

HR PROSPECTOR



WINTER 2009

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COULD THE RECESSION BE A BLESSING IN DISGUISE?

Most analysts expect that, due to the worldwide economic recession, the Canadian economy will exhibit little or no growth over the next 18 months. With a small open economy, Canada is particularly vulnerable to volatility in international markets. Tight credit conditions and declining commodity prices for most minerals and metals have caused some Canadian mines to become non-viable in the short term, resulting in shutdowns and layoffs. Nevertheless, the majority of mining companies have managed to remain solvent as a result of greater productivity and the reduction of capital expenditures and other costs. Although the depth and duration of the recession cannot be predicted, there are indications that the downturn will be short-lived.

Although the recent super-cycle has recently come to an end, not all companies were able to fully capitalize on this period of high commodity prices. This is due largely to the difficulties in finding qualified people. Nearly all mining occupations have experienced some shortages in recent years. Despite the recent downturn in the sector, shortages of skilled labour will likely persist in the medium to long term. This is because a large number of retirees (baby boomers start retiring in 2011) and individuals that leave mining to work in other sectors, will have to be replaced. Through its labour market forecasting work, the Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) continues to forecast the need for tens of thousands of skilled workers across Canada over the next decade.

As commodity prices recover over the next few years, mining companies will be under renewed pressure to recruit and retain individuals with the appropriate skill sets and motivation to work in the industry.

For the Canadian mining industry, there may be a silver lining in this current recession. The more modest pace of business activity will allow managers to devote more attention to human resource planning than was previously the case. This could present an opportunity for human resource practitioners and opinion leaders to implement a more prudent and systematic approach to issues such as employee recruitment, training, retention, succession planning and achieving work-life balance. >>CONTINUE

MEET MIHR AT THE FOLLOWING EVENTS:

- PDAC 2009** - March 1 - 4
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Booth 607
- Inclusion Works 09'** - April 6 - 8
Sheraton Wall Centre, Vancouver
- CIM Conference** - May 10 - 13
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Booth 0105
- Mining in Society** - May 10 - 12
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, The Pavilion

COLLABORATE WITH US

Visit www.MiHR.ca for valuable resources.



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During a period of industry contraction, there is, typically, intense pressure on firms to rationalize their operations. In the case of the domestic mining industry, this could lead to mergers, acquisitions and other types of restructuring. Although greater concentration might result in some job losses, it could ultimately lead to a more efficient and globally competitive industry. Over time, this adjustment process could offset many of the negative employment consequences of the recession.

Sheldon Polowin is Labour Market Analyst at MiHR. If you would like more information on how MiHR is providing industry with up-to-date labour market information please contact spolowin@mihr.ca.

MEET US AT PDAC TO GET INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF Occupational Standards for Exploration

This winter, MiHR, in collaboration with the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada (PDAC), has been working on the development of an inventory of occupations in the exploration sector. Through industry consultation with key sector stakeholders, two or three of these occupations will be identified for occupational analysis and the development of National Occupational Standards (NOS) – the first in the exploration sector.

Visit us at the MiHR booth during the Annual PDAC Convention in Toronto from March 1 to 4, 2009, to learn more about the outcome of the consultation and to get involved in the development of the NOS, scheduled for launch in the spring of 2009. Industry participation in this process is essential to ensure that the standards developed represent the needs of the sector in the areas of skills recognition and labour mobility.



For more information on this initiative, or to learn more about the NOS development and implementation process, **visit us online at www.mihr.ca.**

MINING INDUSTRY IS ONE STEP CLOSER TO SKILLS RECOGNITION

Building on the agreed National Occupational Standards (NOS), the next stage of the Canadian Mining Credentials Program (CMCP) is to establish skills certification. The National Worker Certification Program will help industry develop an appropriately skilled workforce; mining occupations will have clearly defined skills criteria and the tools to assess workers' proficiency and mastery will be widely available.

In order to offer the Canadian mining industry a certification model suited to its needs, MiHR has been working with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). The model that has



CERTIFICATION WILL IMPROVE WORKERS' MOBILITY BY GIVING THEM AN INDUSTRY-ENDORSED CREDENTIAL THAT ATTESTS TO THEIR SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE.

been developed is based on research, industry consultation and best practices including:

- recognition and certification of related experience and credentials;
- a multi-staged certification approach, including base-level certification and competent-level certification;
- requirements to demonstrate proficient performance;
- performance evaluation by impartial certified workplace assessors; and
- voluntary participation.

Certification will improve workers' mobility by giving them an industry-endorsed credential that attests to their skills, knowledge and experience - useful in times when they need to move to new sites or new mining regions within Canada.

The model was validated by the CMCP's Champions Network, a group of about 50 industry stakeholders, including worker representatives, workplace trainers, mine managers, vice presidents of HR, labour union officials, post-secondary educators, mining association representatives, and provincial/territorial and federal government representatives. This group advocates for and promotes the CMCP within their networks and jurisdictions and their input is invaluable.

Industry support and participation is essential to the success of this program. If you are interested in participating in activities related to the CMCP and National Worker Certification Program development and implementation, we would like to hear from you.

Please contact Verónica Sánchez: vsanchez@mih.ca.



WWW.MIHR.CA

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

“TIMES ARE HARD, BUT WE NEED TO KEEP FOCUSED ON DEVELOPING FOR THE FUTURE.”

Jim Utley, VP of Human Resources at Teck, Canada’s largest diversified mining, mineral processing and metallurgical company, knows that retaining focus in a time of economic downturn is key. It’s good advice from someone with over 30 years of experience in the industry and facing the fourth recession of his career.

As co-chair of the standing committee for the Canadian Mining Credentials Program (CMCP), Jim has been a driving force in developing national occupational standards and a national worker certification system for the mining sector. But in an industry facing a recession and layoffs, how relevant is a mining credentials program?

“It’s relevant now more than ever,” comments Jim. “We may be in a downturn, but time does not stand still, the demographic pressures we have now will continue, emerging economies will continue to grow, and the skills shortage we face in the future is going to be more challenging as a result.” As an HR professional, Jim knows that the way to motivate and retain employees is to make them feel valued, recognizing and rewarding hard work. Industry certification will not only create career paths for existing workers, but will allow worker mobility, attract talent from other industries, facilitate recruitment and encourage young people to choose a career in mining.

In addition to his role as co-chair of the CMCP, Jim also sits on the BC Mining Industry Labour Shortage Task Force and the Industry Training Authority. “Encouraging collaboration between MiHR and these organizations has been important as we’re now able to take work completed around the national occupational standard and build upon it.”

As we collectively ride out the recession, what else can we be doing to motivate and engage employees? One example Jim highlights is Teck’s sponsorship of the Olympics, which has already received great employee feedback. “There are two main reasons Teck is supporting the Olympics. We wanted to encourage our employees to get involved in their community, but we also wanted to deliver a rewards program that spoke to them beyond the traditional compensation package.” Thirty-five employees and their guests took a trip to the 2008 summer games in Beijing. This year, employees will have the opportunity to take part in the torch relay across the U.S. and Canada, and next year, to attend the 2010 Winter Games.

To sum up, Jim says, “It’s a challenging time at the moment, but we’ll come out of it, as we have before. Teck is continuing to offer scholarships to university students, collaborate with organizations such as MiHR and keep focused on preparing for the future skills shortage. This is not the time to take a breather.”

MiHR has worked with Jim since 2004 when the mining skills shortage was identified and the first plans made to address it. Jim was instrumental in the development of the “Explore for More” brand and the www.acareerinmining.ca website that promote career opportunities in the mining sector. MiHR thanks Jim for his valued contribution and guidance as he, and others like him, have helped shape the HR solutions we offer to industry today. If you would like to get involved as a volunteer, we would like to hear from you.

Please email us at info@mihr.ca.

BECOME A VIRTUAL MineMentor or Mentee

The results of the Virtual MineMentor Program are in: it has been so successful that we are now recruiting for a full launch. Eleven pairs of mentors/mentees took part in the two-month pilot at the end of 2008 and program evaluation shows:


- some pairs spent more than 90 minutes per week communicating;
- 75 percent of the mentees felt they were well matched with their mentor; and
- 75 percent communicated exclusively through the use of the portal.

“THINGS ARE GOING GREAT! My v-mentor is a really nice and helpful guy and we have been speaking on an almost daily basis since I was set up with him. I have also spoken with some of the other v-mentors who seem happy to provide information.” *Brett (v-mentee)*

With virtual mentoring, geography is no longer a barrier as mentorship takes place primarily through the Virtual MineMentor portal found at www.acareerinmining.ca/minementor. Participants use interactive tools such as instant messaging, blogs, community message boards, e-mail and more.

If you would like to get involved, there is an application process, after which the program coordinator will match mentors (industry employees) and mentees (post-secondary students) based on their interests and objectives for the program. Pairs commit to communicating a minimum of three hours per month, sign a code of conduct and set up a mentoring plan so the program is mutually rewarding.

To become part of the program as a mentor or mentee, or for further information, **please contact Jennifer Clark: jclark@mhr.ca**.



MiHR, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CIM, WILL HOLD THE FIRST VIRTUAL MINEMENTOR PROGRAM PARTICIPANT ORIENTATION SESSION AT CIM ON TUESDAY MAY 12, 2009.

MiHR is seeking partners to help sponsor the travel expenses of our participants. If you would like to sponsor, learn more or sign up for this innovative program, **please contact Jennifer Clark: jclark@mhr.ca**.





WWW.MIHR.CA

NEW EXPLORE FOR MORE WEBSITE



Log on to www.acareerinmining.ca at the end of February 2009 to experience the new Explore for More website.

The website has a vibrant new look, new content, and interactive resources such as the Student-on-the-Job Board, Career Pathways, Speakers Bureau and the Virtual MineMentor portal. For anyone who is asked what a career in mining is all about, direct these potential recruits to log on and view the video gallery and job links to a possible 120 different occupations, and - **Explore for More!**

JOIN US AT the CIM Human Resources Sessions

The human resources sessions, sponsored and hosted by MiHR at this year's CIM conference, have been developed to help HR professionals attract and retain the most valuable industry resource – people. In response to a changing marketplace, a 40 percent retirement rate and a diversifying workforce, MiHR has collaborated with industry and built tools to help HR professionals address these challenges. Come along and hear experts deliver up-to-date labour market information and ideas for attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.

SESSIONS ON **MAY 12 & 13** INCLUDE:

- Mastering Aboriginal Inclusion in Mining
- Labour Market Intelligence
- Engaging the Next Generation of Talent - Marketing Strategies to Attract Youth
- Mining for Diversity: An Employer's Guide to Attract, Recruit, and Retain a Diverse Workforce

For more information go to www.cim.org/toronto2009/ or email info@mihhr.ca.

CIM JOB FAIR - Space Available

As a result of the recent economic downturn, there is significant space available in the annual mining sector job fair hosted by CIM on May 10, 11, and 12. The CIM job fair is marketed throughout the Greater Toronto Area and attracts a wide range of job seekers including engineers, technicians and technologists, skilled trades people and experienced workers.

If you are looking for workers with the right skills for your company contact **Martin Bell, CIM: 514-939-2710 ext.1311.**