

Recruiting and Retention: Northern Communities

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Executive Summary

Recruiting and Retention of Employees in Northern Communities

The Northern Labour Market Clearinghouse has asked for a discussion paper that centred on issues around recruiting and retention of workers in northern communities.

A representative sample of large and small northern employers was interviewed to gain their perspectives on issues that arise from geographical location. They were also asked to share information about innovative solutions to issues.

The report is organized into a discussion of the issues as they pertain to the recruiting and retention of personnel. The second section contains suggested responses to the issues. A final section is devoted to opportunities for college programming that could be of assistance in resolution of the issues.

The issues identified were as follows:

A. Recruiting

- Housing shortages
- Lack of knowledge about how to effectively recruit and train locally
- Lack of knowledge about how to promote the attractions of northern lifestyle
- Creating effective ad copy
- Achieving community cohesiveness in addressing human resource planning
- Lack of knowledge about innovative recruitment strategies
- Lack of knowledge about effective interviewing strategies

B. Retention

- Lack of skills in life management and career planning
- Lack of understanding of how to address workplace issues
- Lack of understanding about establishing worker incentives
- Helping new employees integrate into the community
- Dealing with economic swings in relation to staffing

Opportunities for Colleges

Four clear areas of opportunity for college involvement emerged from the research. These included life management/career planning, best practices in effective recruiting, staff retention strategies and community coordination of human resources activities.

Recruiting and Retention: Northern Communities

1. Background

The Northern Labour Market Clearinghouse has asked for a discussion paper about the issues of recruiting and retention of employees for northern communities. A representative sample of employers was interviewed by telephone to determine their views in terms of the issues, best practice solutions and possible learning opportunities that would assist them in becoming more effective employers.

2. Discussion of the Issues

It should be noted that the issues that are presented below are not consistently present in all the communities surveyed. There appears to be some correlation between a community's distance from a major centre and an increased number of issues identified.

Ft. McMurray is the exception in this regard. Perhaps because of its distance from larger service centres and its size, there is a high degree of self-sufficiency in the ability to address community needs. For example the Regional Infrastructure Working Group is an ongoing initiative with a human resource sub-committee that completes a yearly projection of skill requirements for the Wood Buffalo area. The same group has also created a labour market supply report. The Northeast Alberta Aboriginal Association provides support to local firms that hire Aboriginal people.

Lloydminster and area benefits from the existence of the Sask/Alta Working Group that also has a labour market committee. Six industry sectors are represented on the Working Group with government represented in an advisory capacity. This Group provides seminars and training in response to priorities identified by the membership.

There was general agreement that recruiting and retention presented unique issues for northern communities.

In most cases the larger firms identified fewer issues than did the small firms.

A. Recruiting

- Housing shortages

Those interviewed in all communities identified lack of housing as a major issue. Not only is there a shortage of suitable housing for new people in the communities,

several communities reported that any available rental properties commanded very high rents. Ft. McMurray appears to experience the most severe shortages and high rental costs.

The Lloydminster area traditionally has not built camps for construction workers during periods of industrial construction. Lakeland College students now largely take apartment buildings that were originally built to house construction workers creating a shortage of accommodation for workers coming into the community. Hotel costs are prohibitive and there are reports of people coming into town and sleeping in vans or tents.

Peace River was the only community that reported sufficient available housing.

- Lack of knowledge about how to effectively recruit and train locally

There was agreement that recruiting locally is the preferred approach to hiring. Local hiring avoids the housing problem and facilitates a good corporate citizen image.

The need to develop a clear profile of the skills and characteristics desired in a new employee and provide appropriate on-the-job training was a recurring theme. For example, one respondent spoke of a one-year vacancy for an experienced professional position. The company is reviewing its policy of hiring only experienced individuals given that after a year, an inexperienced employee would be trained. One employer recommended hiring for attitude and providing the skill training on the job.

- Lack of knowledge about how to promote the attractions of northern lifestyle

Only one individual interviewed indicated that her place of employment had a video about the attractions of the North that could be used as a support during graduate recruiting visits to training institutions. Most of the communities have a website, but these appear to be under utilized as a way of promoting northern communities and employment opportunities.

- Creating effective ad copy

No one interviewed had attempted to create recruiting advertisements that highlighted the uniqueness and attractiveness of northern living. The writer undertook a four week survey of the Edmonton Journal Saturday Career Opportunities section. The ads for northern jobs were no different than any of the ads for jobs in major centres outside of the north.

- Achieving community cohesiveness in addressing human resource planning

A number of common sub-issues emerged under the broader community cohesiveness issue. It is generally recognized that keeping young people in small, remote communities is a challenge. Yet, there appears to be no identification of a community

group who could develop a comprehensive strategy that would help local employers address the problem. A factor that was conspicuous by its absence was the acknowledgement that human resources are an economic benefit to a community and coordination through economic development agencies could have a positive effect.

- Lack of knowledge about innovative recruitment strategies for new employees

Existing recruitment strategies appear to fall within the confines of standard recruiting practices used everywhere. These strategies include advertising in the local press, advertising in larger daily newspapers, campus recruiting visits, and word of mouth.

Some applications of technology-based recruiting were noted. The Wood Buffalo website has links to employment opportunities at Suncor and Syncrude. The Sask/Alta Group in Lloydminster also addresses recruiting issues on behalf of its membership.

- Lack of knowledge about effective interviewing skills

A number of people indicated that there is a need for improved interviewing skills that better assess the competencies and level of commitment of applicants. The relationship between effective interviewing and long-term staff retention was stressed by a number of individuals. However, strategies for conducting an interview that includes checks on a candidate's commitment to the area and to the position are not widely used.

B. Retention

- Lack of skills in life management and career planning

Small businesses particularly identified a lack career and life goals among their employees as a source of high staff turnover. This situation is prevalent among young employees. The lure of the oil patch with its good pay draws many local youth who tend to spend what they earn. These youth have no financial reserves and have not developed "back-burner options" for such periods. It is difficult to attract and keep young people in entry level training positions when they see their friends bringing home large paychecks from jobs in the oil field.

The existence of a large industry in a community also creates recruiting and retention difficulties for small employers. The large companies are viewed as more lucrative and more likely to offer stable employment. Small employers indicated that they lacked the knowledge about strategies that would help them encourage their trained employees to stay with a small business.

There also is a lack of understanding of how a small business operates. One employer spoke of experiencing resentment from young employees who saw the income that came into the business and compared that to their salaries without being aware of the high cost of business overhead and other expenses.

- Lack of understanding of how to address workplace issues

Small employers, particularly, identified the need to better understand and implement strategies that would help them develop and keep good employees. Implementing opportunities for employee growth, employee bonuses, keeping staff motivated and resolving differences were identified as gaps.

- Lack of understanding about establishing worker incentives

While the worker incentive notion is encompassed within the larger workplace management issue it was identified as an important strategy that is a concern for a number of individuals interviewed. Questions around timing, criteria, fairness and affordability of worker incentives were raised.

- Helping new employees integrate into the community

This issue was raised by a large number of employers who were interviewed. New employees who are also new to a community can experience isolation and “unconnectedness”. They view the community as being composed of groups of long time residents who have established friendships and support networks that do not welcome newcomers.

The employee’s family members often experience this feeling of isolation, perhaps to an even greater degree.

- Dealing with economic swings in relation to staffing requirements

This issue is particularly evident in small businesses in small communities that are dependent on agriculture and oil. Staffing is one of the more exposed business expenses and thus one of the first cuts an employer considers. The employer recognizes that there is considerable expense in developing an experienced employee and obviously is loathe to lose that person. This is the employee that is first sought when economic conditions improve. Employers want to have strategies for maintaining a core staff with the right skills and for accessing additional staff when needed.

3. Discussion of Possible Responses to Issues

A. Recruiting

An overview note is appropriate here. Many employers interviewed indicated that it is vital to recruit with the goal of retention firmly in mind. Much of the following recruiting discussion reflects the importance of planning for retention during the recruiting process.

Issue: Housing shortages.

With the exception of Peace River, all communities reported that housing shortages created a major problem in recruiting from outside the area. One employer mentioned that employees received bonuses for locating accommodation for new staff members. Another described a system of appealing to the town residents for the use of temporary accommodation while a more permanent solution was sought. The larger communities of Ft. McMurray and Lloydminster are accustomed to seeing new workers to the area sleeping in vans, RVs and even cars.

The Northlands School Division provides housing for its teachers in remote communities.

This is an issue that appears to require the united attention of the entire employment community. (See the Achieving Community Cohesiveness section).

Issue: Lack of knowledge about how to effectively recruit and train locally

Staff members who are from the area are more likely to be long term employees and will not require new housing. As well, an employer who is known to hire locally creates good will in the community.

The barrier to local hiring is often that there are no available skilled people who can immediately walk into a position and be effective. Employers often lack the skills to train an unskilled employee to the required level of effectiveness. The Apprenticeship system provides a good model for this method of recruitment and training. The model includes a provision of graduated pay scales as the employee learns.

The Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training Board is in the process of developing a train the trainer model for use by skilled tradesmen as they train apprentices on the job. Once this is available, it should provide good background for those wishing to hire locally.

The Northeast Alberta Aboriginal Association promotes local hiring with a number of partner companies in Ft. McMurray. Firms recruit locally with the understanding that the new employee will require considerable training. There is support from the Association

for training on the job and the firm agrees to supplement this training with courses available from the College or other community agencies.

Another Ft. McMurray initiative involves an agreement between Suncor and Keyano College. Prospective non-professional staff are screened using the Test of Essential Workplace Skills (TOEWS). The company then interviews those who are successful. Keyano College is preparing individualized learning modules based on TOEWS competencies that can be offered for individuals who score below the required levels. In addition to their existing drop-in tutorials, they are examining the possibility of alternative delivery.

(TOEWS is an instrument developed through a federal/ provincial partnership. Marylea Jarvis of Keyano College can provide more information).

Several companies cited the use of employee bonuses paid for the identification of local new hires.

Issue: Lack of knowledge about how to promote the attractions of a northern lifestyle

Most of the NADC area communities have a website. Additional training in effective website management would enhance local employer's access to new employees. A website could be developed to showcase the special lifestyle attractions of northern living. Links to employment opportunities that feature pictures of local industry and business could be added.

Several people suggested the use of non-traditional publications for recruiting. Outdoor and hunting magazines that are read by those who could be attracted to northern living were cited as examples.

Issue: Creating effective ad copy

This is the lack of knowledge about how to create effective ad copy. If a community developed a united strategy that creates a bank of attractive photos of the area, employers could develop ads that would stand out from the traditional appearances of most copy.

Issue: Achieving community cohesiveness in addressing human resource planning.

Both Ft. McMurray and Lloydminster have an organized industry group that identifies and addresses local issues including human resources. This has resulted in a number of positive initiatives.

The work of the Regional Infrastructure Working Group in Ft. McMurray provides a yearly report to its members about projected skill requirements for the coming year. Thus, employers can focus their recruiting and where possible have coordinated peak

demand periods to lessen labour shortages. The College benefits by being in a position to better plan for upcoming training requirements.

The Sask/Alta Group facilitates the provision of short courses that have been identified as needs by the membership. An example of course offerings are in Appendix C. This approach may work in the NADC region.

Other communities could well find that organizing in a similar fashion could ease some of the human resource challenges that exist. Also, a clearly defined annual needs report would assist local colleges to offer beneficial programs.

B. Retention

Issue: Lack of knowledge in life management and career planning

A number of employers identified a perceived lack of direction and work/life management skills in their young employees. This affects the young employee's ability to develop a learning and employment strategy that would be of direct benefit to him/her. Clearly, an individual with a defined sense of direction also makes a better employee.

A later section of this paper will address the needs of northern communities to recruit locally and to develop an increasingly skilled workforce. A locally presented workshop that facilitates learning in career and life/management strategies would be a good contributor to a community's local hire and development strategy. Young employees with this knowledge should also be able to weather economic vagaries by practicing such strategies as developing "back-burner" options and using downtimes for continuing education.

The writer contacted a career development specialist for advice on this issue. The resulting direction was to a Career Development Standards and Guidelines website. (www.lifeworks.ca). The list contains competencies and indicators that would be recommended curriculum for a life/work management program. (The adult competencies are listed in Appendix B.)

It is this writer's experience that when offering a program such as described above, it is helpful to have representatives from the employer community in attendance. This helps to avoid subsequent misunderstandings, particularly as program completers tend to be more assertive about their own plans than they were before.

There is also information about how to access "train the trainer" assistance on the website. Communities are encouraged to develop a core of trainers and thus become self-sufficient in offering this kind of programming.

(Dave Redekopp is the contact for this information. His telephone number is listed in Appendix A)

The lack of knowledge about how a small business operates was reported as a concern. Perhaps local Chambers of Commerce could develop an overview of small business operations including the financial concerns that an owner must attend to. A reasonable alternative can be found in publications that can be accessed through Alberta Learning Information Services, (ALIS) on the Alberta Government, Alberta Learning website. Follow the links to The Business Link and go to the Virtual Library.

Issue: Lack of understanding about how to address workplace issues

Small business respondents indicated that they would welcome the opportunity to learn about strategies to address a number of workplace issues. These issues include: strategies for employee development, conflict resolution, employee orientation, employee incentives, motivating staff, and team building.

Employee development: Employers who are familiar with the career and life management strategies described in the above section are in a good position to become career coaches with their employees. They will have an understanding of how to create a learning plan with each employee. Applying this strategy has been found to increase employee loyalty and effectiveness.

Employee orientation: A complete orientation package would be an effective way to lay out employer expectations and could also address the work ethic issue. The package could include resources such as Labour Practices and Workers Compensation information that can be found on the Business Link, Virtual Library website. It should also include such information as hours of work, dress codes, a job description and details of employee benefits and pay. The employer should also clearly outline the conditions that trigger pay raises and bonuses. One effective strategy that was tried was the establishment of a workplace support system. This is particularly useful for entry level employees who must work independently (as in the helping professions).

Employee incentives: See employee orientation. Employers should be encouraged to carefully plan their bonus system, pay raises, staff vacation planning and other employee rewards.

Team building: Providing employers with team building strategies could address several of the issues that were identified. Ongoing practice of this strategy can be effective means of dealing with conflict resolution and employee motivation.

Exit interviews: Most employers neglect to gather this important piece of information. Consistently gathering this information will alert an employer to possible unresolved workplace issues, inappropriate staff incentives and other concerns. A careful analysis of the results of exit interviews can assist an employer in rectifying recurring issues.

It is equally important to pay attention to the amount of employee turnover. An analysis of turnover in conjunction with information gathered in exit interviews could provide valuable information about practices that should be improved.

Issue: Helping new employees integrate into the community

Small communities can appear insular to a new person and his/her family. An isolated employee and/or isolated spouse and children pose a threat to the family's desire to stay in the community.

Larger employers in the NADC area have a community orientation plan that includes bringing the partner of a prospective employee in for a day during which there is a tour of the town and its amenities, a tour of the employment site and ends with a hosted dinner with the immediate work group.

Other employers spoke of implementing a "buddy" system that entails having a long term resident introduce the employee and family to sports facilities, churches, school personnel and shopping.

Northern communities could learn from the example of the Canadian military, which in the past five years has placed a higher focus on providing support and resources to re-located families. This has included working directly with local schools to ensure that children are integrated into the community. Employment search and career development resources are also provided to spouses of military members.

Issue: Dealing with economic swings in relation to staffing

A solid human resource plan can be a useful tool in avoiding swings in staff size that result from economic ups and downs. If an employer knows what minimum staff complement can sustain the business during stable times, provisions can be made for training part-time staff to be brought in during upswings. This is a somewhat simplistic notion for a complex problem particularly so in smaller centres.

Resources for human resource planning can be found on the Business Link, Virtual Library, website.

Employers could also consider developing contacts with career practitioners in the area who could provide contact with individuals wanting to build experience through part-time work. (See the section on community cohesiveness).

4. Programming Opportunities Arising From the Research

At least four major themes arose from the research and analysis. The Colleges could work within their communities to determine the specific program requirements of employers and employees in each of the four themes.

Life management and career planning

There were indications that young employees would benefit from workshops in this area. There was some support for the involvement of their staff expressed by employers. The same program could be tailored for employers who are interested in learning more about plans to develop employee skills and about implementing career coaching strategies with their employees.

Best practices in effective recruiting

The research provided good support from all the communities that there was a lack of knowledge and skills in effective recruiting among employers. Even the larger companies indicated that they would support participation in this and other human resource development programming.

Staff retention strategies

Here again, the possibility of good support from all the communities was confirmed. Examination of the Sask/Alta course offerings shows that a series of human resource management seminars were offered. A similar model could be applied in other communities.

Coordination of human resources activities within the community

The two communities that have a formal organization for coordination of economic activities including human resource development have obviously benefited. It is noteworthy that in both communities the organization is made up of local industry representation. The colleges and relevant government departments maintain an advisory role.

In other communities the colleges could facilitate the formation of such organizations. Not only do colleges have staff who would have the necessary facilitation skills to assist in the formation of a local organization, the possibilities of downstream benefits to the college in terms of training programs and other partnerships are real.

Individuals and Organizations Contacted

Ed Kulak, Regional Manager, Lloydminster, Alberta Human Resources and Employment. Telephone: (780) 871 – 6445

Diane, Ft. McMurray Chamber of Commerce. Telephone: (780) 743 – 3100

Jo-anne Lapine, First Eco Capital, Ft. McMurray. Telephone: (780) 715 – 0990

Lynn Troop, Human Resources, Peace River Hospital. Telephone: (780) 618 – 4500

Bruce Barclay, owner, Cycle West, Fairview. Telephone: (780) 835 – 4202

Mavis, Alberta Treasury Branch, Fairview. Telephone: (780) 835 – 4932

Sheila Mahoney, Alberta Personnel Administration. Telephone: (780) 420 - 4407

Scott Montgomery, Alberta Family and Social Services. Telephone: (780) 422 – 3974

Bill Almdahl, Ft. McMurray, Regional Infrastructure Working Group.
Telephone: (780) 743 – 6285

Allan Kalla, Universal Industries, Lloydminster. Telephone: (780) 875 – 6161

Lucille, Northlands School Division, Peace River. Telephone: (780) 624 - 2060

Dave Redekopp, Principal Partner, Life-Role Development Group Ltd., Edmonton.
Telephone: (780) 455 – 1954

Linda Carlson, Human Resources, Daishowa-Marubeni International, Peace River.
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Marylea Jarvis, Dean, Keyano College, Ft. McMurray. Telephone: (780)

COMPETENCIES AND INDICATORS - LEVEL FOUR

A. PERSONAL MANAGEMENT

COMPETENCY 1: Build and maintain a positive self-image

Level Four: Improve on abilities to maintain a positive self-image

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

- 1.4.1 Understand the influence of personal characteristics (skills, knowledge, attitudes, interests, values and beliefs) on career decisions.
- 1.4.2 Understand how achievements related to work, learning and leisure influence self-image.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

- 1.4.3 Explore how one's career decisions have been and still are influenced by one's personal characteristics (skills, knowledge, attitudes, interests, values and beliefs).
- 1.4.4 Identify one's personal achievements related to work, learning and leisure.
- 1.4.5 Adopt behaviours and attitudes that project a positive self-image.

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

- 1.4.6 Re-examine one's personal characteristics and determine those that might contribute positively to the achievement of one's life and work goals.
- 1.4.7 Examine one's personal achievements and acknowledge their influence on one's self-image.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

- 1.4.8 Improve one's life and work by maximizing one's positive characteristics.
- 1.4.9 Engage in life/work experiences that validate one's entire being and provide a sense of personal achievement.

COMPETENCY 2: Interact positively and effectively with others

Level Four: Improve abilities for building positive relationships in one's life and work

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

- 2.4.1 Explore new interpersonal and group communication skills.
- 2.4.2 Explore the concept of “self defeating” behaviours and attitudes as well as strategies for overcoming them.
- 2.4.3 Further the exploration of personal management skills such as time management, problem solving, personal finances, stress management, life/work balance, etc.
- 2.4.4 Explore the importance of positive relationships in one's personal and professional lives.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

- 2.4.5 Demonstrate effective social and group membership skills, knowledge and attitudes.
- 2.4.6 Demonstrate personal management skills such as time management, problem solving, personal finances, stress management, life/work balance, etc.
- 2.4.7 Apply strategies for overcoming self-defeating behaviours and attitudes.
- 2.4.8 Demonstrate behaviours and attitudes for establishing and maintaining positive relationships in one's personal and professional lives.

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

- 2.4.9 Acknowledge and appreciate the outcomes of positive relationships in one's personal and professional lives.
- 2.4.10 Integrate further personal management skills such as time management, problem solving, stress management and life/work balance to one's life and work.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

2.4.11 Engage in further learning experiences that help build positive relationships in one's life and work.

COMPETENCY 3: Change and grow throughout one's life

Level Four: Develop strategies for responding to life and work changes

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

3.4.1 Understand how personal motivations and aspirations may change over time.

3.4.2 Understand physical and psychological changes that occur with age.

3.4.3 Explore how work performance may be adapted to physical and psychological changes that occur with age.

3.4.4 Understand how changes related to work (e.g. job loss, job transfer, etc.) impact on one's life and may require life changes.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

3.4.5 Describe one's personal motivations and aspirations.

3.4.6 Develop and apply strategies to adapt and respond effectively to life and work changes (e.g. problem solving, networking, updating portfolio and resume, acquiring new skills and knowledge, attending personal growth workshops, etc.).

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

3.4.7 Examine one's personal motivations and aspirations and determine their impact on one's life/work decisions.

3.4.8 Acknowledge one's ability to adapt and respond effectively to life and work changes.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

3.4.8 Create life/work scenarios based on personal motivations and aspirations.

3.4.9 Improve one’s ability to adapt and respond to life and work changes.

B – LEARNING AND WORK EXPLORATION

COMPETENCY 4: Participate in life-long learning supportive of life/work goals

Level Four: Participate in continuous learning supportive of life/work goals

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

4.4.1 Investigate educational opportunities (e.g., job training programs, employer-sponsored training, graduate and professional study).

4.4.2 Investigate community resources that support education and training (e.g., childcare, public transportation, and health and human services).

4.4.3 Understand the importance of coping strategies in helping to overcome barriers to education and training.

4.4.4 Explore how skills, knowledge and attitudes acquired in and outside educational institutions enhance work opportunities.

4.4.5 Explore life-long learning resources available in workplace settings (e.g., remedial classes, computer-assisted self-directed training, counselling, and tuition support, etc.).

4.4.6 Explore personal and professional learning plans.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

4.4.7 Prepare short and long-range plans to achieve personal and professional goals through appropriate educational/training paths.

4.4.8 Outline and adopt strategies to overcome personal barriers to education and training.

4.4.9 Undertake learning activities (e.g., studying, taking tests, receiving work site feedback, etc.).

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

- 4.4.10 Assess one's own skills, knowledge and attitudes and determine how these enhance life/work opportunities
- 4.4.11 Determine which continuous learning strategies work best for oneself.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

- 4.4.12 Improve learning strategies and engage in a life-long learning process supportive of one's life/work goals.

COMPETENCY 5: Locate and effectively use life/work information

Level Four: Locate, interpret, evaluate and use life/work information (II)

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

- 5.4.1 Investigate life/work-related information and materials (e.g., on self-assessment, on career planning, on professional associations, on prospective employers, etc.).
- 5.4.2 Explore the uses and limitations of occupational and labor market information.
- 5.4.3 Discover the diverse work opportunities available to an individual with a given set of work skills, knowledge and attitudes.
- 5.4.4 Understand how to assess the reliability of life/work information
- 5.4.5 Discover contracting and hiring practices.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

- 5.4.6 Assess the reliability of life/work information.
- 5.4.7 Use career information resources such as career monographs, occupation classification systems, labour market information, mass media, computer and Internet-based career information delivery systems to educate oneself to the realities and requirements of various work roles.

5.4.8 Identify work opportunities available to oneself with respect to one's set of work skills, knowledge and attitudes.

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

5.4.9 Assess life/work information and evaluate its impact on one's life/work decisions.

5.4.10 Determine, according to one's preferences, which work opportunities should or will be considered in one's life/work scenarios.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

5.4.11 Improve one's strategies to locate, interpret, evaluate and use Create or adapt life/work scenarios using pertinent and accurate life/work- related life/work information.

COMPETENCY 6: Understand the relationship between work and society/economy

Level Four: Understand how societal and economic need influence the nature and structure of work (II)

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

6.4.1 Explore how people's personal values and interests often determine the importance given to work.

6.4.2 Understand how trends (such as social, demographic, technological, occupational and industrial trends) affect education/training programs and work opportunities.

6.4.3 Understand the concept of a global economy and how it affects the individuals, communities, provinces or territories as well as the country itself.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

6.4.4 Demonstrate how one's community is affected by society's needs and functions, as well as by the global economy.

- 6.4.5 Demonstrate how work and learning opportunities in one's community are or could be affected by certain trends (such as social, demographic, technological, occupational and industrial trends).

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

- 6.4.6 Explain how one's personal values and interests determine the importance one gives to work.
- 6.4.7 Evaluate the impact of society's needs and functions, and that of the global economy on self.
- 6.4.8 Evaluate the impact of social, demographic, technological, occupational and industrial trends on work and learning opportunities for oneself.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

- 6.4.9 Engage in work experiences that satisfy one's needs as well as contribute to society.

B. CAREER BUILDING

COMPETENCY 7: Secure/create and maintain work

Level Four: Improve on abilities to seek, obtain/create and maintain work

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

- 7.4.1 Investigate specific work that supports desired career intentions.
- 7.4.2 Identify job opportunities respectful of oneself.
- 7.4.3 Identify relationships that will help with finding work.
- 7.4.4 Update work search tools and skills required to seek, obtain/create and maintain work (job application forms, résumés, portfolios, job interviewing, proposals, cover letters, etc.).
- 7.4.5 Understand how recent social and economical changes (e.g., technological developments, changes in demand for products or services)

- influence the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for seeking, obtaining/creating and maintaining work.
- 7.4.6 Explore alternative strategies reflective and supportive of career change (e.g., on-the-job training, career ladders, mentors, networking, continuous learning).
 - 7.4.7 Investigate career planning and work finding services available through organizations (e.g., government, educational institutions, business/industry, labour and community agencies).
 - 7.4.8 Explore skills, knowledge and attitudes that are transferable from one work role to another.
 - 7.4.9 Understand the importance of making life/work decisions in step with one's preferred future.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

- 7.4.13 Establish relationships that will help with finding work.
- 7.4.14 Practice or apply work search tools and skills required to seek, obtain/create and maintain work (job application forms, résumés, portfolios, job interviewing, proposals, cover letters, etc.).
- 7.4.15 Experience career planning and work finding services available through organizations (e.g., government, educational institutions, business/industry, labour and community agencies).
- 7.4.16 Demonstrate skills, knowledge and attitudes that are transferable from one work role to another.
- 7.4.17 Plan career changes reflective of one's preferred future.

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

- 7.4.18 Re-examine one's network and determine the relationships most helpful to one's work search strategies.
- 7.4.19 Evaluate one's skills, knowledge and attitudes in terms of effective tools for seeking, obtaining/creating and maintaining work.
- 7.4.20 Assess one's skills, knowledge and attitudes in terms of one's career goals and work opportunities.

7.4.21 Assess work opportunities in terms of one's preferred future.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

7.4.22 Create and engage in work opportunities reflective of one's personal set of skills, knowledge and attitudes.

7.4.23 Create and engage in work opportunities reflective of one's preferred future.

7.4.24 Adapt or innovate with one's work search skills and tools.

COMPETENCY 8: Make life/work-enhancing decisions

Level Four: Incorporate adult life reality into life/work decision making

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

8.4.1 Explore the type of skills, knowledge and attitudes important to acquire or develop in order to assess work opportunities (in terms of advancement, management styles, work environment, benefits and other work conditions).

8.4.2 Explore the effects that learning, family and work decisions may have on one's career decision process.

8.4.3 Understand how personal and environmental conditions may effect decision-making.

8.4.4 Explore effective career decision-making skills, knowledge and attitudes.

8.4.5 Explore potential consequences of decisions.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

8.4.6 Demonstrate the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to assess work opportunities.

8.4.7 Demonstrate effective career decision-making skills, knowledge and attitudes.

8.4.8 Determine personal criteria for making decisions about learning, family and work.

8.4.9 Identify potential consequences of one's decisions.

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

8.4.10 Assess work opportunities for oneself.

8.4.11 Evaluate the impact of one's decisions on self and others.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

8.4.12 Engage in decision-making respectful of oneself and supportive of one's goals.

COMPETENCY 9: Maintain balanced life and work roles.

Level Four: Incorporate the “balanced life/work” issue in life/work building.

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

9.4.1 Explore how individual growth and evolving family life impact one's career path.

9.4.2 Understand how work, family and leisure activities interrelate.

9.4.3 Understand how personal values may influence one's priorities.

9.4.4 Explore strategies for negotiating work, family and leisure demands (e.g. working hours, time with friends, etc.) with family members.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

9.4.5 Apply strategies for negotiating work family and leisure demands (e.g., working hours, time with friends, etc.) with family members.

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

9.4.6 Determine the value of work, family and leisure activities for oneself.

9.4.7 Explore one's work, family and leisure activities and evaluate their impact on one's life.

9.4.8 Determine the kind of work, family and leisure activities one feels will contribute to a balanced life.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

9.4.9 Engage in life/work scenarios and leisure activities that support one's goals and contribute to a balanced life.

COMPETENCY 10: Understand the changing nature of life/work roles

Level Four: Understand and learn to overcome stereotypes in life/work building (II)

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

10.4.1 Investigate recent changes in gender norms and attitudes.

10.4.2 Investigate trends in the gender composition of the labour force.

10.4.3 Explore difficulties encountered in stereotyping occupations.

10.4.4 Explore skills, knowledge and attitudes that help eliminate stereotyping in education, family and work environments.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

10.4.5 Demonstrate skills, knowledge and attitudes that help eliminate stereotyping in education, family and work environments.

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

10.4.6 Evaluate the impact that trends in the gender composition of the labour force have on one's career plans.

10.4.7 Determine one's need to adopt strategies or take actions that help eliminate gender bias and stereotyping.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

- 10.4.8 Create and engage in fulfilling life/work scenarios regardless of gender bias and stereotyping.
- 10.4.9 Engage in life/work experiences in ways that help eliminate gender bias and stereotyping.

COMPETENCY 11: Understand, engage in one’s own career (life/work) building process.

Level Four: Manage one’s life/work building process

Stage I – Acquisition: acquiring knowledge

- 11.4.1 Explore the nature of life/work transitions and their impact on one’s life/work building process.
- 11.4.2 Investigate the choices and challenges of major transitions (e.g., becoming a parent/spouse/retiree, losing a job, etc.).
- 11.4.3 Explore financial and lifestyle needs and their relationship to life/work roles.
- 11.4.4 Explore effective strategies to use during transitions.
- 11.4.5 Understand the importance of updating one’s portfolio using newly acquired information about self and the work dynamic.
- 11.4.6 Understand the importance of revisiting and fine-tuning one’s preferred future, life/work scenarios and short-term action plans.

Stage II – Application: experiencing acquired knowledge

- 11.4.7 Plan and apply coping strategies or desired scenarios during transition periods (e.g., starting a family, retirement, losing a job, etc.)
- 11.4.8 Update one’s portfolio
- 11.4.9 Review one’s preferred future and fine-tune one’s life/work action plans.
- 11.4.10 Pursue one’s action plans.

Stage III – Personalization: integrating acquired and applied knowledge

11.4.12 Revisit one's preferred future to determine whether or not it is necessary to modify and/or create new life/work scenarios and adjust one's short-term action plans.

11.4.13 Re-examine one's strategies during transition periods in light of one's preferred future and determine whether or not it is necessary to adjust them.

Stage IV – Actualization: striving towards full potential

11.4.14 Adapt one's preferred future in order to always reflect one's true self.

Sask/Alta Group Training for Winter 1999 – 2000

- Policy and Procedure Manual Development
- HR Management – reward system; empowering your employees
- Work Ethics – time management, work environment skills, professionalism, (these are things expected by the employer of a new employee), labour standards. (A pre-employment program for youth).
- Community knowledge training
- Small Retail vs. Big Box Retailers
- Merchandising
- Advertising and Creating a Corporate Image
- Inventory Management
- Financing for Non-Finance Managers
- Time Management
- Liquor Service Seminar – legal issues, proper procedures, etc.
- Information Session on Labour Standards
- 4 - 6 Week Introductory Course for the Hospitality Industry
- Computer Training
- General Labourer Training
- Leadership and Supervisory Training
- Personnel Management
- Service Rig Courses for Equipment Operation
- Team Leadership and Building for Mid-managers
- Robbery Prevention Training
- Internet Use and Benefits for Managers
- Health and Safety – Agriculture
- Enterprise Management and Farming as a Business
- Dealing With Legal Contracts
- Time Management – Agriculture
- Farm Safety – Children and Teenagers
- Management –personnel, communications, marketing, HR manual (series of evening seminars).