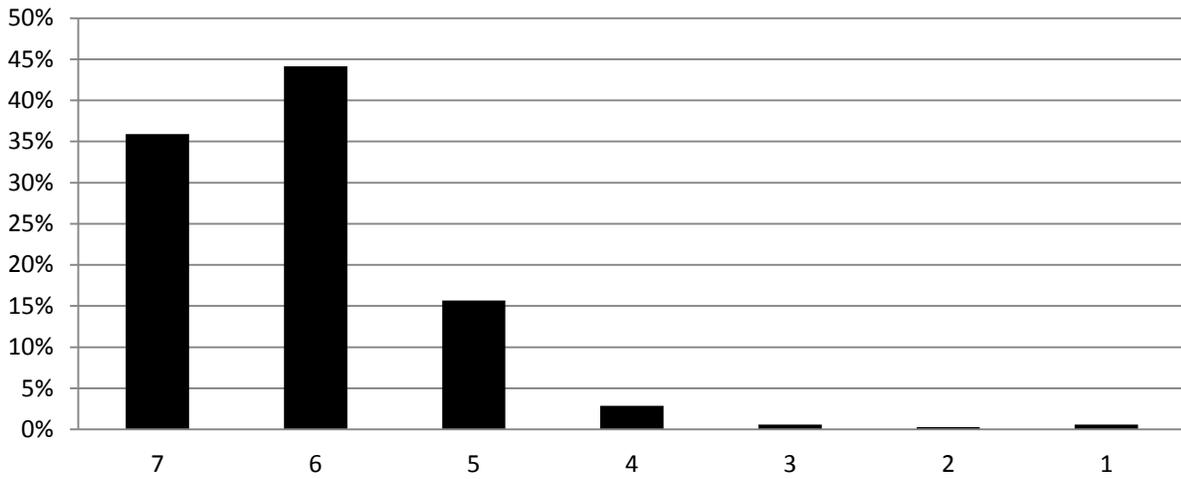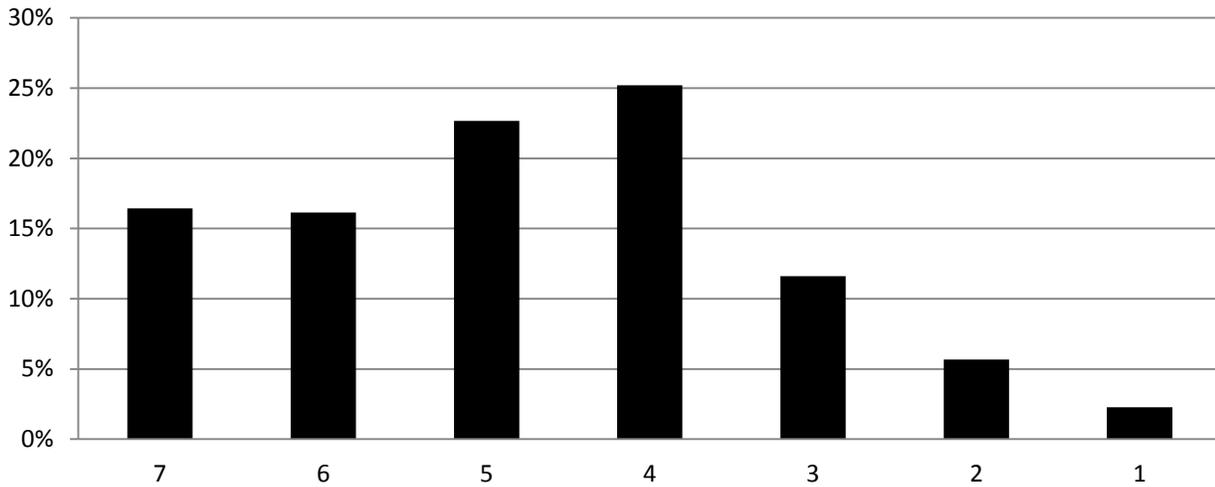13. Knowledge of fundamental insurance concepts
14. Creativity in finding solutions to a problem
15. Organizational skills
16. Analytical/problem solving skills
17. Ability to seek out and analyze information that will lead to new insights

SECTION 3 –Please indicate your agreement with the following statements regarding recently-graduated new hires and job candidates in the insurance industry. Strongly disagree – strongly agree

1. Recent hires and job candidates have excellent oral communication skills
2. Students with a liberal arts degree are better prepared for insurance career vs. those with other degrees
3. Recent hires and job candidates have excellent written communication skills
4. Recent hires and job candidates are able to adapt to different business situations
5. Knowing how to manage his/her time is a strength of recent hires and job candidates
6. Recent hires demonstrate initiative when completing job assignments
7. Recent hires and job candidates can be counted on to act ethically in situations

8. Leadership skills demonstrated by recent hires and job candidates are well developed
9. Recent hires work well within groups
10. A degree in a business discipline better prepares students for an insurance career vs. other degrees
11. Teamwork skills demonstrated by recent hires and job candidates are well developed
12. Interpersonal skills and the ability to relate well to others are well developed in recent hires and job candidates
13. Recent hires and job candidates have excellent computer skills
14. Critical thinking skills by recent hires and job candidates are well developed
15. Recent hires and job candidates have excellent knowledge of fundamental insurance skills
16. Creativity in finding solutions to a problem is a strength of recent hires and job applicants
17. Recent hires and job applicants have excellent organizational skills
18. Recent hires and job applicants have excellent analytical/problem-solving skills
19. Students with an insurance degree are better prepared for insurance career vs. those with other degrees
20. Seeking out and analyzing information that leads to new insights is a strength of recent hires and job applicants
21. What deficiencies do you typically see in your newly hired insurance professionals that might keep them from maximizing their success?

SECTION 4 - What attributes are ideal for a new hire for an insurance position? Please allocate 100 points among the categories below, giving more points to categories based on your perceived level of importance.

1. Written Communication Skills
2. Exhibits Ethical Professional Behavior
3. Works Well as a Team Member
4. Exhibits Enthusiasm for Learning
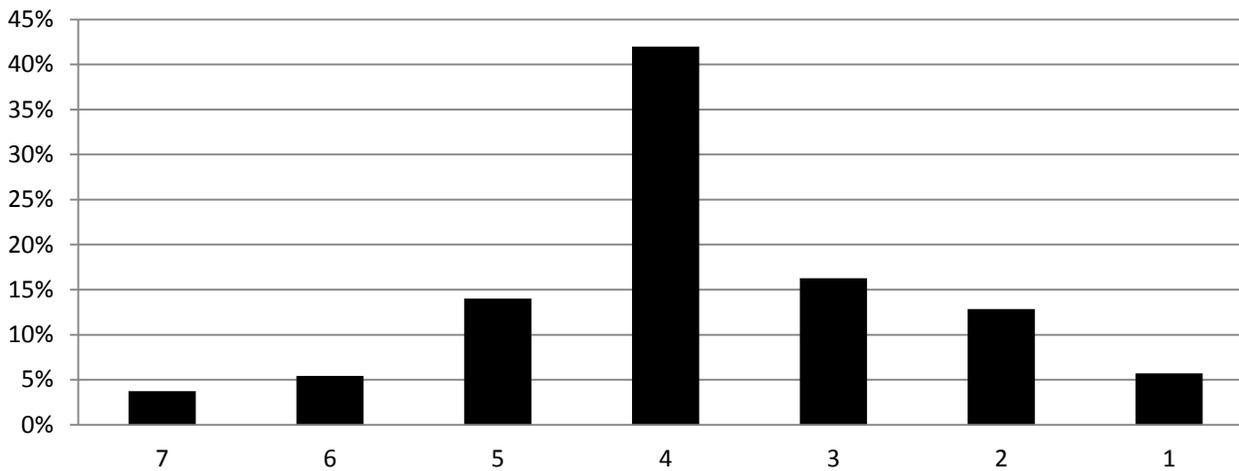5. Verbal Communication Skills
6. Strong Analytic/Problem Solving Skills
7. Adapts Quickly in Unfamiliar Situations
8. Strong Computer Skills
9. Works Well as a Team Leader
10. Insurance Specific Foundational/Technological Knowledge
11. Commitment to an Insurance Career
12. Initiative
13. Work Ethic

B. What Specific Skills/Attributes are Important?: Graphic Presentations of Results

Where: 7 = The utmost importance; 1 = No importance at all

Figure 2. Oral communication skills

Figure 3. Written communication skills

Figure 4. Adaptability to different business situations

Figure 5. Knows how to manage his/her time

Figure 6. Shows initiative

Figure 7. Predisposition to make ethical decisions

Figure 8. Leadership skills

Figure 9. Works well within groups

Figure 10. Demonstrated teamwork skills

Figure 11. Interpersonal skills

Figure 12. Proficiency in computer skills

Figure 13. Critical thinking skills

Figure 14. Knowledge of fundamental insurance concepts

Figure 15. Creativity in finding solutions to a problem
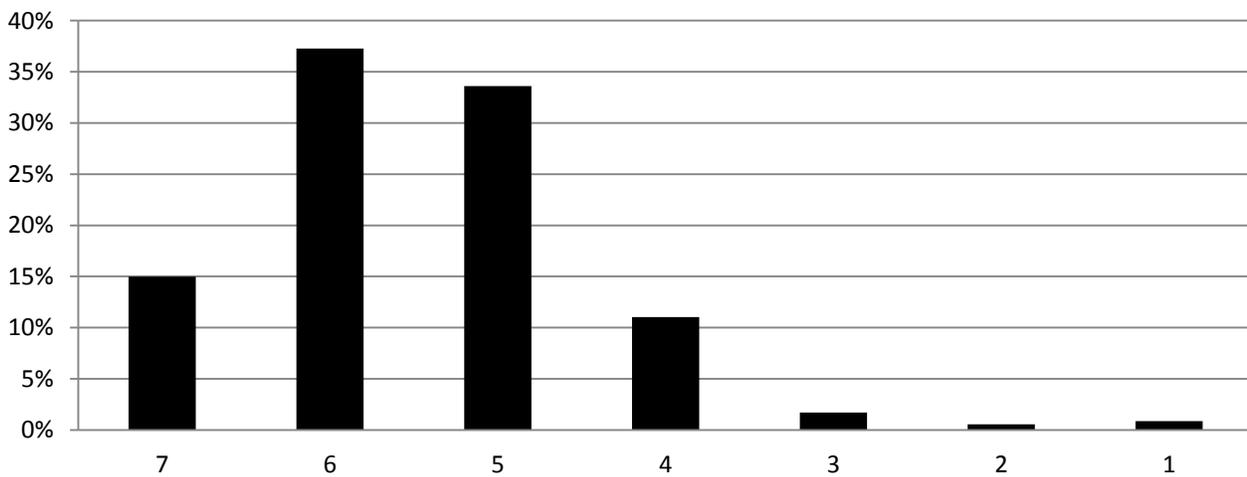
Figure 16. Organizational skills
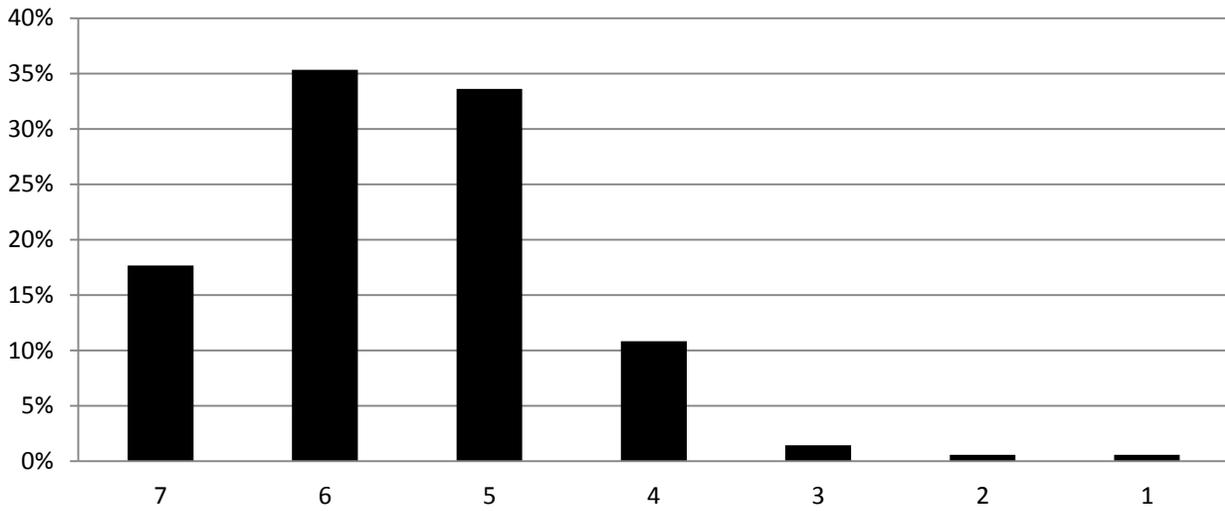
Figure 17. Analytical/problem solving skills
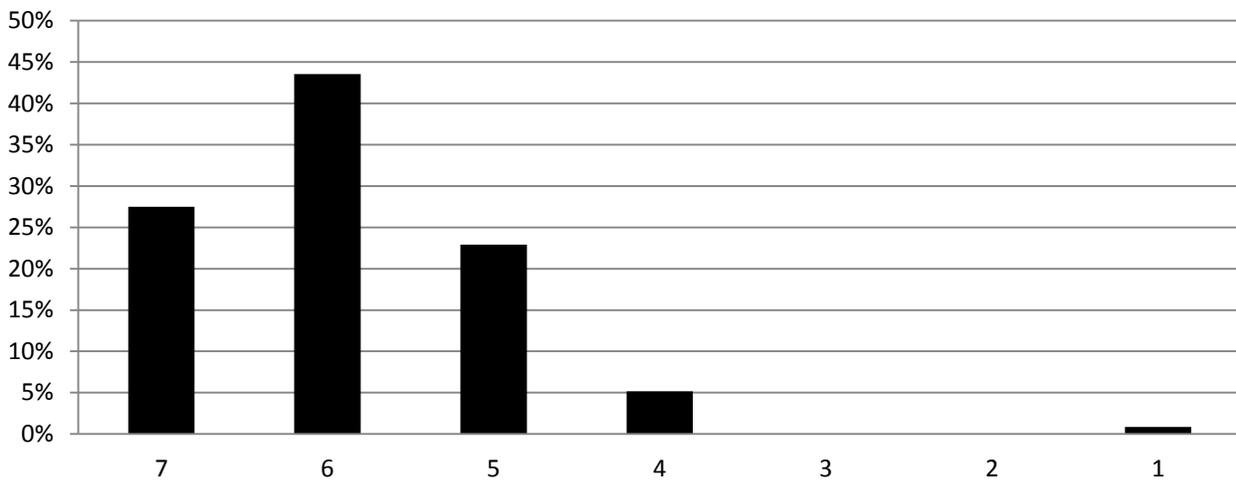
Figure 18. Ability to seek out and analyze information that will lead to new insights
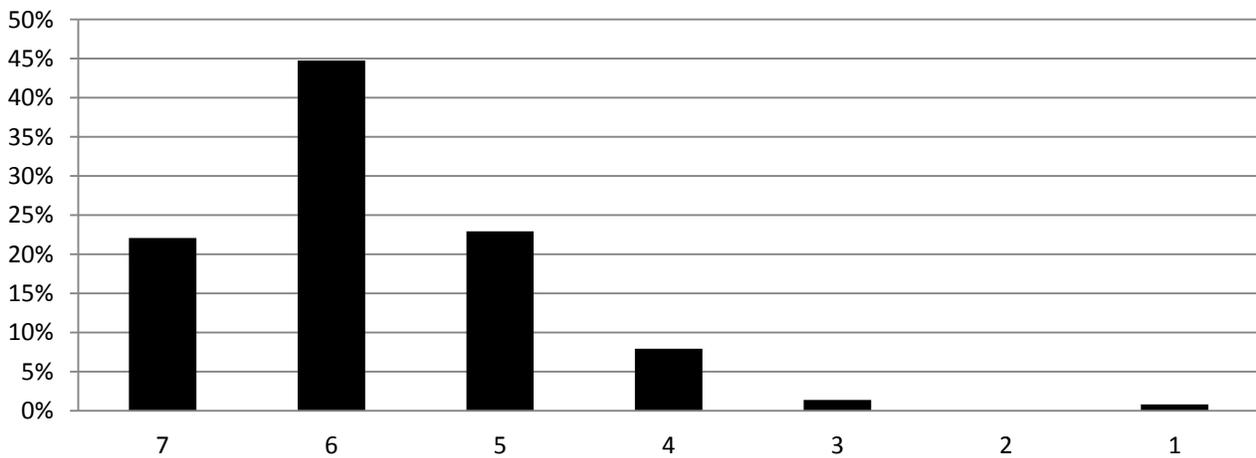
C. To What Degree are New Hires Prepared for the Workforce: Graphic Presentations of Results

Where: 7 = Strongly agree; 1 = Strongly disagree

Figure 19. Recent hires and job candidates have excellent oral communication skills
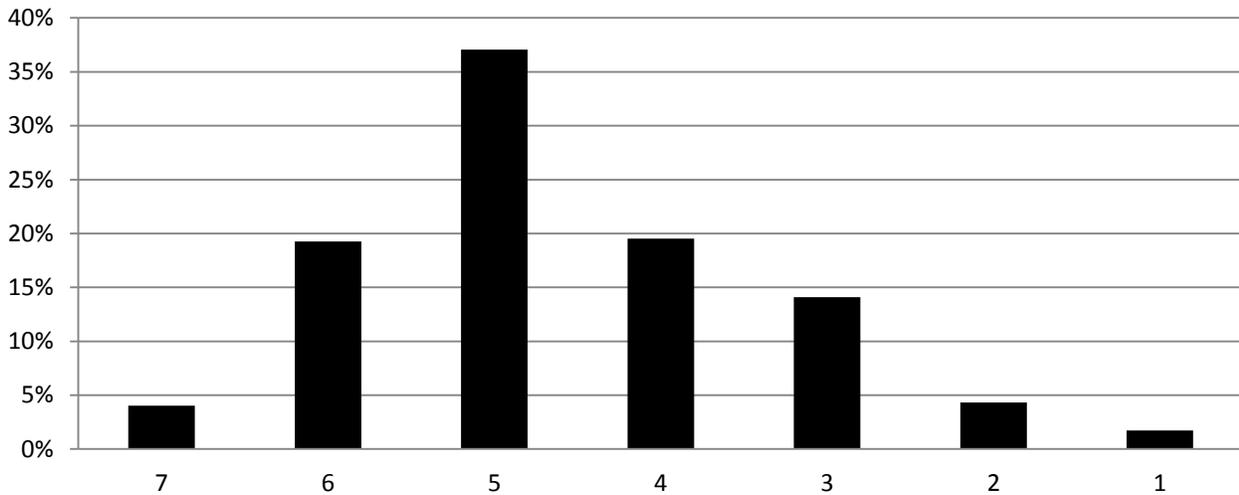
Figure 20. Students with a liberal arts degree are better prepared for insurance career vs. those with other degrees

Figure 21. Recent hires and job candidates have excellent written communication skills
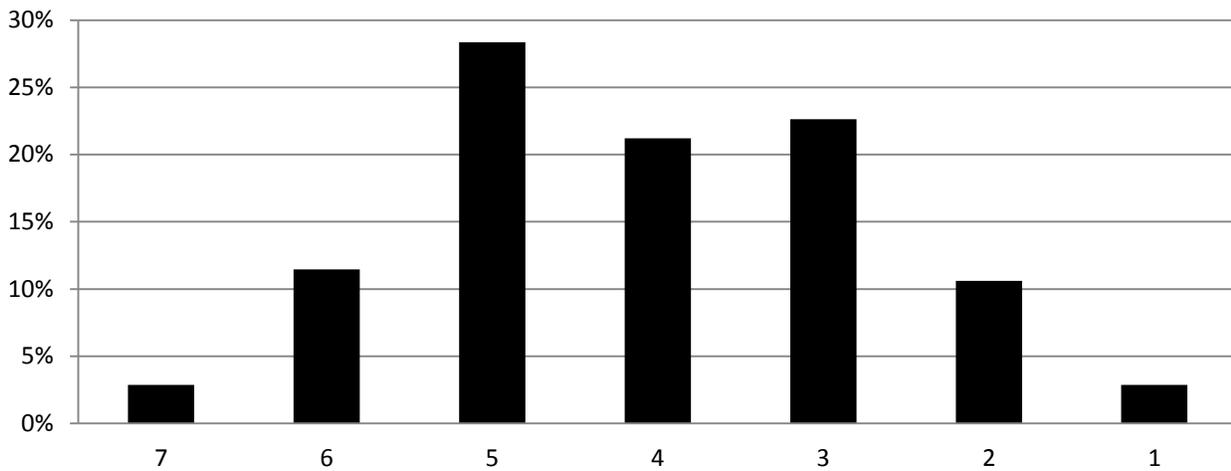
Figure 22. Recent hires and job candidates are able to adapt to different business situations
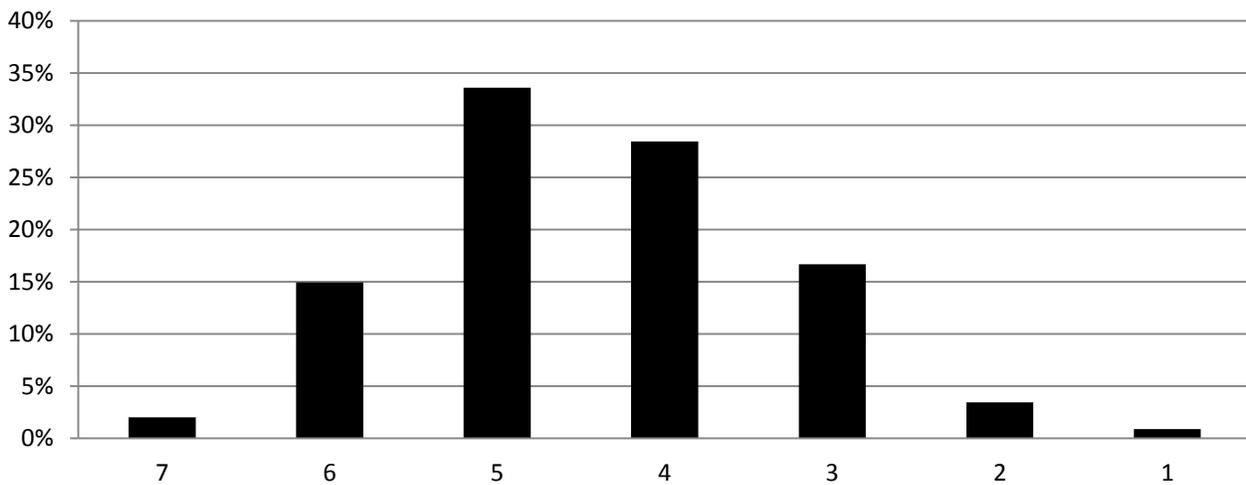
Figure 23. Knowing how to manage his/her time is a strength of recent hires and job candidates
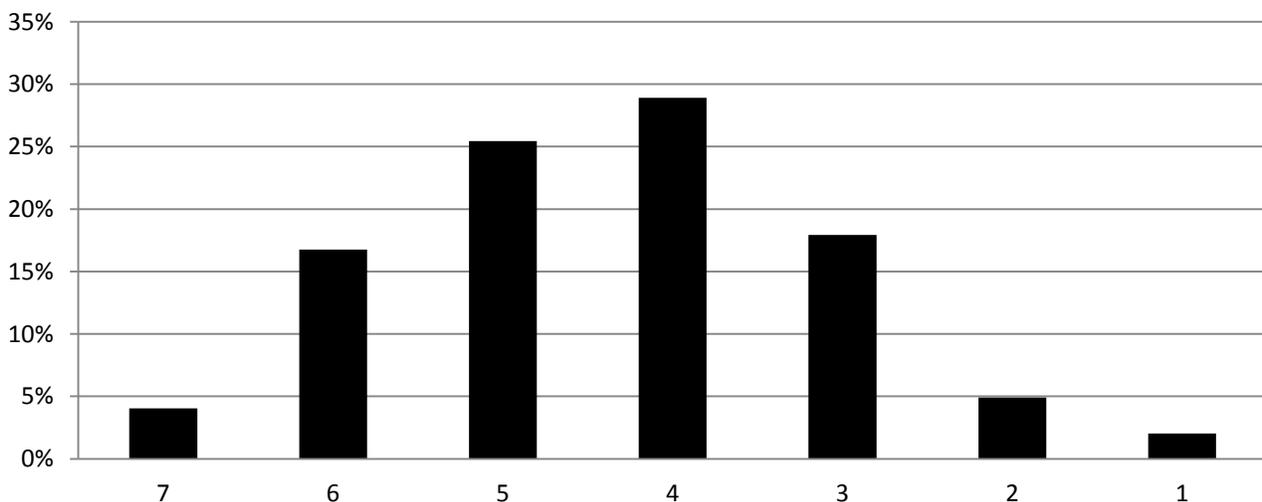
Figure 24. Recent hires demonstrate initiative when completing job assignments
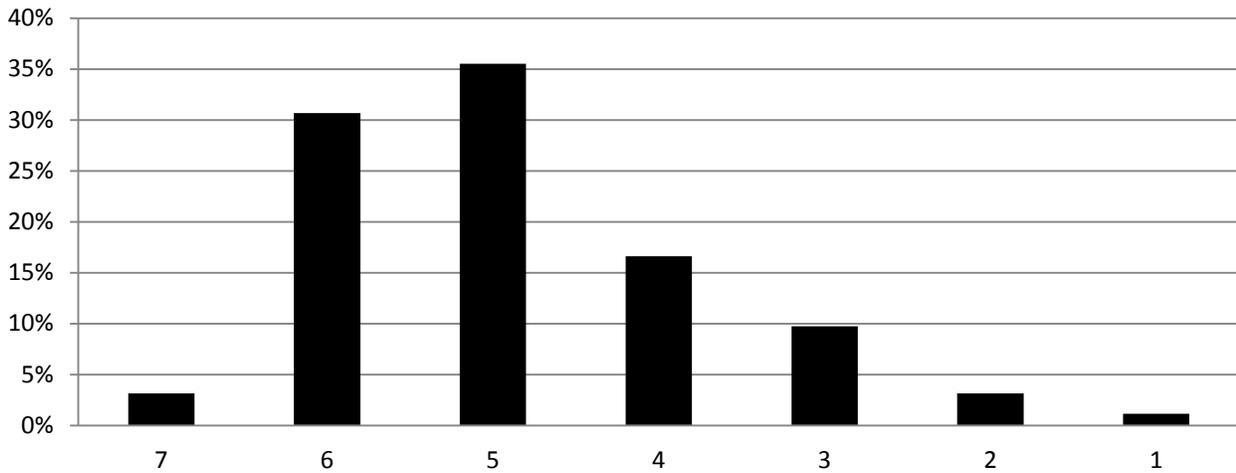
Figure25. Recent hires and job candidates can be counted on to act ethically in situations
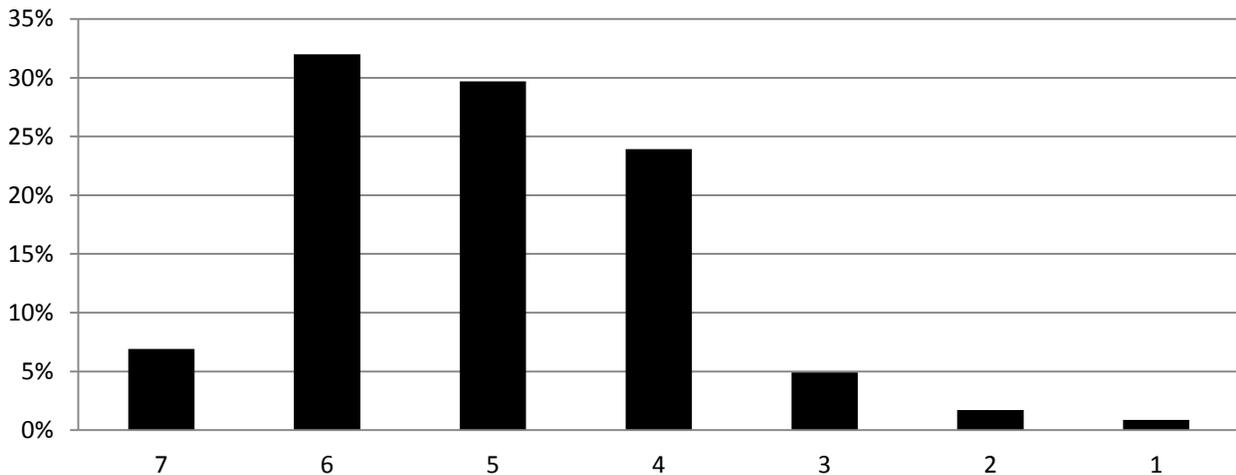
Figure 26. Leadership skills demonstrated by recent hires and job candidates are well developed
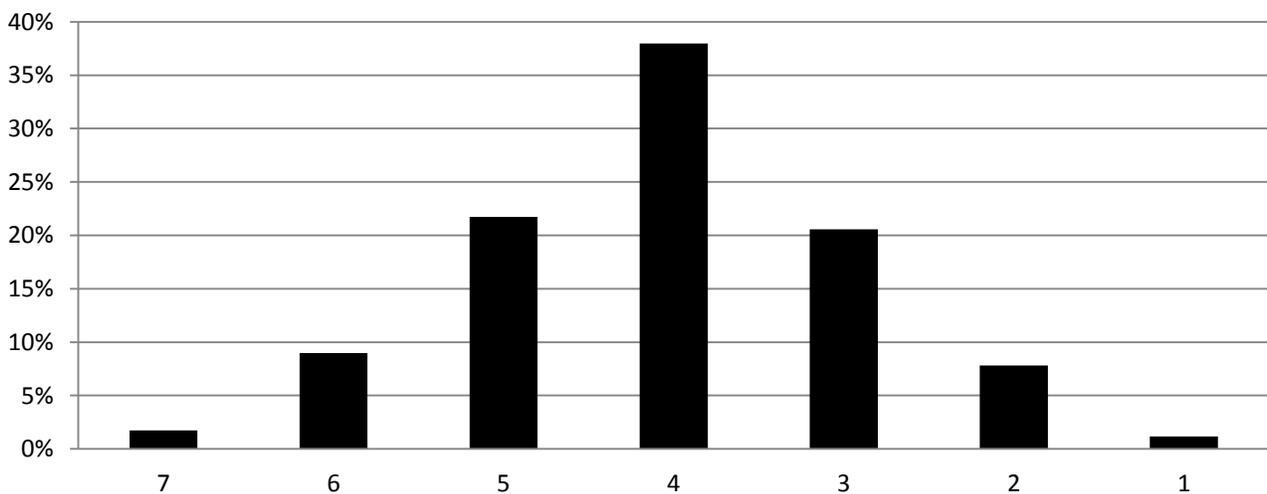
Figure 27. Recent hires work well within groups
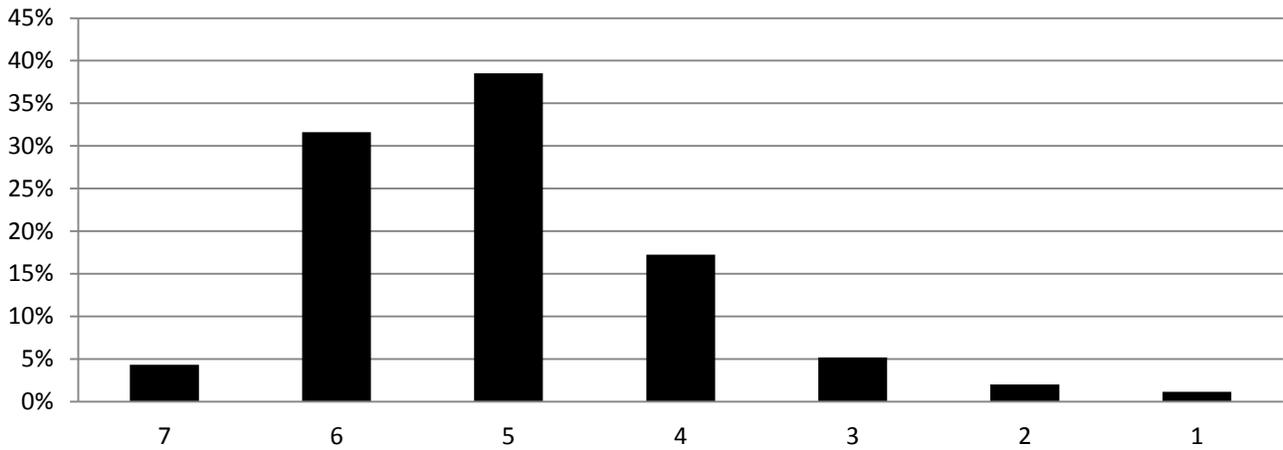
Figure 28. A degree in a business discipline better prepares students for an insurance career vs. other degrees
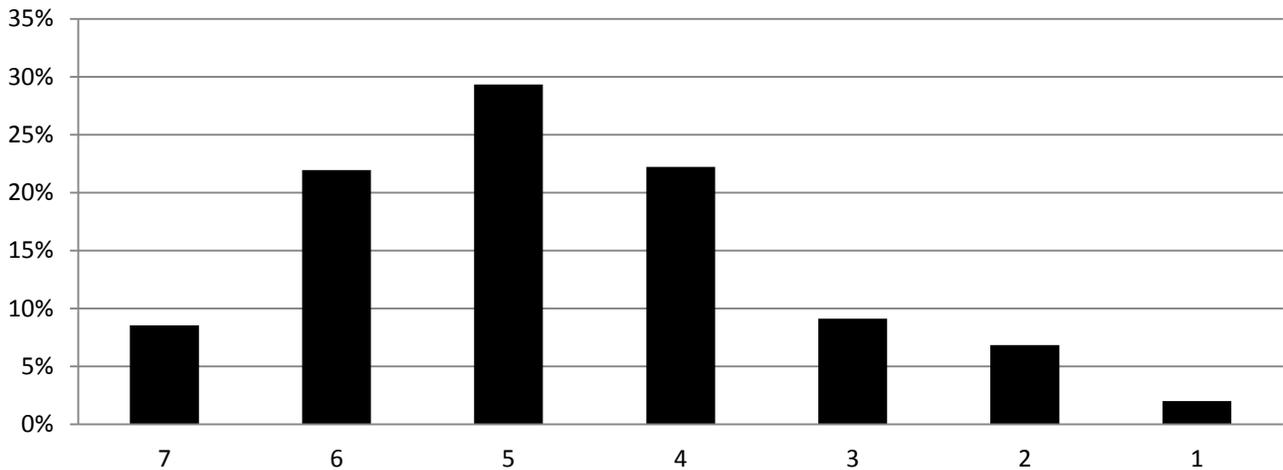
Figure 29. Teamwork skills demonstrated by recent hires and job candidates are well developed
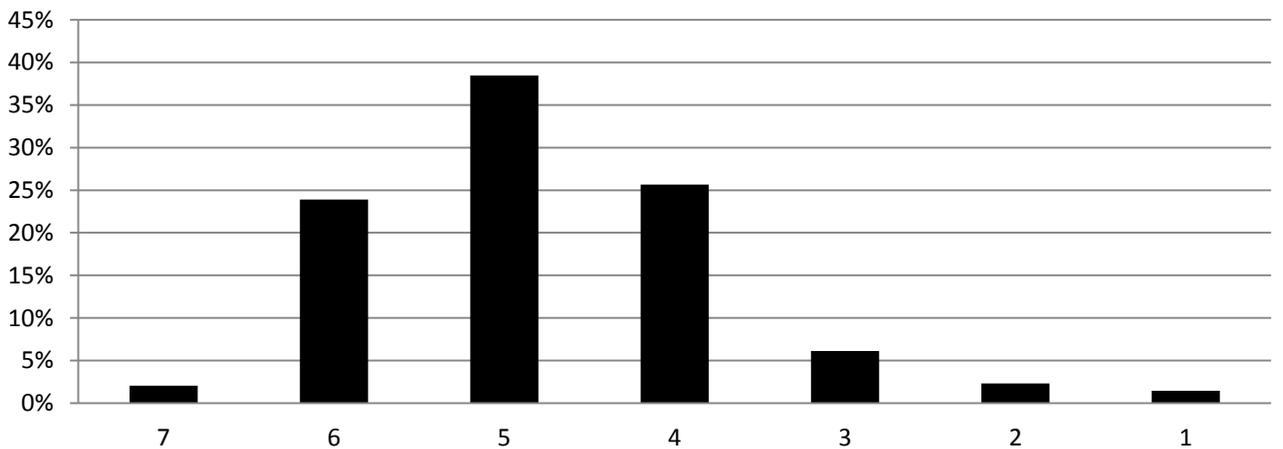
Figure 30. Interpersonal skills and the ability to relate well to others are well developed in recent hires and job candidates
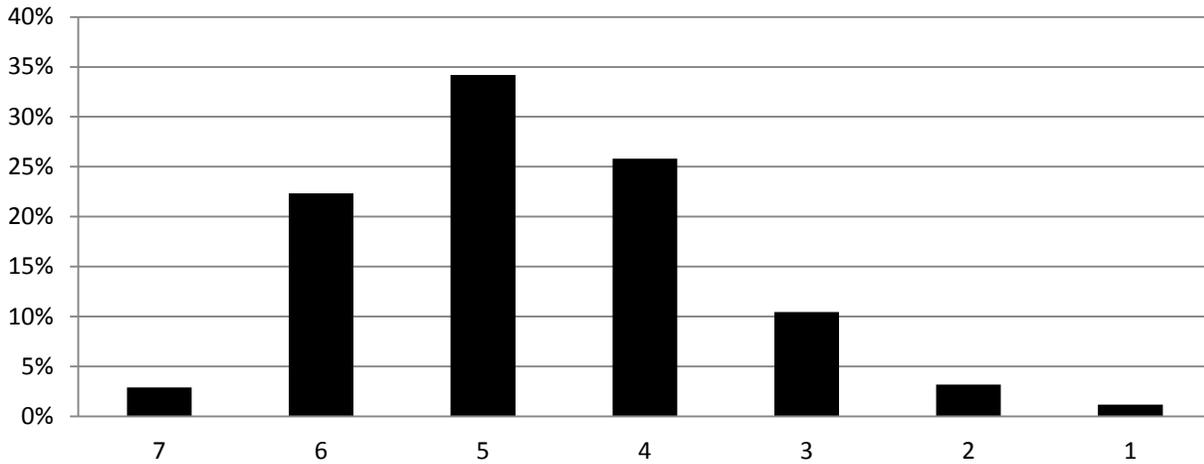
Figure 31. Recent hires and job candidates have excellent computer skills
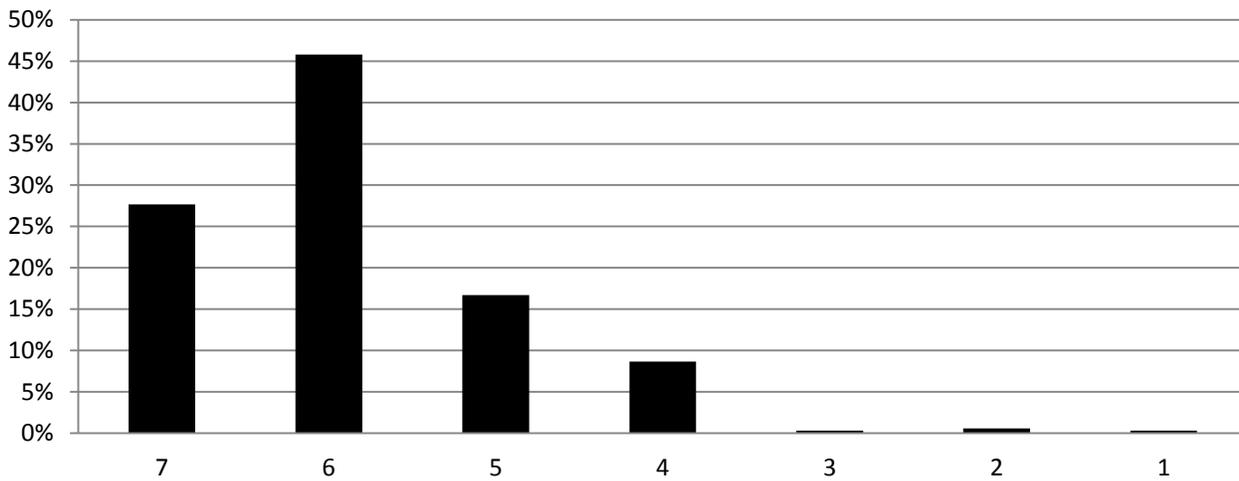
Figure 32. Critical thinking skills by recent hires and job candidates are well developed
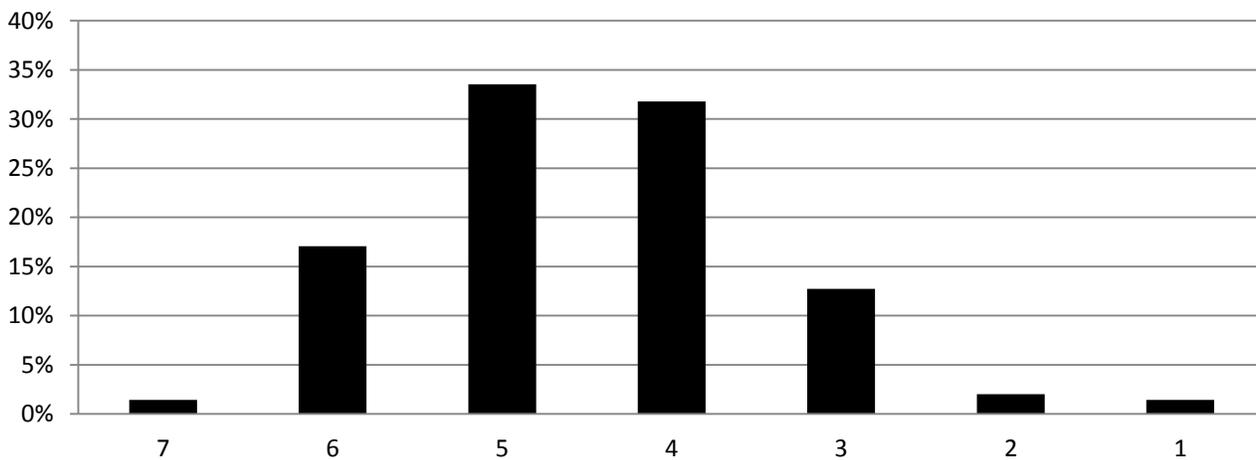
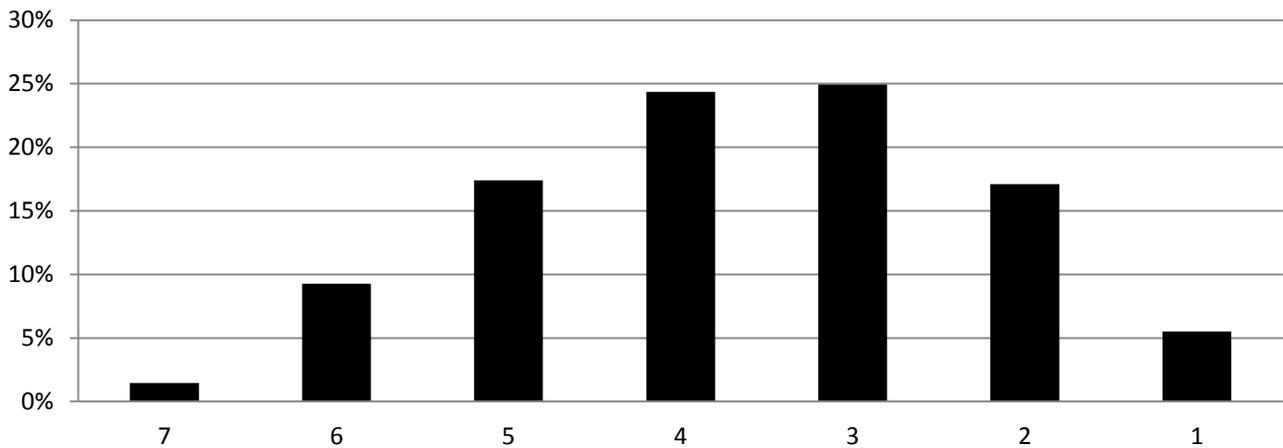**Figure 33. Recent hires and job candidates have excellent knowledge of fundamental insurance skills**

Figure 34. Creativity in finding solutions to a problem is a strength of recent hires and job applicants
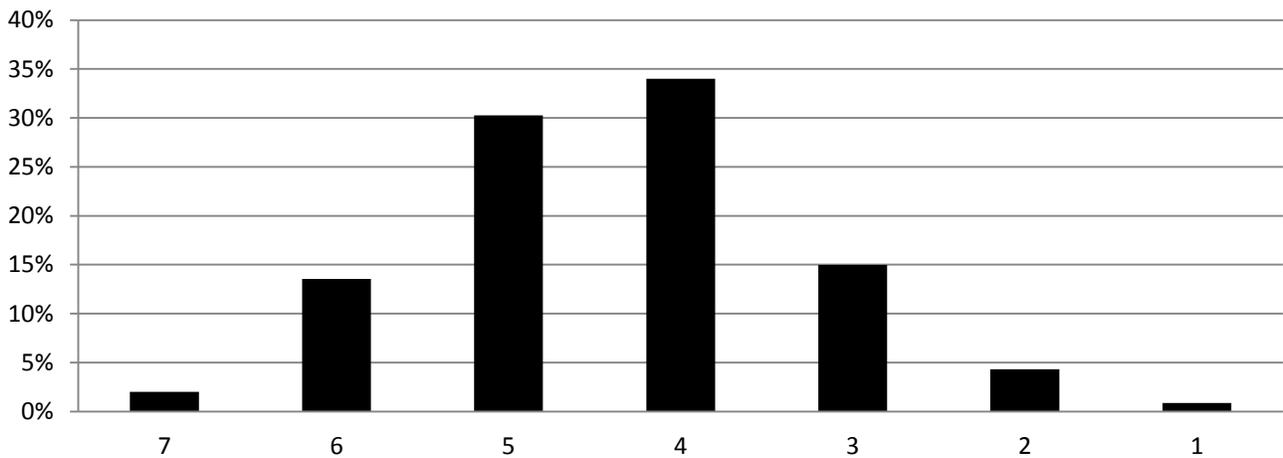

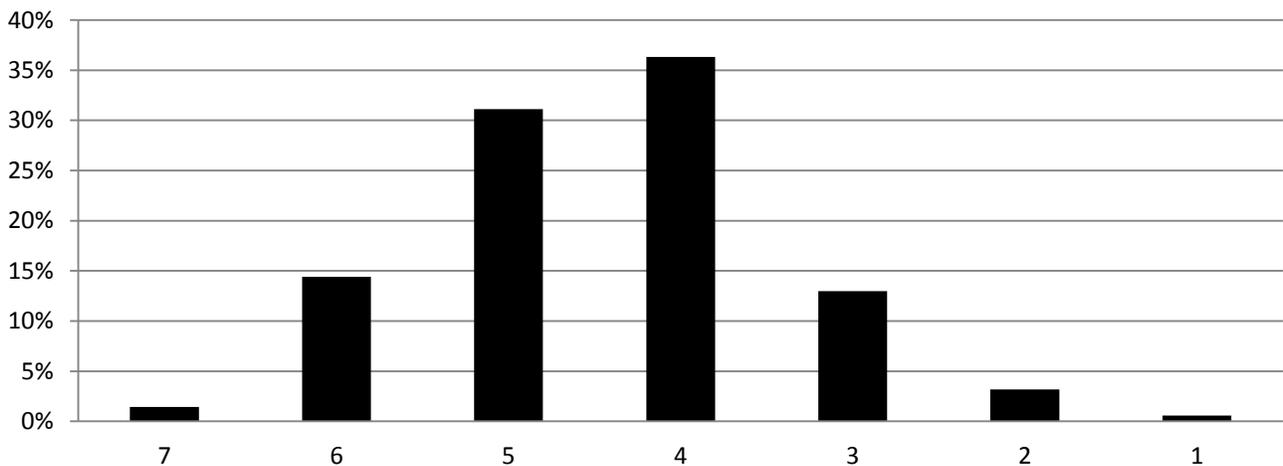**Figure 35. Recent hires and job applicants have excellent organizational skills**

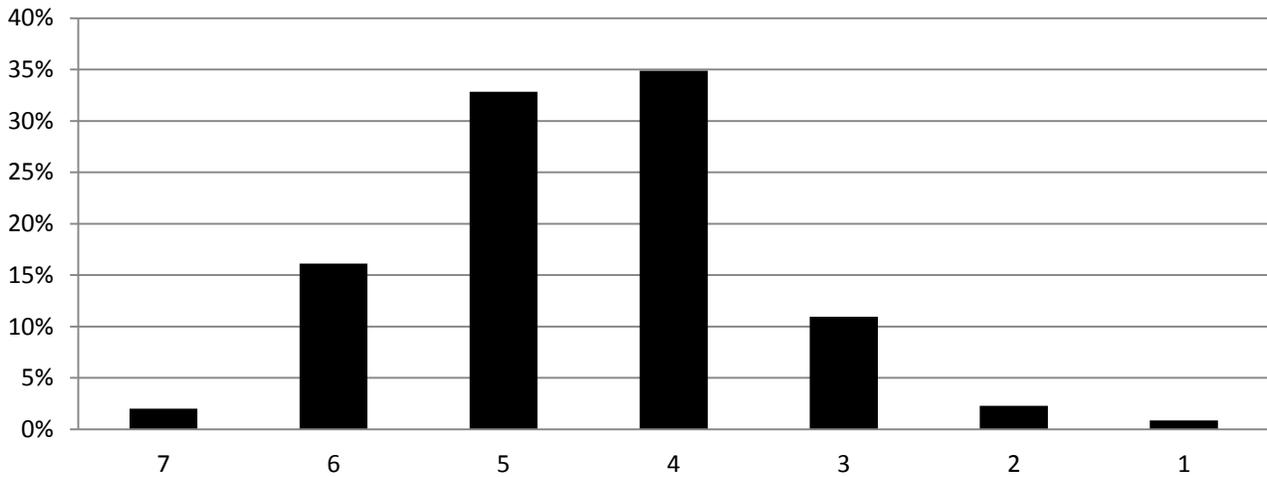**Figure 36. Recent hires and job applicants have excellent analytical/problem-solving skills**

Figure 37. Students with an insurance degree are better prepared for insurance career vs. those with other degrees
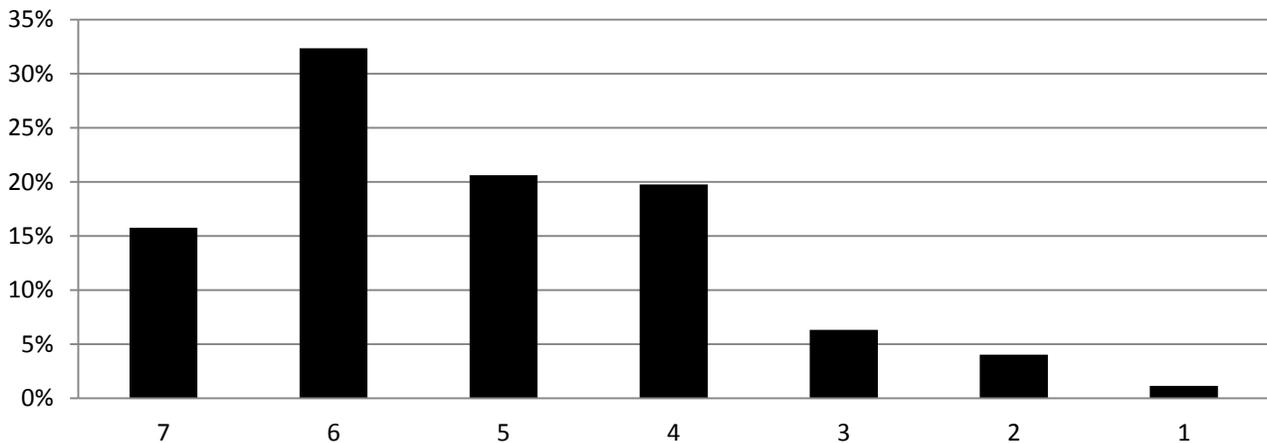

Figure 38. Seeking out and analyzing information that leads to new insights is a strength of recent hires and job applicants