



The Alliance of Sector Councils
L'Alliance des conseils sectoriels



SKILLS AGENDA

HELPING THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY



Skills Agenda: Helping the Economic Recovery
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The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC) is a network of some 37 sector councils and sector-like organizations that bring together representatives from business, labour, education, and other professional groups in a neutral forum to comprehensively and cooperatively analyze and address sector-wide human resource issues on a national scale.

SKILLS AGENDA: HELPING THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY

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SECTOR COUNCILS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN CANADA'S LABOUR MARKET

This compilation of articles, commissioned by The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC) in 2009, provides an informative overview of the breadth and strengths of the tools, programs and resources developed and delivered by Canada's sector councils.

Sector councils are industry-led partnership organizations that address skills development issues and implement solutions in key sectors of the economy. Sector councils work as a uniting element to engage employers, workers, educators, professional associations and government in a strategic alliance that is focused on implementing solutions to the specific skills and human resource needs that will enable their sector to thrive.

Over the past 15 to 20 years, a focus on human resource strategies became the catalyst for the creation of sector councils. With today's global marketplace changing at an unprecedented rate, dramatic shifts in the economy, large-scale layoffs, recession, changing demographics and the pace of technological advancements combine to add pressure to an already competitive labour market. It is essential that Canadians be prepared to meet these challenges with the skills, knowledge and confidence that are required to succeed in this new landscape—and sector councils are well positioned to help Canadians address these labour market issues.

The Alliance of Sector Councils is where Canada's sector councils converge to become a unified,

cooperative movement that is committed to reaching shared economic goals, and addressing skills development, labour market and human resource issues across sectors.

We hope you will find these articles provide you with insight into the valuable work of Canada's sector councils.

**CHERYL PARADOWSKI, CHAIR,
THE ALLIANCE OF SECTOR COUNCILS
AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CANADIAN GROCERY HR COUNCIL.**

**For more information about
TASC and sector councils,
please visit our website at
www.councils.org.**

SECTOR COUNCILS BRING ALL THE KEY PLAYERS—COMPANY OWNERS, CORPORATE LEADERS, LABOUR, GOVERNMENT, EDUCATORS AND INDIVIDUALS— TOGETHER TO CREATE THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR CANADIAN BUSINESSES TO SUCCEED. CANADA'S INDUSTRY-LED SECTOR COUNCILS ARE ONE OF THIS COUNTRY'S COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES. BY RESPONDING TO CHANGING HUMAN RESOURCE NEEDS, THEY HELP KEEP CANADA AND CANADIANS ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY. [SECTOR COUNCILS] HAVE SUCCESSFULLY MANAGED TO LEVERAGE OUTSIDE SUPPORT FROM INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDERS RESULTING IN 70 CENTS OF OUTSIDE INVESTMENT FOR EVERY DOLLAR INVESTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA. THOSE INVESTMENTS ARE PRODUCING IMPRESSIVE RESULTS THROUGH WORK WITH OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS, CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND ONLINE LEARNING PROGRAMS.

THE HONOURABLE DIANE FINLEY, MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT.
IN AN ADDRESS TO MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE OF SECTOR COUNCILS ON FEBRUARY 5, 2009.



PARTNERSHIPS THAT PUT STUDENTS ON PROMISING CAREER PATHS:

BY SHARON FERNANDEZ

THE TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD PILOT AND BEYOND

Canada is at a skills crossroads. Relentless technological, economic and social change is placing unprecedented pressure on the country to develop a skilled workforce to drive the next period of economic prosperity. New competencies, high-potential employees and boundaryless careers are at a premium. As a result, young people today face circuitous career journeys as they transition into the 21st century workforce.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Effective training curricula and stakeholder alignment are needed to help high school students choose careers and succeed in the real world of work. At the same time, the more than 200,000 teenagers who drop out of school before the age of 16 need to find pathways to productive futures.

Sector councils can help. Sector councils build strategic alliances between industry and schools to expand innovative education programs that promote skills that are essential for students in their learning and future careers.

“Sector councils,” as Human Resources and Skills Development Minister Diane Finley described in February 2009, “bring all the key players—company owners, corporate leaders, labour, government, education and individuals—together to create the conditions necessary for Canadian businesses to succeed. Canada’s 33 industry-led sector councils are one of this country’s competitive advantages.”

INVESTING IN THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF ONTARIANS IS A CORNERSTONE OF THE GOVERNMENT’S PLAN TO STRENGTHEN THE ECONOMY.

ONTARIO MINISTRY OF TRAINING COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, MAY 2009.

A MODEL PARTNERSHIP

One example of a strategic alliance is between Canada’s sector councils and the Toronto District School Board (TDSB). Together, these organizations deliver an initiative that injects practical industry experience into school programs, providing students with better skills, access to job-relevant courses, and up-to-date labour market resources. The partnership of sector councils, the TDSB and the federal and provincial government departments involved all provide support materials and resources for this initiative.

The goal of the four-year Education/Sector Council Partnerships Project is to develop, implement, test and evaluate the potential for education/industry partnerships to promote lifelong learning and improve students’ career prospects. Specifically, nine project targets continue to form the basis of new program models and school initiatives:

1. sustainable industry and education partnerships;
2. nine essential skills embedded in school programs;
3. expanded opportunities for experiential learning at employment sites;
4. new and enhanced courses and programs focused on sectors and skills;

5. career and labour market information awareness for students;
6. parental awareness of new labour force realities and opportunities;
7. new sector and industry classroom resources;
8. industry recognition of skills, competencies and credentials; and
9. effective transitions to work or post-secondary learning.

What distinguishes the Education/Sector Council Partnership Project is that it integrates the documentation and evaluation of what it takes to build and sustain workable partnerships between sector councils and schools, and the extent to which collaboration results in changes in the nine defined target areas.

The project illustrates the type of 21st-century convergence of workforce interests and training perspectives. The aim is to replicate this collaborative model with other interested education systems.

OTHER TOP TEAMS

Education/industry partnerships are comprised of sector council representatives and local employers that form teams and collaborate with schools, teachers and principals to implement innovative programs and curriculum.

To ensure industry accuracy and relevance, and to encourage participation of local employers, councils fully support these joint efforts.

Indeed, almost half of Canada's sector councils work with high schools to develop pertinent training programs. Councils such as the Cultural Human Resources Council, BioTalent Canada, the Canadian Aviation Maintenance Council, the Canadian Police Sector Council, the Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council, the Canadian Automotive Repair and Service Council, the Construction Sector Council, the Information and Communications Technology Council, ECO Canada, and the Wood Manufacturing Council all have established programs with partnership networks in place.

The Wood Manufacturing Council, for example, implemented WoodLINKS so that high school students across Canada could be certified for entry-level work in wood manufacturing. Meanwhile, the Police Sector Council is actively involved in partnerships to develop school programs that adhere to Ontario guidelines for interdisciplinary studies and focus on justice and community services.

The council provides in-service industry training for teachers, builds links with similar programs in other provinces, and develops industry partnership networks.

Collaboration between three schools and the Cultural Human Resources Council has led to the development of an Entrepreneurship in the Arts program, designed for Grade 11 students. The council has also facilitated expanded experiential learning opportunities for students interested in working in the cultural sector.

BUILDING THE WORK-FORCE OF TOMORROW

Sector councils look to the future and are a vital link between industry, education, training deliverers and today's youth. In the spirit of sharing wisdom about the array of career paths, challenges and tools available, these councils work together through The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC) to help young Canadians transition smoothly into tomorrow's high-skills workforce.

SHARON FERNANDEZ IS A CONSULTANT TO FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS IN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE.



TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

Cultural Human Resources Council
www.culturalhrc.ca

BioTalent Canada
www.biotalent.ca

Canadian Aviation Maintenance Council
www.camc.ca

Police Sector Council
www.policecouncil.ca

Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council
www.supplychaincanada.org

Canadian Automotive Repair and Service Council
www.cars-council.ca

Construction Sector Council
www.csc-ca.org

Information and Communications Technology Council
www.ictc-ctic.ca

ECO Canada
www.eco.ca

Wood Manufacturing Council
www.wmc-cfb.ca

Community colleges have an opportunity—a chance to be national leaders in labour-market-driven education. With a wide range of certificate, diploma and degree programs, community colleges are uniquely able to use input from local and regional stakeholders and employers to adjust course options and meet industry's changing needs for skilled workers.

THE PERFECT MIX

Ultimately, to retrain the current workforce and prepare new entrants, college curricula must be based on what employers want. And employers want job-ready graduates.

Katrina Murray of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) explains that employers sit on governing boards and program advisory committees to shape college priorities and curricula. They provide equipment and job



placements as well as classroom instructors, all to ensure a close alignment between teaching and employment practice. Given that college programs cater to employers' requirements, it is not surprising that over 90% of graduates are employed within six months.

SUPPORT FROM THE SECTOR COUNCILS

Sector councils, such as the Canadian Steel Trade & Employment Congress (CSTEC), work to address issues within a specific sector. In addition to promoting employment needs in schools and at job fairs, CSTEC offers

apprenticeship workshops and information on workforce recruitment, essential skills development and training needs.

Colleges can foster the success of graduates with CSTEC's employment programs. CSTEC offers career awareness and youth employment initiatives that help workplaces recruit, pre-train and offset the financial costs of new entrants to the sector. As well, the council promotes a co-op program at Mohawk College, which integrates co-op educational experience into the traditional apprenticeship model.

CSTEC has had a long and fruitful relationship with the

WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?

A MESSAGE TO COLLEGES

BY DIANE COLLETTE

college system. In 1994, with the purpose of improving transferability and recognition in its training courses, CSTEC and the participating colleges/CEGEPs entered into an articulation agreement to develop and implement a training and accreditation program, which partnered the steel industry and the college system to develop 39 courses with college-level accreditation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

Labour market information (LMI) is invaluable when it is shared and effectively incorporated into decisions about curricula.

One sector council that promotes LMI for a range of occupations is the Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council (CSCSC). Employers and educators identified information collection as a high priority in the sector and the CSCSC responded with two research initiatives: the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and the National Accreditation Program (NAP).

NOS creates skills profiles to help inform decisions on the desired outcomes of college curricula. Employers can feel confident hiring graduates, knowing they have been trained in areas specifically requested by industry. The CSCSC obtains feedback on all standards development and consistently seeks input from employers.

NAP is in its second phase and investigates employers' needs and preferences in terms of education. In phase one, focus groups identified a shortage of middle-level managers, suggesting

that students should be trained in business management to fast-track graduates into these positions.

UP TO THE CHALLENGE

The Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) coordinates a number of affinity groups in cooperation with sector councils in fields such as tourism and hospitality, petroleum, construction, apparel and the voluntary and nonprofit sector. These affinity groups come together to share ideas, best and worst practices, and occasionally organize joint activities to explore and promote their common interests.

The ACCC also brings together educators and employers to share information on enrolment levels, student success rates, research opportunities, mentorship programs, labour shortages, job-skill requirements and effective recruitment practices in support of lifelong learning opportunities.

Sector councils can help focus the attention and commitment of industry partners to take action by developing human resource and skills development solutions that are specific to their sector or industry. By acting as a bridge

between industry and colleges, and permitting collaboration and collective action on skills issues, sector councils promote economies of scale in addressing human resource challenges—benefiting all partners.

DIANE COLLETTE TEACHES COMMUNICATIONS AT CONESTOGA COLLEGE IN KITCHENER, ONTARIO.

PEOPLE ARE SEEING THE VALUE OF A CAREER IN THE SKILLED TRADES AND OUR GOVERNMENT IS DOING ITS PART TO HELP PROVIDE APPROPRIATE AND TIMELY TRAINING. WITH THESE INVESTMENTS, WE ARE GROWING OUR SKILLED WORKFORCE—THE WOMEN AND MEN WHO ARE LITERALLY HELPING BUILD OUR FUTURE.

DARIN KING, MINISTER OF EDUCATION, NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, JANUARY 2010

TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

Canadian Steel Trade & Employment Congress

www.cstec.ca

Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council

www.supplychaincanada.org



WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?

A MESSAGE TO UNIVERSITIES

BY DIANE COLLETTE

Employers know that success depends on an abundant, well-educated workforce. They're looking to universities for help to ensure that the labour supply will meet the market's ongoing and evolving labour demands.

A recent survey conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers provided startling evidence of labour market gaps, revealing that 60 percent of Canadian firms believe their growth is limited by a shortage of qualified workers. Canada's sector councils are facilitating an open dialogue between employers and universities to identify the industries' specific needs and improve programs that are preparing graduates to meet these requirements.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR GROWTH

Sector councils are industry-led partnership organizations that address skills development issues in key sectors of the economy. By linking industry and educational institutions, sector councils can help stakeholder groups identify and close supply/demand gaps.

While some councils have established partnerships with colleges, others are beginning to forge links with Canada's universities. Two councils that have had success in this area are Environmental Careers Organization (ECO) Canada and BioTalent Canada.

ECO Canada works with employers in the environmental sector to help them develop a highly skilled and experienced workforce. These employers want

graduates with interdisciplinary science and engineering backgrounds, which give them the flexibility to work in a variety of areas within the sector. ECO Canada is extremely active in reaching out to the university community to promote these employer needs.

Kevin Nilsen, Senior Manager for Practitioner Programs at ECO Canada, says the council works with more than 8,000 employers and 85,000 environmental professionals—among others—to identify labour supply gaps and new fields in the sector.

TOWARD HIGHER STANDARDS

In response to requests from the Canadian University Environmental Science Network (CUESN), ECO Canada—in close

MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCES WILL BE A KEY CHALLENGE FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES AS WE BEGIN A PERIOD THAT IS EXPECTED TO BE MARKED BY SKILL SHORTAGES.

PRESIDENT OF STUDENTS IN FREE ENTERPRISE MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY,
NEWFOUNDLAND, FEBRUARY 2010

cooperation with environmental educators—is facilitating a project to develop standards for the accreditation of university environmental programs. This accreditation will help universities prepare students to better meet the environmental sector's employment needs.

ECO Canada has also worked with Royal Roads University to create an online post-graduate program. With 150 courses in 11 specialized streams, the program enables students to further develop sought-after skills. In addition to feature courses from Royal Roads University, the program also incorporates courses from 25 colleges and universities, creating valuable new markets and revenue opportunities for participating institutions. After only two years of operation, the program has attracted 393 students. The program also offers an online prior learning assessment and recognition process that can be applied for as much as 50 percent of the program credit.

SERVING MULTIPLE INDUSTRIES

Science is also a concern for BioTalent Canada, a sector council that works in the bio-economy, which includes many subsectors such as health, bio-energy, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, medical devices and forestry industries. Executive Director Colette Rivet says employers

are looking for job-ready workers with not only science skills, but also management and business competencies.

To help universities develop relevant curricula, BioTalent Canada facilitates, with industry, the development of bio-economy-specific skills profiles. With current information from employers on competencies and skill requirements, universities can address possible program gaps and develop curricula that link directly to skills identified by industry. Universities that create curricula based on industry needs will then attract the top talent to their programs.

Rivet emphasizes that it's important to see the big picture when it comes to curriculum development, as approximately 80 percent of the firms BioTalent Canada works with are cross-sectoral and a third are experiencing a skills shortage. Education at universities must reach beyond science curricula to include management and business skills development so that graduates are job-ready and have the multi-faceted, interdisciplinary skill sets that employers need.

Rivet recommends looking for ways to start small and work outwards. Whether in the early stages of communication about the industry, or in more advanced stages of mentoring programs with employers such as our Bridging BioTalent program. This program,

currently in development, will provide students with valuable hands-on bio-economy work experience during their post-secondary studies. Establishing the mechanisms to keep educators and students informed of the industry-required skills is key in developing what Rivet calls "BioReady" graduates. By acting as a national hub and central resource for employers, job seekers, students, educators and government agencies, BioTalent Canada is helping make this happen.

WORKING FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL

In a complex labour market, close collaboration can benefit employers, educators and graduates. Employers get a workforce that is highly skilled and adaptable. Universities grow and flourish by working with industry to ensure targeted curriculum development, mentoring and internship programs. Graduates enter the workforce confident that their skills are in demand.

DIANE COLLETTE TEACHES COMMUNICATIONS IN THE LIBERAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT AT CONESTOGA COLLEGE IN KITCHENER, ONTARIO.

TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

BioTalent Canada
www.biotalent.ca

Environmental Careers
Organization Canada
www.eco.ca

Immigrants looking for information on career opportunities who don't speak either of Canada's official languages need no longer be hampered by linguistic barriers, thanks in part to The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC).

Gateway to Careers is a multilingual website created by TASC and LASI World Skills, an Ottawa-based immigrant service agency, to provide information about careers in key Canadian industries. Focused on employment needs and career outlooks in different sectors of the economy, the website is the latest in a suite of workforce development tools prepared by TASC.

REACHING OUT IN 12 LANGUAGES

TASC's Gateway to Careers is a unique career resource and is available in 12 languages.

There is a severe lack of Canadian career information in languages other than English or French. Because of language limitations, many people cannot get the information they need to make good career decisions. As Canada's workforce depends heavily on immigration, this is an issue sector councils are trying to address.

Immigrants who have only a rudimentary command of English or French may absorb information more readily if it is presented in

their native language. They can also share career resources and consider career options in their first language with family members and friends. Having access to career information in their first language can only help immigrants be better prepared to work in Canada.

The material presented on Gateway to Careers is available in English and French, as well as the principal languages spoken in the top 10 source countries of immigrants to Canada between 2003 and 2007: Chinese (simplified), Punjabi, Tagalog, Urdu, Farsi, Korean, Spanish, Tamil, Romanian and Russian.



EXPLORING CAREERS IN DIFFERENT SECTORS AND MANY LANGUAGES

BY CONSTANCE LIM

The multilingual Gateway to Careers will also serve another target group: parents in Canadian immigrant communities.

“Parents are key to guiding their children’s career choices,” says Mengis Tsegaye, executive director of LASI World Skills, which worked with the immigrant service sector across Canada to validate the content of the website in all 12 languages. “Not all immigrant parents are adept in English or French. We hope that this website will help parents and family members guide their children’s education and career choices.”

Gateway to Careers was funded in part by Citizenship and Immigration Canada and launched in English and in French in June 2009 and 10 other key languages in November 2009.

WHERE ARE THE CAREERS?

“Knowing about the opportunities in industry is especially important in these difficult economic times,” says TASC Executive Director Andrew Cardozo. “People need the career information that sector councils have. Sector councils can tell you what skills are in demand, and they can provide information that can help workers decide on appropriate training.”

Gateway to Careers is a one-stop resource for essential information on careers in 33 sectors. The website provides a current snapshot of each sector, including the working conditions, range of occupations and skills and training required by employees. The site also provides links to career guides and provincial and territorial employment

resources, as well as links to career resources developed by the individual sector councils.

For example:

- The Canadian Automotive Repair and Service Council’s website profiles more than 40 occupations and features a quiz for the career seeker to see how his or her interests match up with jobs in the industry. This site is expanding to house a variety of essential skills materials, including occupational profiles.
- The Construction Sector Council’s website targets students, parents, teachers and guidance counsellors. Visitors to the site can access career profiles on close to 60 trades and occupations, as well as information on wages, training requirements, duties, essential skills and job prospects by province and trade for the next nine years. In addition, sample career paths show the variety of opportunities in the industry. The site also dispels some commonly held myths about construction and provides quizzes to test visitors’ knowledge of construction. All of the information on the site is supported by stories of men and women in the trades, and videos and visuals of construction. The site provides links to more than 600 organizations where visitors can find additional information.
- The Canadian Grocery Human Resource Council’s career website provides information on career pathways in the food retail/wholesale industry. Users can search for jobs and

training, read career articles, browse occupational profiles, download career presentation materials and network with like-minded individuals using the website’s blog and social media profiles.

- The Apparel Human Resources Council maintains an online recruitment tool that describes Canada’s apparel manufacturing industry. The site provides information for high school, college and university students and young professionals looking to work in the apparel industry. It includes close to 90 apparel job descriptions, as well as salary ranges and skills required.

CONSTANCE LIM IS OWNER OF LIM CONSULTING ASSOCIATES, WHICH PROVIDES MANAGEMENT CONSULTING SERVICES FOR ORGANIZATIONS IN THE PUBLIC, NONPROFIT AND PRIVATE SECTOR.

TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

Canadian Automotive Repair and Service Council

www.carsyouth.ca

Construction Sector Council

www.careersinconstruction.ca

Canadian Grocery HR Council

www.cghrc.ca

Apparel Human Resources Council

www.apparel-hrc.org



INTEGRATING IMMIGRANTS: EXAMPLES FROM SECTOR COUNCILS

BY PAUL DE SILVA

Today's global economic slowdown is front-page news in Canada and virtually every country around the world. Canadians are confronted with one of the biggest economic challenges of our history, and governments and individuals are making every effort to develop creative and effective solutions to alleviate the crisis.

It is truer now than ever before that Canada must leverage all of its resources to grow and be competitive. Specifically, Canada must use all of the talents and experience that its immigrants bring to the labour market. Failure to do so will cost the Canadian economy between \$2.4 billion and \$3.4 billion a year, according to a Conference Board of Canada study.

SECTOR COUNCIL SOLUTIONS

Sector councils can help Canadian companies meet international quality standards, hire new employees, manage the careers of current workers and develop and deliver training programs that help meet the needs of a diverse workforce. What is more, sector councils can help industries develop strategies to maximize the skills and talents that immigrants bring to Canada.

For its part, the Construction Sector Council represents workers who build homes, offices, schools, bridges, roads, factories and shopping malls and who contribute to a \$130 billion industry that employs more than 12 percent of Canada's labour force. The council's web portal,



TempForeignWork.ca, has information to help employers hire temporary foreign workers, and a guide is now being developed to help foreign workers find employment in Canada's construction industry. The site also provides a guide specifically to assist foreign workers looking for employment in Canada's construction industry.

The council has also undertaken a trade mapping exercise to benchmark the training and certification systems for trades in other countries against Canada's system for Red Seal trades. A benchmarking framework was developed and tested with two trades (electrician, plumber) in two countries (South Africa, Philippines).

The electricity industry is preparing for significant workforce changes—according to the Electricity Sector Council (ESC), the electricity industry faces an immediate shortfall of 1,300 positions every year for the next three years, and must replace

nearly 30 percent of industry positions or approximately 25,000 people within the next six years to meet Canada's energy demands. The ESC initiated a comprehensive one-year research project to review best practices for employee recruitment and integration. The project's findings—detailed in a 2008 report entitled *Generating Solutions: Review of Foreign Credential Recognition in Canada's Electricity Sector*—emphasize the need for a comprehensive strategy that enables employers to hire workers with foreign credentials more readily. In light of this conclusion, the council is committed to partnering with industry stakeholders to streamline policies and processes and facilitate the recruitment and integration of internationally trained workers.

The council provides human resource and workplace development support to workers employed by the electricity and renewable

energy industries and the related co-generation, energy efficiency, and manufacturing and service/consulting industries. Through its research and work with industry employers, the council is resolving issues such as recruiting and retraining workers, facilitating school-to-work transitions and developing sector and career awareness strategies.

The Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Council realizes that workers skilled in the trades are in short supply. In support of training and human resource development in the motive power repair and service sector, CARS undertook a research project to determine the potential for internationally trained workers to help address the problem. The comprehensive study outlines the challenges the industry has attracting and retaining foreign-trained professionals who will help the sector meet the labour challenges of

the future. Working with one of the largest components of the Canadian labour market, comprised of approximately 39,000 businesses that together employ more than 188,000 workers across the country, CARS develops proactive programs and projects that increase workforce skill levels and industry productivity.

THE ALLIANCE OF SECTOR COUNCILS

The skills, hard work, and determination of immigrants have played a vital role in the growth and development of Canada as a nation and newcomers will continue to make valuable contributions to the country. That is why the 33 sector councils together formed the Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC) to analyze and address sector-wide human resource issues such as immigration and foreign credential recognition.

PAUL DE SILVA HAS WORKED IN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING, JOURNALISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

Construction Sector Council

www.csc-ca.org

www.tempforeignwork.ca

Electricity Sector Council

www.brightfutures.ca

The Canadian Automotive Repair and Service Council

www.cars-council.ca





BY PAUL DE SILVA

MAKING THE IMMIGRATION SOLUTION WORK: EXAMPLES FROM SECTOR COUNCILS

Globalization creates enormous challenges as well as considerable opportunities for all sectors of society. Businesses must compete for labour and talent, and productivity depends on the creative use of resources, particularly human resources. To succeed in this new world marketplace, Canada must make every effort to use its human capital as effectively as possible.

IMMIGRATION AND CANADA'S LABOUR SUPPLY

Immigration has played a key role in Canada's development as a nation. Indeed, Canada is known the world over for its

diversity, and its multicultural policies serve as a model for other countries.

One in five Canadians was born on foreign soil. And, according to the 2006 Census, immigrants will soon represent an even larger share of the general population. The country is experiencing unprecedented levels of immigration. Between 2001 and 2006, Canada's foreign-born population grew at a rate four times faster than that of the Canadian-born population.

Statistics Canada reports that immigrants who arrived in the 1990s accounted for 70 percent of the net labour force growth between 1991 and 2001. By 2011, thanks to a shrinking population, Canada will rely

completely on immigration for net labour market growth. By 2031, we will rely wholly on immigration for population growth.

SECTOR COUNCIL SOLUTIONS

The diversity of tomorrow's workforce poses new challenges and presents unparalleled opportunities for employers. Sector councils are ready to help businesses maximize the potential of Canada's changing labour market.

In partnership with the private sector, sector councils enhance adult workers' skills through employer investments in skills development and the promotion of workplace learning and training. The Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC), for example, helps create a highly skilled Canadian ICT workforce by developing occupational standards, labour market intelligence, career pathways and immigration initiatives for the Canadian ICT industry, educators and governments.

One of the ICTC's initiatives, the Ottawa Job Match Network (OJMN), matches internationally trained people with employment opportunities commensurate with their education and experience. A job-match specialist is on location at the offices of each of the project's collaborators: LASI World Skills, Algonquin College and the National Capital Region YMCA-YWCA.

Like the ICTC, the Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada (Petroleum HR Council) is also hard at work helping employers integrate immigrants into the workforce. The Petroleum HR Council is a national, collaborative forum that addresses



human resource issues in the petroleum industry. It recently completed the Alberta Immigrant Integration project, looking into the tools, resources, and support processes required to effectively integrate and retain immigrants in Alberta's petroleum industry.

Based on the project's findings and recommendations, an employer workshop on immigrant integration was developed and piloted in April 2008, and career awareness tools targeted at immigrants and their key influencers were created. The employer workshop worked to raise awareness of current immigrant recruitment and integration barriers and challenges, equip employers to evaluate and/or change current HR processes and practices, and provide tools and resources to help employers recruit and integrate immigrants into the petroleum workforce. The Career Awareness online tools are part of www.careersinoilandgas.com and an interactive workshop. These tools offer detailed information on the petroleum industry in Canada and a step-by-step checklist to help with finding a career in Canada.

The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) has generated groundbreaking work on issues related to foreign credential recognition, temporary foreign workers and comprehensive training and certification resources. The council believes that not only do newcomers have foreign language skills that are particularly useful in the tourism industry, but they also bring fresh perspectives on how to attract and serve customers from other parts of the world. Most importantly, as Canada becomes more culturally diverse, employees who come from outside Canada



can help provide more inclusive services and project a more diverse image.

The CTHRC markets its suite of training and certification resources under the tourism training brand *emerit*, and maintains a comprehensive website called Discover Tourism (discovertourism.ca) that provides valuable information to employers in the industry who wish to hire new immigrants and foreign workers.

During the economic downturn, there is the danger that issues relating to immigrants can take a back seat. However, ignoring human resource issues serves neither workers nor employers. That is why the 33 sector councils together formed The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC) to analyze and address sector-wide human resource issues.

PAUL DE SILVA HAS WORKED IN RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING, JOURNALISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS.

TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

**Information and
Communications
Technology Council**
www.ictc-ctic.ca

**Petroleum Human
Resources Council
of Canada**
www.careersinoilandgas.com
www.petrohrsc.ca

**Canadian Tourism Human
Resource Council**
www.cthrc.ca



BY JENNIFER DAVID

INNOVATIVE ABORIGINAL PROJECTS

While the current economic downturn has seen many sectors experience job losses, other sectors continue to require skilled workers. In the potential labour pool for these sectors, one key demographic continually emerges: Canada's Aboriginal population.

The Aboriginal community in Canada is growing at a rate that is nearly six times faster than that of the country's general population. And, as more than half of Aboriginal people are under the age of 24, this community represents a potential pool of human resources to meet Canada's labour market needs.

Several Canadian sector councils have taken advantage of these demographic trends and have developed Aboriginal-specific programs and initiatives to meet sector-specific labour market needs.

ABORIGINAL HUMAN RESOURCE COUNCIL

The Aboriginal Human Resource Council (AHRC) was formed in 1998 as a cross-sectoral council with a mandate to address Aboriginal labour market issues on a national level. With its focus on employers, it has built many private and public partnerships to research and develop a wide range of practical Aboriginal inclusion programs, products and solutions for the supply and demand side. The council is the nation's leading expert on organizational inclusion and innovator in Aboriginal recruitment, retention and advancement solutions.

EVEN WITH THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, CANADA CONTINUES TO FACE A SKILLS SHORTAGE THAT WILL ONLY ESCALATE WITH OUR AGING POPULATION. CANADA MUST POSITION ITSELF TO FILL THIS SKILLS GAP BY TAPPING INTO UNDERUTILIZED POOLS OF LABOUR, SUCH AS THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY WHICH REPRESENTS THE LARGEST UNTAPPED LABOUR FORCE IN THE COUNTRY.

PERRIN BEATTY, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, NOVEMBER 2009

The AHRC has developed a number of innovative and successful programs and initiatives to help companies become organizations of inclusion and to address Aboriginal human resource issues in Canada, including the following:

- *Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion:* A series of five self-study modules, one- and two-day workshops and online learning forums. Five years in the making and representing the most cutting-edge research and knowledge in the field, Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion is the road map to workplaces of inclusion and a stronger Canadian economy. Discover a comprehensive set of tools for building an Aboriginal inclusion strategy that really works.
- *Workforce Connex:* A national forum series designed to promote insightful dialogue and connections to successful partnerships that facilitate the development of human resource strategies that help Aboriginal

people acquire the right skills and opportunities to enter new labour market sectors.

- *Inclusion Network:* A dedicated national Aboriginal job board (inclusionnetwork.ca) that connects employers, educators and job seekers electronically—all of whom can post jobs, or resumes, create online profiles or search the database.
- *Inclusion Works Annual Event:* The largest national Aboriginal employment event bringing together corporations, leaders, learners, educators and organizations, to foster networks of change and develop partnerships with the council. This event provides a platform for communities to consider new ways to work with employers to prepare Aboriginal candidates for the future workforce. It fast-tracks employer connections with Aboriginal workers and provides a one-stop shop for building partnerships and solutions that advance the participation of the Aboriginal people in Canada's workforce,



and builds a more prosperous economy for First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

- *Annual Champions Event:* A one-day leadership event designed to build understanding about the key issues underlying Canada's productivity challenges and the role of Aboriginal diversity strategies. Leaders have an opportunity to provide their guidance to the council's three-year plan so that it continues to evolve and stay relevant to client needs.

It is the Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources (BEAHR) project, however, that stands out as the most unique endeavour committed to increasing Aboriginal employment in a particular sector. A partnership between ECO Canada and the AHRC, BEAHR offers several resources in the areas of career awareness, training, and employment, including the following:

- the Aboriginal EnviroCareers educators tool, a website for students and teachers that consists of descriptions of jobs in the environment sector, Aboriginal role-model profiles, video clips, and more;
- the Aboriginal EnviroCareers Calendar Contest, which invites young Canadians to submit artwork that highlights a career in the environment for a chance to win a \$1,000 scholarship;
- the BEAHR Learning Institute, which develops culturally relevant, employment-focused training programs for Aboriginal communities across Canada;
- the BEAHR Job Board, which enables Aboriginal practitioners to post resumes and search job openings across Canada, and allows employers an easy way to recruit qualified candidates;
- the Aboriginal Internship Program, which offers approved candidates a wage subsidy of up to \$8,000 for a 6- to 12-month internship in the environmental field;
- the Employer's Guide, an online resource that has everything employers need to know about how to find, select, hire and keep skilled Aboriginal environmental practitioners.

To learn more about BEAHR, contact info@beahr.com.

MINING INDUSTRY HUMAN RESOURCES COUNCIL

Many mineral exploration and mine sites in Canada are located within the traditional territories of Aboriginal peoples. As a result, mining companies must work with various Aboriginal communities

on joint initiatives, impact-benefit agreements and other revenue-sharing ventures.

The Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) recognizes the importance of collaboration between the mining sector and Aboriginal communities and the Aboriginal workforce in mining projects. In 2007, the council began to develop the *Mining Industry Human Resources Guide for Aboriginal Communities*. This guide, launched at a national conference in May 2009, is a user-friendly tool that details career opportunities in the mining sector and includes job descriptions and information on education and training options. An accompanying website, www.aboriginalmining.ca, was launched in April 2009.

MiHR has also adapted the AHRC's Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion program to the mining industry, with specific information about the history of mining and Aboriginal communities and case studies of Aboriginal inclusion initiatives in the mining sector and more.

Melanie Sturk, Director for Attraction, Retention and Transition at MiHR, believes the guide will enable Aboriginal people to find careers in their home communities. "Hiring locally is better for all involved, both communities and companies" she said.

POLICE SECTOR COUNCIL

The Police Sector Council recently conducted a pilot Aboriginal awareness training program. Introduction to Aboriginal and First Nations

Issues addresses current social issues, trends and needs of the police community. The training was launched in January 2009 and has already had over 6,500 officers registered.

FOREST PRODUCTS SECTOR COUNCIL

Aboriginal peoples have been the stewards of Canada's forests for centuries and it is widely recognized that an important relationship exists between Aboriginal peoples and the forest products industry. Canada's forest products sector today employs more Aboriginal people than any other industrial sector.

Increasing the number of Aboriginal people employed in the forest products industry and broadening the range of jobs accessible to them are priorities for the recently established Forest Products Sector Council. These priorities are being addressed in the council's Aboriginal Inclusion Project, which began in mid-2009. This project will help develop a better understanding of the programs that are already in place. It will gather further information about what successful projects already exist, what information is currently available, and how any future partnerships may be able to leverage and build upon the work that has already been done. It will also provide baseline information so the impact of any new initiatives in the forest products sector can be measured.

Other sector councils, including the Construction Sector Council, the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council, and

the Wood Manufacturing Council, also have new and existing projects that address the critical Aboriginal human resource issues in Canada.

JENNIFER DAVID IS CREE FROM CHAPLEAU CREE FIRST NATION IN NORTHERN ONTARIO AND MANAGER AND VICE-PRESIDENT AT STONECIRCLE CONSULTING.

TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

Aboriginal Human Resources Council:
www.aboriginalhr.ca

Building Environmental Aboriginal Human Resources
www.beahr.com

Mining Industry Human Resources Council
www.mihr.ca

Aboriginal Mining
www.aboriginalmining.ca

Police Sector Council
www.policecouncil.ca

Forest Products Sector Council
www.fpsc-cspf.ca

Inclusion Network
www.inclusionnetwork.ca

A black and white photograph of a woman with her hair in a bun and wearing safety glasses, focused on sanding a piece of wood with a power sander in a workshop setting. The background shows various tools and equipment.

WORKPLACE TRAINING: A SURE BET IN UNCERTAIN ECONOMIC TIMES

BY JEN WRIGHT

During slow economic times, such as the one Canada is experiencing now, employers look for opportunities to cut costs from their bottom line. Expenses are reviewed and budgets are trimmed. Inevitably, investments in human resources are clipped.

Lean times, however, demand that employers increase the productivity of their workforce to not only meet tighter budgets, but also ensure their organization remains competitive. So instead of cutting training programs, employers should consider investing in their workers.

In its 2008 report *Building a Twenty-First Century Workforce: A Business Strategy to Overcome Canada's Skills Crisis*, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce stated, "It is very clear that education and continued job skills training are vital not only for the procurement and employment of individuals, but also for businesses as a means to maintain competitiveness both at home and abroad."

Workplace training increases productivity, raises the skill levels of workers and makes organizations more competitive, achieving the three goals of business in any economic environment, but especially important in a recession. Workplace training is also essential to retain key employees that will be needed even more once the economy rebounds.

THE ROLE OF SECTOR COUNCILS

Sector councils are well positioned to help employers provide workplace training and develop the skill levels of their workers.

THE SKILLED TRADES ARE MORE IMPORTANT TO ONTARIO'S FUTURE THAN EVER BEFORE. ESTABLISHING THE COLLEGE OF TRADES RECOGNIZES THE SECTOR'S PROFESSIONALISM, AND WILL HELP ONTARIO PRODUCE THE SKILLED WORKERS WE NEED TO COMPETE IN TOMORROW'S ECONOMY.

JOHN MILLOY, MINISTER OF TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES,
OCTOBER 2009

Most councils offer innovative, sector-specific programs and tools that can be implemented easily on the job to the benefit of workers, employers and industries as a whole.

The Textiles Human Resources Council's Skills and Learning Portal, for example, enables employees to access training from work or from home at their convenience. The training ranges from industry-specific to more general business skill development. As a result, employers can take advantage of the resource to meet the unique needs of individual workers in a cost-effective manner.

Another example of workplace training tools is the Rapid Internal Skills Enhancement (RISE) and Management Training program developed by the Wood Manufacturing Council rolled out in the fall of 2009. RISE provides practical plant-floor training that can be customized to each operation's needs. Developed by the University of British Columbia's Centre for Advanced Wood Processing, the program brings university-level training to the workplace without the travel expenses and other costs often related to off-site training. The

program enables employees to apply training on site while developing new skills.

Online tools bring resources to the workplace—regardless of where that workplace may be. Agriculture producers and their employees are located across rural Canada and are usually long distances from the training institutions that serve them. Now, thanks to the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council's (CAHRC) Inventory of Learning Programs, those looking for training and skills development in the agriculture sector can have one-stop access through the CAHRC's online portal (www.agritalent.ca). The website makes it easier to locate available training without having to leave the farm.

The Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Council also has a sophisticated online training program that enables automobile technicians anywhere in Canada to access training on the job or at home.

The automotive manufacturing industry, like others in the manufacturing sector, is facing challenging economic conditions. Given everything they're dealing

with, employers may not be giving much thought to the question of apprenticeship training. Yet, one out of every four automotive SMEs is experiencing some form of skills shortage—and, according to the Council for Automotive Human Resources (CAHR), one in three expects to do so in the near future. Apprenticeship is the key to meeting those long-term human resource needs.

CAPITALIZE ON THE CHANGING TIMES

In the current economic climate, maximizing business performance is crucial. Apprenticeship training is working for employers right across Canada. Employers who participated in a recent Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (CAF) phase 2 study indicated that apprenticeship training results in benefits for journeypersons, reduced risk of skill shortages, greater overall productivity, better relations with customers, fewer mistakes and better health and safety performance.

In fact, employers receive a benefit of \$1.49 for every \$1 invested in apprenticeship

training. This is up 11 cents since the 2006 pilot study—*Building a Skilled Workforce for a Strong Bottom Line*. Investing in apprenticeship makes good business sense. Visit www.caf-fca.org to find out how to get started in the exciting potential of apprenticeship training.

Still not convinced? Tools are available to help employers measure their return-on-training investment (ROTI). The CAF provides an Employer Toolkit that includes case studies to demonstrate how training actually helps, rather than hinders, the bottom line. The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) also offers an ROTI tool for tourism businesses to either forecast the impact of a particular training program or measure the effectiveness of programs that have already been implemented.

PREPARE TO SUCCEED

The recession will pass and, when it does, employers who invest in workplace training now will come out with a strong competitive edge. Sectors that invest in their employees will dominate global

markets and countries that ensure training programs are available to employers will prosper. Canada's sector councils can help employers achieve this goal.

JENNIFER WRIGHT IS THE OWNER OF JAITEC SOLUTIONS INC., AN OTTAWA-BASED CONSULTING FIRM.

TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

The Textiles Human Resources Council

www.thrc-crhit.org

Wood Manufacturing Council

www.wmc-cfb.ca

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council

www.cahrc-ccrha.ca

Canadian Automotive Repair and Service (CARS) Council

www.cars-council.ca

Council for Automotive Human Resources

www.cahr-crha.ca

Canadian Apprenticeship Forum

www.caf-fca.org/

Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council

www.cthrc.ca





HUMAN RESOURCE AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT TOOLS: THE STRONGEST FOUNDATIONS OF ANY ORGANIZATION

BY CYNTHIA MARTIN

Ask a manager in any organization to identify the company's greatest resource and he or she will invariably point to the company's workers. But how can managers ensure that their business's personnel needs are addressed not only today, but also well into the future?

One way is through the assistance of sector councils—industry-led partnership organizations that address skill development issues in key sectors of the economy.

Sector councils study labour market trends and help companies improve business management practices and identify and close labour supply and demand gaps.

ONLINE HR TOOLS FOR THE PLASTICS, TEXTILE AND CONTACT CENTRE INDUSTRIES

Contact Centre Canada (CCC) helps customer contact centre clients in the public and private sectors refine their human resource processes for today and tomorrow.

"Most small and medium-sized businesses—the companies that make up the majority of the contact centre sector—do not have human resource departments or managers," says CCC CEO Donna Miller. "These are the companies most in need of practical HR tools."

To meet this need, CCC has developed *HR To GO!*, an online tool designed to coach small and medium-sized businesses through every stage of the human resources cycle. From application and interview forms and checklists to customizable templates

...WE CAN ONLY BUILD A STRONG AND ADAPTABLE ECONOMY BY DEVELOPING A HIGHLY SKILLED AND RESILIENT WORKFORCE. TRAINING AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT THUS ARE KEY TO OUR SUCCESS.

HON DIANE FINLEY, MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT, MARCH 2009

such as letters of offer and employee manuals, *HR To GO!* helps employers reduce turnover, manage employee performance and save time and money. The tool's tagline—It's like having an entire human resource department at your fingertips!—says it all.

The Textiles Human Resource Council addressed its industry's human resource business needs by creating Textile Training through Technology, an online collaborative workforce-development system. The portal offers 400 learning programs that cover technical, manufacturing and foundational skills, as well as computer software training in French and English. From mechanical power transmission to basic literacy, communications, problem-solving and team-building skills, Textile Training Through Technology is an indispensable resource for any company or job seeker.

The Canadian Plastics Sector Council (CPSC) has addressed its industry's human resource challenges in a similar manner. Massive technological and structural changes in the plastics industry have changed the way in which employers manage personnel. In response, CPSC created its Virtual HR Department,

a web-based resource with tools such as job description templates, "how-to" procedures and ready-to-implement HR policy samples. Thanks to this initiative, and the human resource efficiencies it delivers, employers can spend more time focused on other core business operations.

VOLUNTEERING AND FISH HARVESTING: UNIQUE INDUSTRIES WITH DISTINCT CHALLENGES

The Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters (CCPFH) and industry stakeholders are facing a particular challenge: developing the skills required to run a small enterprise. CCPFH's business management tool, *Managing Your Fishing Enterprise*, ensures that business owners have access to interactive training modules to develop the skills they need, skills like building a business plan. And through its *Setting a New Course and Taking our Bearings* studies, CCPFH provides the fish harvesting industry with human resource forecasts.

The HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector has designed its HR Toolkit to help managers, employees and board members

better understand, address and manage the sector's particular human resource issues. The kit describes not only ways to get and keep the right people, but also ways to develop softer skills, such as sensitivity to diversity and the passion to meet community needs, which are essential among sector employees. The council has supplemented these tools with a monthly electronic newsletter called *Perspectives* and a database of articles targeted at volunteer and nonprofit sector staff and managers.

The HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector has also conducted leading-edge research into employee benefits in the nonprofit sector. This research will supplement the council's work in the fields of core competencies and shared services, and enable volunteers and nonprofit workers to transfer their skills among the sector's 69,000 organizations.

INVESTING TODAY FOR TOMORROW'S SUCCESS

Without a doubt, investments in human resource and business management tools offer short- and long-term benefits, and help companies maximize benefits from their greatest resources—their human resources.

“Clearly, companies that have motivated, career-minded, skilled workforces will be in the best position to sustain their businesses through the current economic climate,” says CCC's Donna Miller.

CYNTHIA MARTIN IS MANAGING CONSULTANT AT WITSEND COMMUNICATIONS IN NOVA SCOTIA.

TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

Contact Centre Canada

www.contactcentrecanada.ca

Textiles Human Resource Council

www.thrc-crhit.org

Canadian Plastics Sector Council

www.cpsc-ccsp.ca

Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters

www.ccpfh-ccpp.org

HR Council for the Nonprofit Sector

www.hrvc-rhsbc.ca



WHY BOTHER WITH STANDARDS?

BY CYNTHIA MARTIN



Standards create shared understandings and communal expectations that every industry—and individual—relies on in innumerable ways. Safety standards, for example, assure consumers that new technologies can be trusted. And maintenance standards enable manufacturers to get the most out of old equipment.

Increasingly, industry employers use occupational standards to assess workplace performance, and determine the skills and knowledge workers need to perform particular jobs.

SETTING STANDARDS FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE

The Forum for International Trade Training (FITT) sets standards and designs training programs for professional certification, and details the practical skills needed to meet international trade's long-term human resource requirements. The leading membership-based organization of its kind in the world, FITT also uses its relationships with more than 60 Canadian and international colleges, universities and other training organizations to boost short-term productivity in the global marketplace.

With three levels of recognition, two credentials and a professional trade designation like no other, international trade practitioners have a competitive advantage in world markets. FITT offers many online resources and its forum activities include the development of international trade curriculum and standards.

CHILD CARE HUMAN RESOURCES SECTOR COUNCIL

The sector-led Child Care Human Resources Sector Council's Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators project is underway, with a focus on defining the scope of the core occupation in early childhood education and care and creating standards that document the knowledge, skills and abilities required.

Since the first set of standards for practitioners were created in 2003, the range of services provided and expectations of those working in the sector have increased. That's why Phase 1 of the project focused on clearly defining the scope of the core occupation and identifying emerging occupations where additional standards should be developed through future projects.

Once the scope was defined, the occupational standards for the core occupation were developed. The standards serve as a useful tool for skills development and also inform the work of post-secondary educators and licensing officials. The council also uses the new standards to conduct analyses of

early childhood education curricula, identify training gaps, and make related recommendations. This project was completed in the spring of 2010.

Additionally, the council's Pathways to Credentialing in Canada's Early Childhood and Education Sector focuses on documenting all aspects of the various credential assessment processes that exist for early childhood educators across the country. Currently, many provinces and territories have different approaches to ECE credentialing, while others have no system in place. In addition, where credential assessment practices do exist, some are voluntary and others mandatory. These differing approaches make it challenging for an early childhood educator to move from one province or territory to another and be recognized as qualified, creating barriers to entry.

In addition to creating the Guide to ECE Credentialing in Canada, the Pathways project will lead to the creation of an Essential Skills Profile (ESP) and Occupational Language Assessment (OLA) for early childhood



educators. These tools will facilitate increased understanding of credential assessment processes and skills development in the sector, with the goal of ultimately enhancing workforce mobility in a sector facing a significant shortage of skilled labour.

CANADIAN PRINTING INDUSTRIES SECTOR COUNCIL

The printing industry faces competitive challenges as a result of new print-on-demand services and universal computer software programs that encourage people—many of whom do not understand project specifications—to submit work to printers directly. Fortunately, standards can help printing businesses manage these new competitive pressures.

The Canadian Printing Industries Sector Council's Skills for the Future Project, for example,

develops national standards in three production areas: pre-press, press and finishing/bindery. It also profiles key occupations.

It is important to note that employers can learn from standards adopted in other countries as well. Calgary hosted WorldSkills 2009, showcasing the training standards of more than 1,000 competitors from 50 countries, competing in a variety of skill categories—from transportation and construction to creative arts and manufacturing. Canada's printing industry was represented there for the first time.

THE ALLIANCE OF SECTOR COUNCILS

Along with the National Occupational Classification codes that most human resource professionals use, standardized skills, training and job functions save industry vast amounts of time and work.

No longer do employers need to continually repeat explanations for criteria.

All 37 sector councils and their members—including associations, businesses and individual human resource professionals—now have access to a manual The Alliance of Sector Councils developed with the Canadian Standards Association. *Setting the Standard* is a step-by-step guide, helping users develop and improve national occupational standards, accreditation of training and education programs, and personnel certification programs. The manual's flexible approach and protocols help users customize the process from planning and development to implementation and maintenance. Besides saving precious time, the publication can also help councils and others realize cost savings on standards that are in their infancy or simply need to be updated with benchmarks and best practices.

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TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

Forum for International Trade Training

www.fitt.ca

Child Care Human Resources Sector Council

www.ccsc-cssge.ca

Canadian Printing Industries Sector Council

www.cpisc-csic.ca



SECTORS WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER SERVICES

BY CYNTHIA MARTIN

Canadian fish is served in homes and restaurants around the world. Its quality is tied directly to its freshness, which can be a challenge to maintain when time and distance separate the ocean where the fish is caught and the table where it's served.

Canada's sector councils understand full well how time—and the lack of it—plays a critical role in getting products to market. "Fish harvesters are committed to bringing good quality fish and seafood products to consumers," says John Sutcliffe, Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvester's (CCPFH) executive director. "However, our people can't do it alone. From the moment we land it on the wharves, we rely on workers in other industries to maintain the product's high quality until it reaches consumers."

To ensure fish harvesters have the required knowledge, skills and commitment, the CCPFH collaborates with organizations representing fish harvesters across Canada. The council's training programs address subjects such as fishing enterprise management and resource management. Technical training programs are available in fisheries schools across the country. The council's new *Fisheries Science and Management Handbook* is another example of an initiative to further entrench workers' professional skills.

STRONG CONNECTIONS ENSURE DELIVERY

With seafood exports totalling 670,000 tonnes and \$3.9 billion in 2007, the fisheries sector works closely with others to forge a strong delivery chain. Joanna Oehling, executive director of the Food Processing HR Council, formerly

known as the National Seafood Sector Council (NSSC) reinforces this need for connections, saying, "It's important that all industries and companies involved in this chain be committed to employing workers with the appropriate skills." Sector councils—industry-led partnership organizations in key economic sectors, such as fisheries and seafood processing—address these critical skills development issues.

The FPHRC works on behalf of the entire seafood processing industry to provide human resource strategies and programs. One initiative is the council's *Regulatory Export Certification Products for Fish & Seafood*, which provides information and tools on export regulations and legislation. The FPHRC also offers a human resources toolkit that details a no-nonsense approach to securing, retaining and managing

employees. In this unique affiliation of sector partners, employers, employees, unions, associations, regulatory agencies and private trainers work toward the common goal of a strong and prosperous seafood processing industry.

FISH MUST FLY

The only way time-sensitive seafood products can arrive fresh in many markets is if they take to the air—thanks in part to members of the Canadian Aviation Maintenance Council (CAMC). This council represents the aviation and aerospace sector, one of the fastest growing in Canada. CAMC members keep this country's aircraft flying. CAMC provides a comprehensive human resource strategy and training for the industry, including individual certification in 24 occupations—all highly valued by industry for the standards of excellence set in technical and safety skills.

HITTING THE ROAD

Whether a seafood shipment must go from coast to coast or around the corner, the fisheries also turn to the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC). This council works with and on behalf of this \$67 billion industry that employs half a million people, and has become the foremost resource for information services and solutions related to recruitment and retention, training and human resource management. Building on the experience of its members and council expertise, the CTHRC is “making sure your business keeps on trucking” by introducing programs such as Closing the GAP, Foreign Competency Recognition, *Your Guide to Human Resources*, Canada's Driving Force, Phase 2, truckingcareers.ca, and so much more, in efforts to engage the right people, in the right industry at the right time.

THE POWER OF INTEGRATION

The links between these four sector councils clearly show the integration of Canada's economy. Whether moving seafood, producing electricity or boosting tourism, Canada's sector councils deliver specialized training and career-focus programs, set occupational standards and produce vital labour market information. Each council is aware that economic success is not achieved in sector isolation.

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TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

**Canadian Council
of Professional
Fish Harvesters**

www.ccpfh-ccpp.org

**Food Processing
HR Council**

www.fphrc.ca

**Canadian Aviation
Maintenance Council**

www.camc.ca

**Canadian Trucking Human
Resources Council**

www.cthrc.com





LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION PROVIDES ESSENTIAL TRENDING DATA

BY ANDREW CARDOZO

Increasingly, industry and governments alike want to have a strong understanding of the labour market in Canada, within regions and within industries. They also want to know what's ahead—the forecasts for the coming 5 and 10 years and longer. How many people do we expect will retire? In what occupations and what regions? How many workers will industries need in the future as they grow or contract? Are there sufficient replacements coming through the education and training system, or from other sources such as immigration?

Increasingly, all sector councils are feeling the need to have some level of good labour market information (LMI) and intelligence. Here's a look at some of the systems.

Whether local, regional, provincial or national, LMI for seven of the sector councils includes a considerable amount of information and specific data, detailing the structure and workings of the councils' markets along with factors likely to influence their industry.

Four councils have well-developed and sophisticated

methodologies appropriate to their needs:

- The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (www.cthrc.ca) quantifies long-term economic and demographic trends affecting the tourism sector by using a macroeconomic model to report potential labour shortages out to 2025. By determining the gap between the potential demand for labour and the supply of labour available, the degree to which labour shortages will affect the sector over the medium and long term can be assessed for both tourism occupations and Canadian regions. The report relies heavily on industry input to ensure accuracy and to develop strategies for mitigating future shortages.
- The Construction Sector Council (www.csc-ca.org) provides industry and governments with an annual forecast scenario that includes an economic outlook, construction investment, and employment demand for more than 31 trades and occupations for 14 regions across Canada over a nine-year period. The scenario is produced using a sophisticated

model and significant input from a network of regional LMI Committees comprised of industry and government stakeholders. This complex analysis culminates in a market ranking of labour availability for the more than 31 trades and occupations by province/region, and an assessment of the retirements over the nine-year period. This state-of-the-art, complex and detailed analysis of construction supply and demand is used extensively by the private sector, various levels of government, and training providers across the country as a planning and decision-making tool.

- The LMI collected by ECO Canada (www.eco.ca) is used not only to track supply and demand dimensions of the environmental labour market, but also to explain the intricate relationships between business strategy, government policy and public consensus for the environmental sector as well as assist in defining such phenomena as the "Green Economy" and the "Low Carbon Economy." LMI is especially crucial in the environmental sector, as

National Occupational Classifications can't yet fully identify the industry's spectrum of jobs and considerations, such as that most occupations have potential or some environmental aspect. Evaluating the sector and defining "environment-related employment" is critical. Using the North American Industry Classification System, 13 such occupations were analyzed for 2006 to 2010, with a high growth rate projected.

- Since 2001 the Information and Communication Technology Council (ICTC) (www.ictc-ctic.ca) has been the source for LMI for the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector in Canada. ICTC's Outlook 2008–2015 is the first supply and demand forecast of ICT occupations. Fourteen core and 19 ICT-related occupations, across 20 occupations were forecasted for six regions using three scenarios to project the supply and demand needs of industry. This biannual forecast will be revised in 2010. Skill shortages are the key issue for ICT employers. Labour shortages exist in some critical ICT occupations in select regions. LMI is used extensively by ICTC stakeholders and by ICTC to develop and guide long-term strategic human resource planning.

Three other councils are also well on the way to developing complex LMI systems:

- The highly focused three-year project of the Electricity Sector Council (www.brightfutures.ca) collected information on 15 critical occupations, reporting on current employment, workforce statistics and demographics, as well as future

IN A TIME OF RAPIDLY SHIFTING LABOUR MARKET AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PLAY AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT. THEY ARE ALSO ABOUT ENSURING MANITOBA HAS THE SKILLED WORKFORCE THAT WILL CONTINUE TO BE A PRIMARY DRIVER OF GROWTH FOR A THRIVING ECONOMY.

COMPETITIVENESS, TRAINING AND TRADE MINISTER ANDREW SWAN, MANITOBA, NOVEMBER 2009

projections for employment, retirement and the workforce demand/supply gap nationally. The methodology involved surveys and interviews with employers and educational institutions, and an extensive review of official data. A unique attribute of this LMI project is that a small number of employers represent the bulk of employment—therefore the involvement of the majority of employers resulted in LMI data that is highly representative of the sector as a whole.

- The major LMI initiative of the Mining Industry Human Resources Council (www.mihr.ca) is the Mining Industry Workforce Information Network (MIWIN), which was launched in 2007. Its primary objective is to provide accurate and timely LMI to industry stakeholders. Among other things, this entails forecasting hiring requirements by occupation and region for the next decade. To date, such forecasts have been produced for the mining sectors of British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario. By mid-2010, MiHR will complete the development of a national forecasting model. The resulting information will enable the industry, which employs some 215,000 people, to respond more effectively to the numerous HR challenges that it faces, such as how to further integrate non-traditional sources of labour into the workforce.

- The Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada (www.petrohrsc.ca) provides regularly updated, long-term labour market projections and trends for the upstream petroleum industry (2010–2020). The Council also gathers, tracks, analyzes and shares short-term labour market issues and trends on a quarterly basis. Short-term labour market information provides a snapshot of labour market conditions within the upstream petroleum industry. Whether industry growth is flat or increasing, projections show workforce shortages beginning in 2012. The petroleum industry will continue to provide significant job opportunities through 2020 in both conventional oil and gas and the oil sands.

While seemingly disparate, these sectors are aligned in broader ways, using information that illustrates the vagaries of the environments in which they operate. With unpredictable market changes, the sectors are increasingly understanding—and effectively managing—their own labour markets.

For more information, see *Understanding LMI Technologies and Issues, The Case Studies: Reviewing LMI Methodology Adopted by Seven Sector Councils (2009)* at www.councils.org. Links to all the sector council websites are also available at this address.

ANDREW CARDOZO IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE ALLIANCE OF SECTOR COUNCILS.



WHAT DO THEY DO IN OTHER COUNTRIES?

BY SHARON FERNANDEZ

Over the past few decades, advances in telecommunications and technology have ushered in an era of unparalleled globalization. Today, influences from across the world affect nearly every workplace in Canada: trade is universal, borders are permeable and knowledge is easily transferred between countries.

Taking advantage of this climate of openness are Canada's sector councils, industry-led partnerships that address skill

development issues in key sectors of the economy. As the global economy contracts and employers shed jobs, Canadian sector councils are sharing solutions to common challenges with their international counterparts in areas such as

- transitioning displaced workers
- developing skills for the new economy
- producing sector-specific labour market information
- developing and upgrading nearly 400 national occupational standards

CANADIAN RESPONSES TO INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGES

The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council's (CTHRC's) *emerit* program—a suite of occupational standards for tourism professionals—has formed the basis of a new International Events Management Standard (IEMS). CTHRC developed the IEMS in conjunction with partner organizations in six other countries. The result is a competency-based occupational standard that will increase

labour mobility and help integrate internationally trained workers into Canada's tourism workforce.

The Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada (MCPCC), representing all sectors of the bus industry, is also involved with international partners. The council has teamed up with the US Transportation Research Board of the National Research Council, which produced the report *Public Transportation Operating Agencies as Employers of Choice*, and participates on various panels. The MCPCC's National Occupational Standards for Professional Bus Operators have been recognized for their relevance to the American bus industry. MCPCC also collaborates with its counterpart in the United Kingdom on various initiatives.

THE TASC ANNUAL FORUM ON PRODUCTIVITY

The activities of the sector skills councils were on display in February 2009 at The Alliance of Sector Council's Annual Forum on Productivity. For the first time,

sector councils from around the world shared some of their responses to the global recession.

Tom Bewick of the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils in the United Kingdom introduced key facts about the declining state of the UK economy. Sector skills councils are organizations independent of government that lobby on behalf of 85 percent of the UK workforce. They were responding to a UK economy that was in a serious recession. Unemployment was rising, the value of the currency was falling, GDP was declining and property prices

decreasing. UK sectors experienced massive job losses at the end of 2008: 28,000 in financial services, 3 million in retail and potentially more than 15,000 in the automotive industry. All sectors, including construction, information technology, steel and manufacturing, were expected to shed jobs.

At the same time, Bewick said, there was potential for growth. There were as many as two million jobs open in the cultural export, digital and science innovation sectors. Overall, he noted that the UK government's response

THE MARKET FOR SKILLED LABOUR, WORLDWIDE, WILL BE FIERCE. EMPLOYERS NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WILL BE A NEW WORLD REQUIRING NEW HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGIES. COUNTRIES, PROVINCES AND STATES THAT UNDERSTAND WHAT IS COMING AND START PROACTIVELY PREPARING FOR IT WILL HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ADVANTAGE.

RICK MINER, FORMER PRESIDENT OF SENECA COLLEGE, MARCH 2010





has been piecemeal and sector skills councils are underused. Bewick argued that the recession had profound effects on different sectors of the economy and that responses must be bolder and based on strategies developed by industry.

Jeremy Baker, the executive director of New Zealand's Industry Training Federation (ITF), said his country's economy faces a series of difficult challenges: maintaining employment and skill development, augmenting productivity, streamlining qualifications systems and increasing industry leadership in vocational education and training.

New Zealand's sector councils are different from those of other countries. The 39 industry training organizations (ITOs) set national qualifications and standards and fund 180,000 trainees in 30,000 businesses. To better respond to challenges,

New Zealand's skills strategy relies on the partnership of ITOs, business, unions and government. New Zealand's ITOs are owned by industry (both employers and workers) and exist to ensure that the skill development needs of their industry are met. They develop and arrange workplace learning and vocational education for industry, while ensuring that the views of people working in their industries are heard in the development of skill standards and qualifications.

In Australia, the government recognizes that training and retraining workers will be an essential part of the country's economic recovery. As a result, the government's strategic focus has been on opportunities for workforce development such as linking skills and innovation, advancing technical expertise and building foundational skills such as literacy and numeracy. The Australian government has rolled out a C\$126 million package to help secure the jobs and training of apprentices and trainees. The package has provided a number of incentives for employers to retain apprentices and trainees in the workforce and maintain their training.

There are 11 national Industry Skills Councils that cover the skills needs of most Australian industries. These councils

- help industries and their workforces integrate skill development with economic and business goals;

- build accurate industry intelligence on future trends by providing advice on industry skills and training needs to stakeholders; and
- support the development, implementation and continuous improvement of high quality, nationally recognized training products and services.

Sector-based skill development organizations from Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand and Australia have been networking since 2008 to share best practices and produce better results in skills development.

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TO LEARN MORE:

www.councils.org

The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council:

www.cthrc.ca

The Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada:

www.buscouncil.ca

MEMBERS AND PARTNERS OF THE ALLIANCE OF SECTOR COUNCILS

The Alliance of Sector Councils
www.councils.org

Aboriginal Human Resource Council
www.aboriginalhr.ca

Canadian **Agricultural** Human
Resource Council
www.cahrc-ccrha.ca

Apparel Human Resources Council
www.apparel-hrc.org

Canadian **Apprenticeship** Forum
www.caf-fca.org

Council for **Automotive**
Human Resources
www.cahr-crha.ca

Canadian **Automotive Repair
and Service** Council
www.cars-council.ca

Canadian **Aviation
Maintenance** Council
www.camc.ca

BioTalent Canada
www.biotalent.ca

Motor Carrier Passenger
Council of Canada (Bus)
www.buscouncil.ca

Child Care Human Resources
Sector Council
www.ccsc-cssge.ca

Construction Sector Council
www.csc-ca.org

Contact Centre Canada
www.contactcentrecanada.ca

Cultural Human Resources Council
www.culturalhrc.ca

Electricity Sector Council
www.brightfutures.ca

Environmental Careers
Organization Canada
www.eco.ca

Canadian Council of Professional
Fish Harvesters
www.ccpfh-ccpp.org

Food Processing
HR Council
www.fphrc.ca

Forest Products Sector Council
www.fpsc-cspf.ca

Canadian **Grocery** HR Council
www.cghrc.ca

**Information and Communications
Technology** Council
www.ictc-ctic.ca

Forum for **International Trade** Training
www.fitt.ca

Mining Industry Human
Resources Council
www.mihrc.ca

HR Council for the **Nonprofit** Sector
www.hrcouncil.ca

Petroleum Human Resources
Council of Canada
www.petrohrsc.ca

Canadian **Plastics** Sector Council
www.cpssc-ccsp.ca

Police Sector Council
www.policecouncil.ca

Canadian **Printing** Industries
Sector Council
www.cpisc-csic.ca

Canadian **Steel** Trade and
Employment Congress
www.cstec.ca

Canadian **Supply Chain**
Sector Council
www.supplychaincanada.org

Textiles Human Resources Council
www.thrc-crhit.org

Canadian **Tourism** Human
Resource Council
www.cthrc.ca

Canadian **Trucking** Human
Resources Council
www.cthrc.com

Wood Manufacturing Council
www.wmc-cfb.ca

PARTNERS

Asia Pacific Gateway Skills Table
www.apgst.ca

National Association of
Career Colleges
www.nacc.ca

Association of Canadian
Community Colleges
www.accc.ca

Engineers Canada
www.engineerscanada.ca

Installation, Maintenance and Repair
Sector Council and Trade Association
www.imrsectorcouncil.ca

Polytechnics Canada
www.polytechnicscanada.ca

Canadian Council of **Technicians
and Technologists**
www.cctt.ca