

The October survey asked for views on oil prices, employee rights, management, training both for those running their own businesses and for their staff, government grants, 'road charging', crime and security, selling and buying through the internet and the biggest source of time wastage.

About the respondents

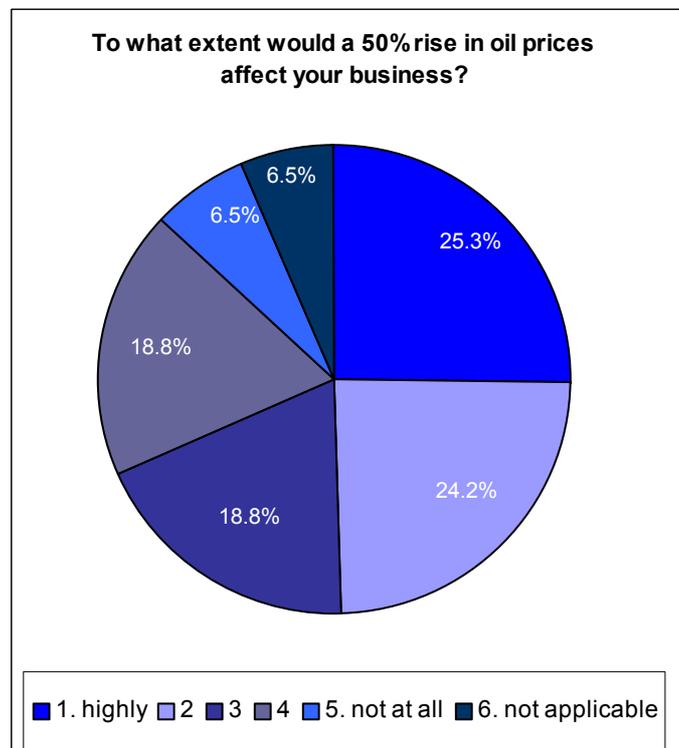
186 respondents were drawn with the following population characteristics:

Sector			
Production & Manufacturing	Distribution	Services	Total
28.0%	8.1%	64.0%	100.0%

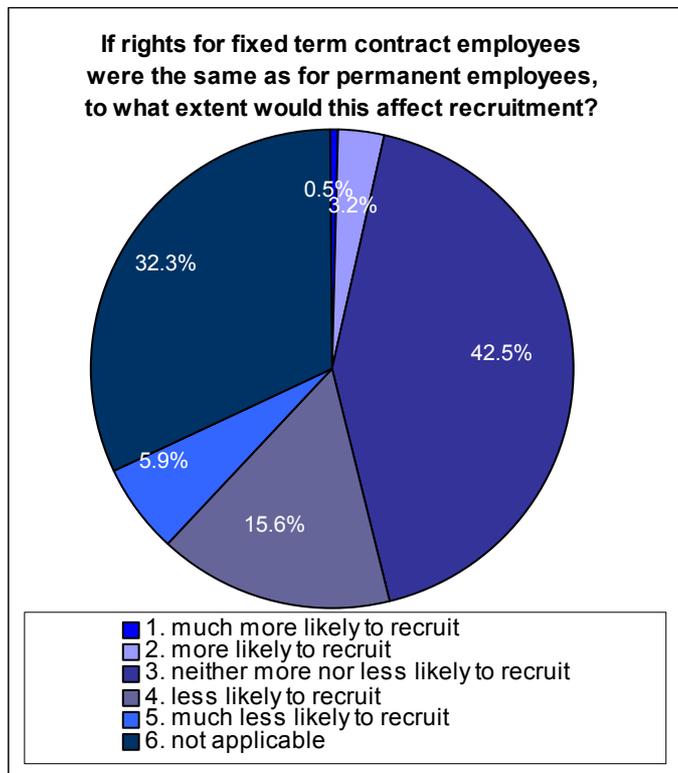
Turnover (£)			
< 1 M	1M-3M	>3M	Total
66.7%	19.9%	13.4%	100.0%

Number of Full-time Employees						
1-10	11-20	21-50	51-100	100+	unknown	Grand Total*
49.5%	30.1%	7.0%	3.2%	3.2%	7.0%	100.0%

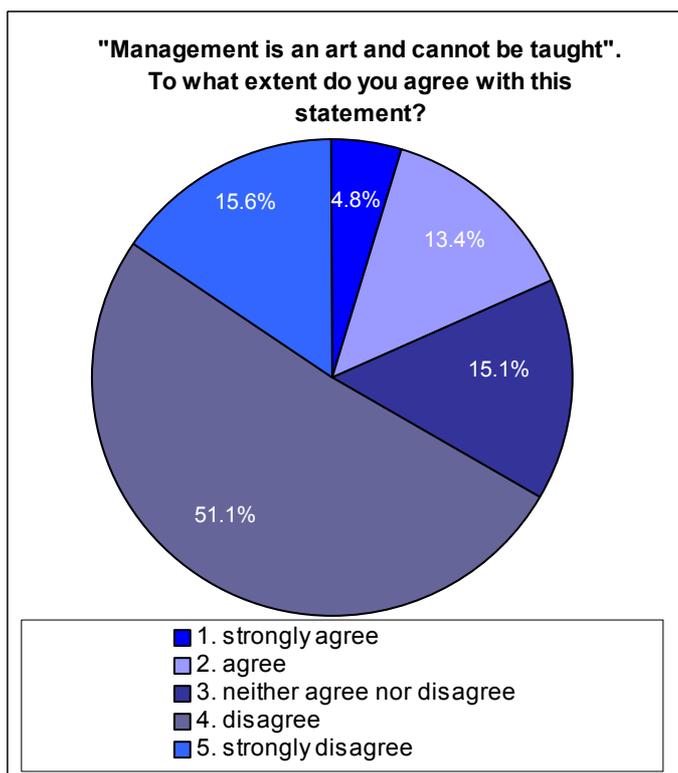
Recent volatility in oil prices has given rise to commentary on the impact of yet further large increases, dependent on the international situation. If faced with a 50% rise, 25% of respondents' businesses would be highly affected, with another 24% moderately highly affected. 19% of businesses would be moderately affected. 19% of businesses would be moderately affected.



Changes in employment conditions for fixed term contract employees is not a major issue for any of our respondents. 32% found the question was not applicable and 43% did not believe that improvement for employees would affect their recruitment expectation. Of the remainder, more felt they would be less or much less likely to recruit (22%) than those who would be more or much more likely to recruit (3%).

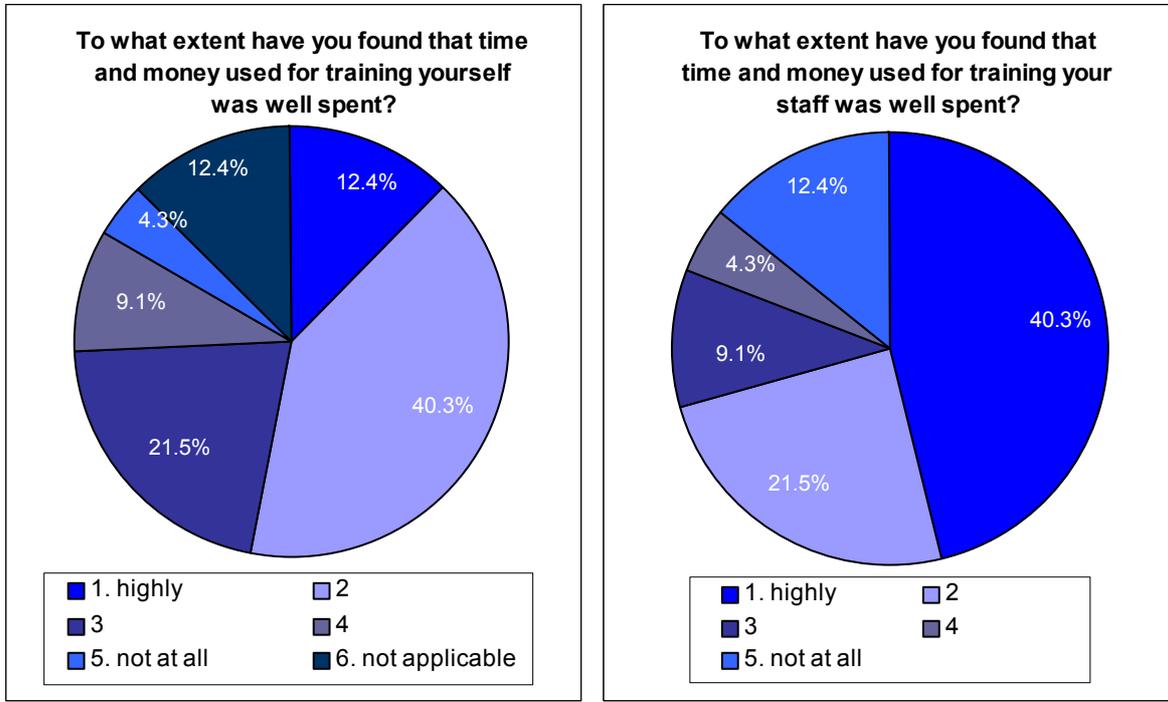


A question on whether management can or cannot be taught brought a fairly strong majority view – 51% believe it can be taught, another 16% believed this very strongly. On the other hand, 5% strongly believed it cannot be taught and 13% agreed with them, but less strongly.

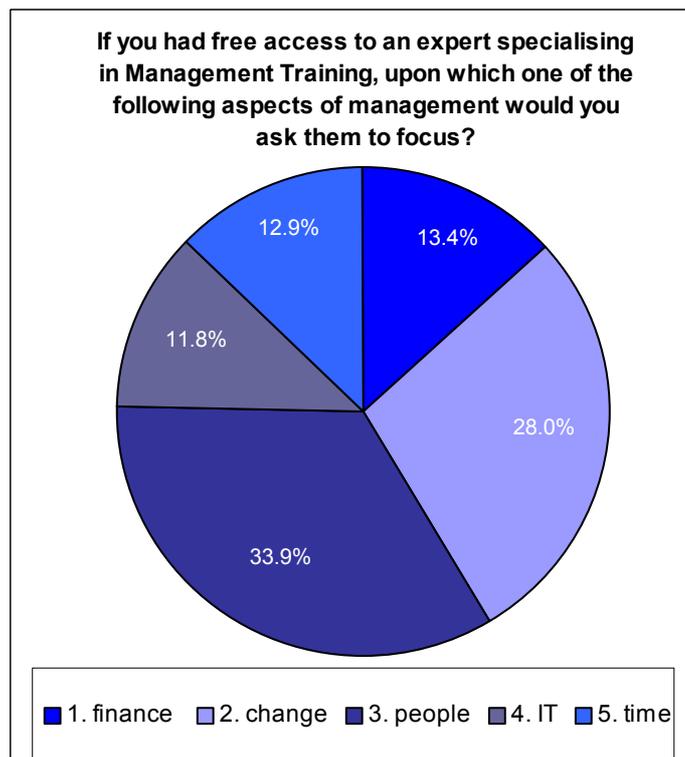


Drawing the distinction between training for owner/entrepreneurs and their staff, 53% found time and money highly, or moderately highly, well spent on themselves, although the October Business Advisers Barometer survey showed that only 4% of Advisers' clients learn and develop their business acumen through training courses.

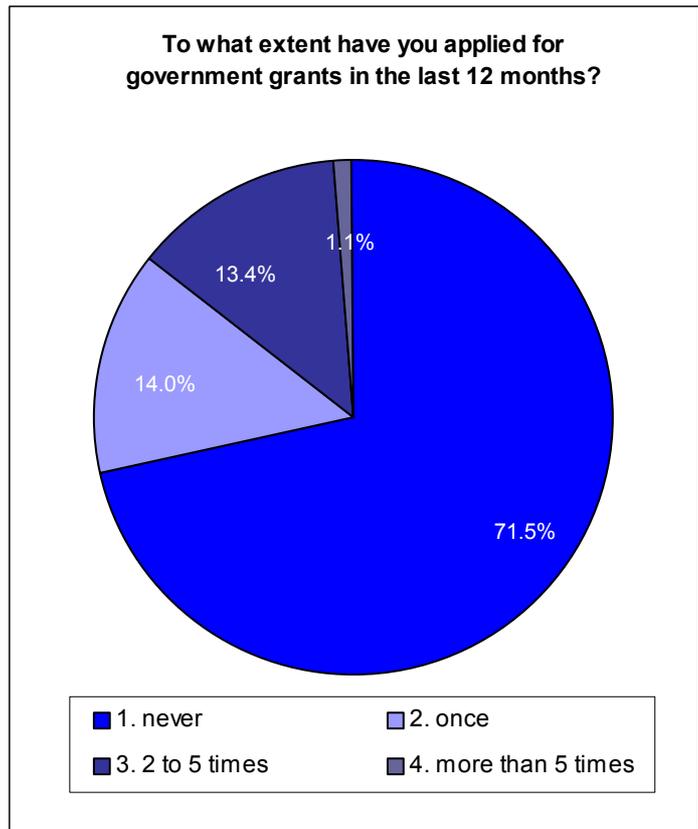
62% of respondents found training time and money to be highly, or moderately highly, well spent on their staff. .



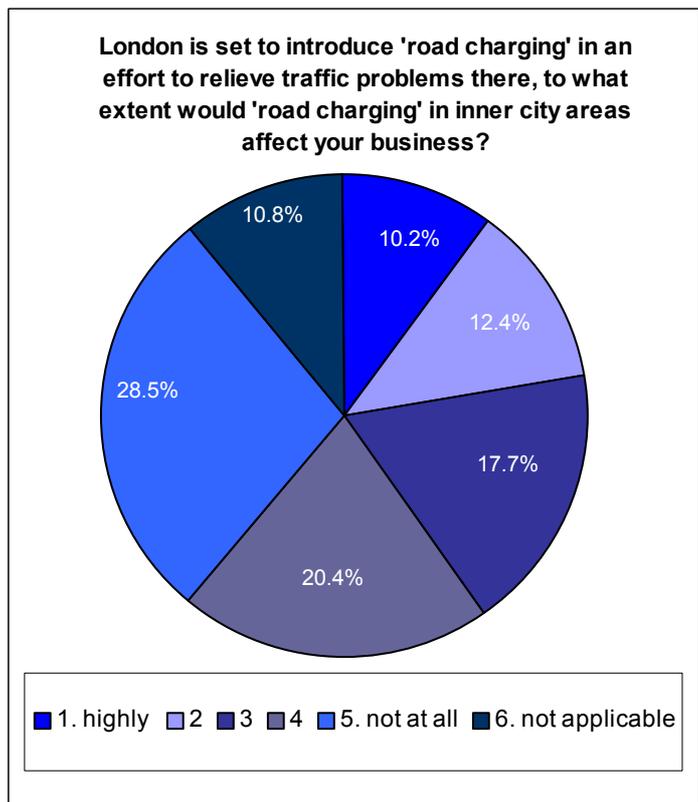
The type of management training attracting most votes was direct management of people (34%). Change management came second with 28%:



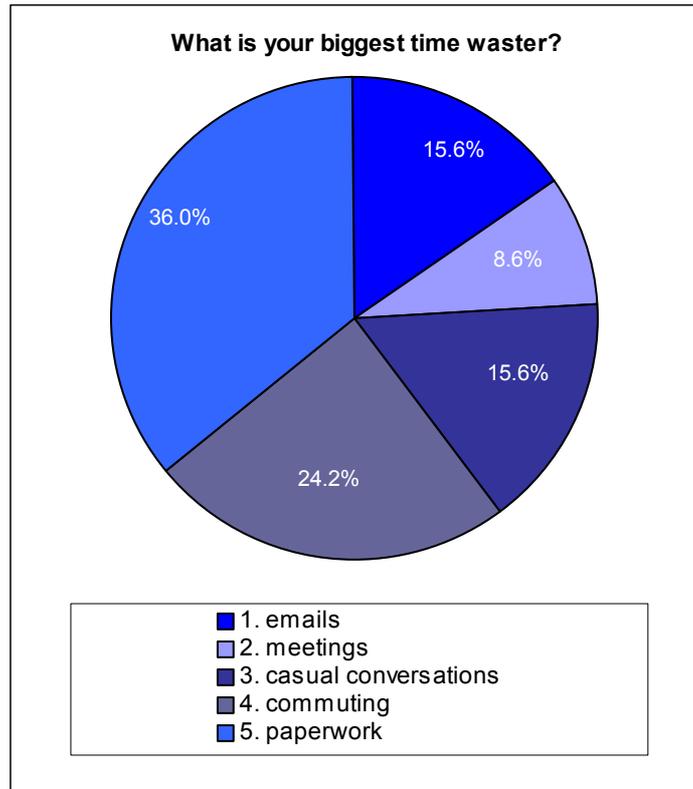
Few respondents have applied for government grants in the last 12 months. Amongst those who have applied for grants, half have applied for more than one grant:



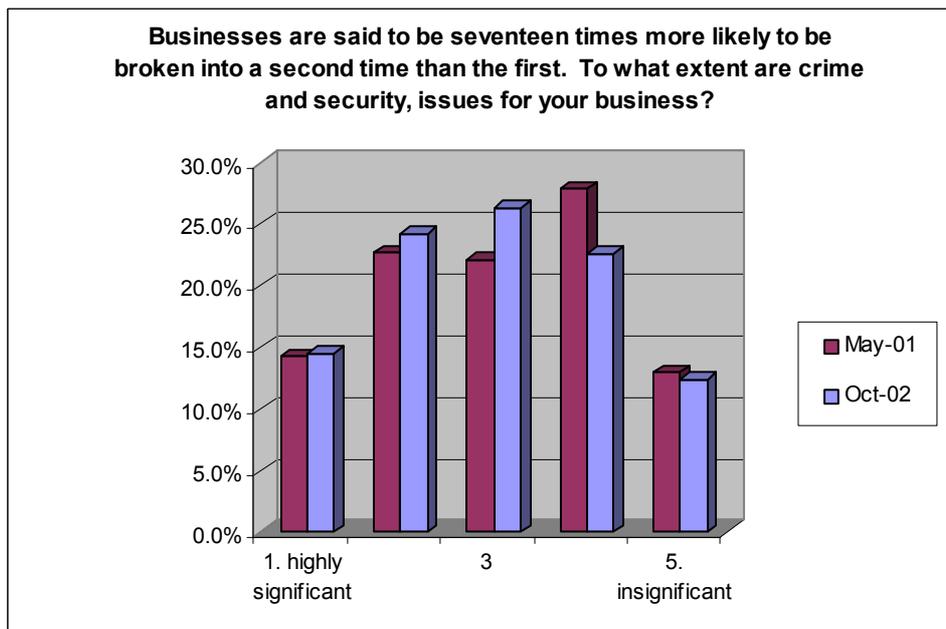
Looking at the possibility of the new road charging scheme being taken up in other inner city areas, 61% of respondents would expect some effect on their business, but only 10% to a high extent.



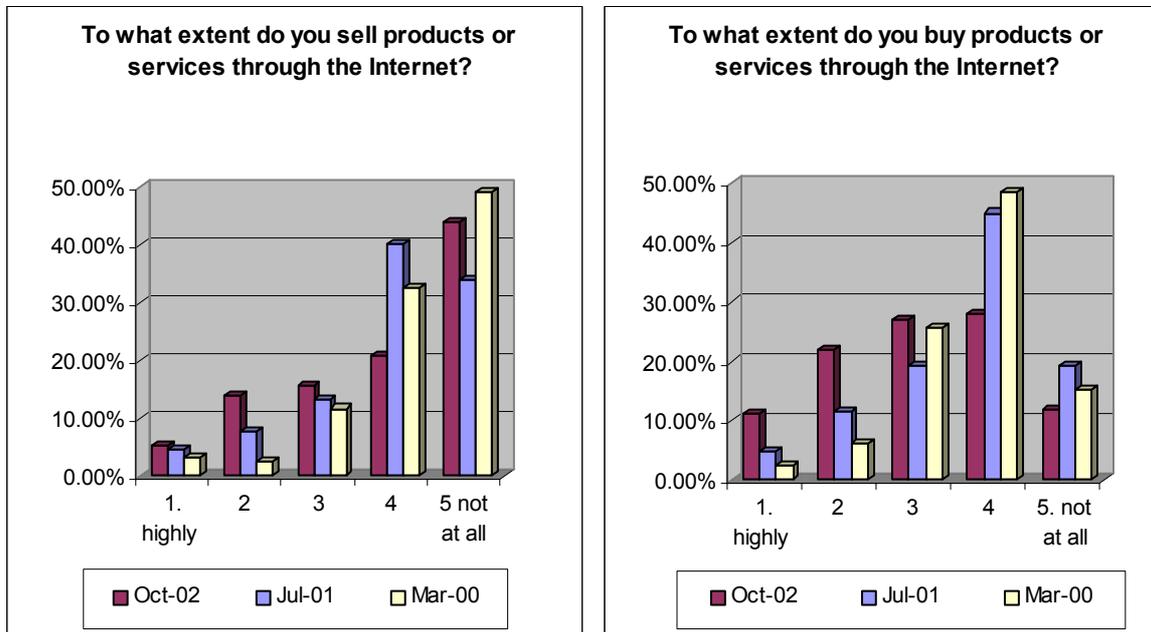
Every entrepreneur is aware of operational tasks that are less productive. 36% of our respondents feel that paperwork wastes most time, while 24% waste time more on commuting than on the other tasks.



Crime and security are highly significant or significant issues for 39% of respondents but insignificant to 12%. There was a small increase in the level of significance to businesses since we last asked this question, in May 2001.



According to a recent external survey, 94% of businesses are predicting that consumer demand for availability of goods through the Internet will increase. The last two questions in the October survey were follow-ups to similar questions in two previous UKBB surveys. Responses across the three surveys suggest growing support for this in respect of both buying and selling products or services.



**Listed below are extracts from feedback received in Survey BB53 October 2002**  
**Comments are listed under sector headings.**

*Views expressed are those of individual panellists and may not represent those of the University.*

**Construction**

How much does the recent "de-stocking" by suppliers affect the overall efficiency of your business?

**Motor Trade**

**“Q8. London is set to introduce ‘road charging’ in an effort to relieve traffic problems there, to what extent would ‘road charging’ in inner city areas affect your business?”**

Highly in a positive way, as we are Motorcycle dealers who should see an increase in 2 wheel transport caused by the move away from chargeable modes such as cars.

**Production & Manufacturing**

**“Q8. London is set to introduce ‘road charging’ in an effort to relieve traffic problems there, to what extent would ‘road charging’ in inner city areas affect your business?”**

As rail suppliers the effect could be positive.

I believe a reduction in traffic congestion in the inner city would improve business and fully support the concept.

## **Feedback Survey BB53 October 2002 - continued**

### **Business Services**

**“Q7. To what extent have you applied for government grants in the last 12 months?”**

There are virtually no grants in my area. I would apply for everything I could would there be a grant available.

Email - Email communication is fundamental to our business - so email is not a waste of time. However spams are and this is a growing problem.

**“Q9. What is your biggest time waster?”** - Biggest time waster is junk mail and collecting payments

EC/UK Government red tape slows Internet growth

My biggest time waster is the telephone, and the dramatic increase in companies that telephone during the day wanting to sell me something or wanting to conduct a survey. It has reached the point where I have unfortunately started to get annoyed with the callers (although I know that they are only doing their jobs) because they are just taking up unnecessary time and blocking the phone lines. An email survey like this is far less intrusive and disruptive.

**“Q9. What is your biggest time waster?”** - The biggest timewaster to my business is cold callers wanting to speak to the Finance Director or Managing Director about saving costs on electricity by changing supplier for example.

### **Retail**

Crime is our biggest issue - on an average week we can expect to be the victim of a crime twice - this is putting untold stress on staff, resources and we face the threat of having insurance cover withdrawn or having to suffer exceptional excesses for our claims. We pay extortionate rates for which we receive no benefit at all (we do not even get the bins emptied!) - more resources should be put into policing.

### **Other**

Our business travel cannot be helped but it is getting more of a pain every month/year and wastes a lot of our time and hence our money.