

# Making the Grade: Current and Projected Supply and Demand for Highly Qualified People in the Canadian Minerals and Metals Industry

## Who We Are

The Mining Industry Human Resources (MiHR) Council is the national sector council for the minerals and metals industry. MiHR contributes to the strength, competitiveness, and sustainability of the Canadian minerals and metals sector through bringing all industry stakeholders together to address human resource challenges and opportunities. MiHR is the recognized industry leader in the identification and analysis of the HR issues facing the industry and a catalyst for development and implementation of solutions.

## Background

One of the Mining Industry Human Resources (MiHR) Council's strategic objectives is to research, analyze, forecast and disseminate labour market, human resource and other human capital information relevant to the minerals and metals sector (i.e. labour market intelligence, sector studies, occupational supply and demand forecasts, and relevant research focused on HR issues).

To meet this objective MiHR is engaged in several initiatives to improve the quality and availability of labour market information to industry stakeholders. This includes developing better ways of collecting, analyzing, disseminating and communicating mining-specific labour market information. Since 2003, MiHR has carried out several labour market initiatives. *Making the Grade* will add to this work through research, analysis and dissemination of findings on labour market issues and the short and long-term human resource challenges associated with highly qualified people (HQP) in the minerals and metals industry.

HQP are a valuable asset to the Canadian mining industry because they provide the sector with organizational leadership, and play an important role in education, and research and development. They often occupy vital mission critical roles, drive innovation, and ensure the long-term sustainability of the industry. However, despite their importance to the industry, HQP are a scarce labour resource. What is more, there is a significant lack of baseline data with regards to HQP as a labour group.

## Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine the current and projected industry supply and demand for HQP in all phases of the mining cycle, and to increase knowledge and understanding of the barriers and opportunities in attraction, development, and retention of HQP in the industry. From there, a human resource strategy and proactive action plan will be developed to address human resources challenges related to HQP and capitalize on industry opportunities.

## Objectives

The primary objectives for this project are to:

- enhance the labour market information on HQP available to industry stakeholders;
- assess factors affecting labour supply and demand of HQP;
- develop a strategy to monitor, assess, and project the supply and demand of HQP for the minerals and metals industry;
- identify the short- and long-term HR challenges and opportunities related to HQP in the industry; and
- serve as the basis for developing an industry strategy and action plan to address key HR issues.

## Partners

MiHR contributes to the strength, competitiveness and sustainability of the Canadian mining sector by collaborating with all relevant communities of interest. For the purposes of this project, MiHR is partnering with the newly established Canada Mining for Innovation Council (CMIC) as well as other interested stakeholder groups.

## Activities

Project work for *Making the Grade* will be broken down into three phases: a situational analysis; intensive industry research; and stakeholder roundtables to develop a strategy and action plan.

### Phase 1: The Current Situation

In the first phase of research, the current state of the workforce and available labour market information will be assessed. Primary activities in this phase will be to:

- conduct an analysis of the current state of knowledge and literature review on known labour market conditions for HQP;
- determine the scope of labour market information requirements on HQP and reporting needs for stakeholders;
- develop an inventory of existing sources of information on labour supply and demand;
- identify the labour market information gaps, determine probable causes, who is affected, and what has been done to date to address the issues; and
- incorporate data and analysis into MiHR's labour market information system.

### Phase 2: Primary and Secondary Research

In the second phase of project work, primary and secondary research will be used to identify the human resource challenges and opportunities related to HQP in the minerals and metals industry. Activities will be to:

- conduct surveys, interviews, and focus groups with industry stakeholders to determine the short- and long-term HR challenges related to HQP;
- review relevant academic and grey literature on HR issues related to HQP for the sector, as well as Statistics Canada data products and reports, COPs reports, etc.; and
- provide insights on the short- and long-term HR challenges and opportunities facing the sector.

### Phase 3: Analysis and Industry Strategy

In the third phase of work, industry stakeholders will be consulted to review project findings and develop an industry strategy for addressing the issues raised.

- consult with industry stakeholders about Phase 1 and Phase 2 findings through roundtable or focus group discussions and determine the overall implications for the industry;
- provide insights and suggest practical solutions;
- develop an industry strategy to address identified issues; and
- produce a series of reports and other communications (e.g., webcasts, presentations, articles) to disseminate findings to all communities of interest.

### Outputs and outcomes

Project work will be presented to the industry in the form of a two-part sector study report (Part 1: Situational Analysis and Part 2: HR Challenges and Opportunities). Research findings will be disseminated through web and webinar postings, conferences, forums, and media coverage. Ultimately the project is expected to improve labour market information and increase the level of understanding among stakeholders about the HR challenges and opportunities related to HQP in the minerals and metals sector.

Research and project work will result in the following outputs:

- a complementary set of information reports related to supply and demand for HQP in the minerals and metals industry;
- an industry strategy to address key HR issues;
- improved labour market information for this vital segments of the industry workforce; and
- updates and contributions to MiHR's labour market information system.

In addition, the following long-term impacts are anticipated:

- improved strategies to achieve balance between supply and demand of HQP for the Canadian mining industry;
- increased understanding among communities of interest about key human resource issues that must be addressed by the mining on industry to ensure its viability; and
- increased level of dialogue, collaboration and buy-in from mining industry stakeholders to the collaborative process being fostered in the industry.

### More Information

For more information on this and other exciting HR-related Research initiatives, please contact:

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