

STRENGTHENING BC'S WORKFORCE

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND THE WORKPLACE ROLES AND COMMON GOALS

EMPLOYABILITY
A PRODUCTIVE WORKPLACE
A HEALTHY ECONOMY

Time and
Location TBA
Vancouver, BC

Draft - For
Discussion

Submitted by
BC Career Information Partnership
and
Member Agencies

PROPOSAL FOR A ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

- A Round Table Discussion on Career Development and the Workplace is proposed. Its purpose is to help to align the interests, expectations and activities of the career development and employer communities with respect to their common human resource development goals – formation of individuals with the appropriate education, training and skills needed in today’s workplace in order to meet the labour requirements of a rapidly changing and expanding economy.

BRITISH COLUMBIA’S CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- Career development services include career education; career counselling; employment counselling; human resource development; training in employment skills; community rehabilitation; and job-related training services such as job-search, interviewing, self-exploration, time management and entrepreneurship.
- The scope of career development objectives is equally broad – more appropriate occupational, learning and career choices; more efficient school and work transitions; more successful employment outcomes; and more effective utilization of human resources and capital. These objectives contribute directly to a growing and more productive economy, and corresponding individual and societal well-being

A person with insufficient knowledge of available education and career opportunities and the knowledge, skills and abilities demanded by employers is destined to be adrift in the labour market of the 21st century. (Richard Froeschle, Costs of Market Indecision...)

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND THE WORKPLACE

- Demographics, globalization, technology and a rapidly changing economy and labour market have raised concerns regarding future availability of workers with the right mix of education, training and skills needed to meet the demands of the workplace.
- Career awareness and appropriate career planning and choices on the part of individuals have been identified as major contributors in helping to meet the current and future human resources needs of employers.

Demographics, globalization and technology infusion have combined to make this a different period than when skills were in short supply in the 70s, 80s and 90s – the coming ten years will be pivotal to BC’s and Canada’s future global competitiveness. BC’s human capital stakeholders largely continue to work independently and this further limits progress to reversing the escalating skills crisis. Without significant change in the way British Columbians approach training and the attraction and retention of qualified skilled workers the province will experience massive skilled worker shortages as predicted for some time (John Winters, BC Chamber of Commerce, Closing the Skills Gap, April 2002)

ROUND TABLE OBJECTIVES

- To identify the connections and contributions of career development services to better learning and labour market plans and decisions, more efficient school and work transitions, greater employability and a more productive workforce.
- To promote greater collaboration between the career development and employer communities in development and use of career services, tools and resources to support development of the BC workforce.

While the value of a university degree is well known, the value of the other forms of post-secondary education and training is often overlooked. It is not well known that these other options can lead to rewarding jobs and fulfilling careers. (Jerry Lampert, BC Business Council, The Third Option...)

APPROACH

- Expert panels from the career development and employer communities will present recent research and perspectives on the linkages and contribution of career development programs and services to workforce development issues. A series of facilitated breakout and plenary sessions will focus on commonalities and points of agreement regarding priorities, ways and means of strengthening those linkages.

Respondents tended to assess employer activity in information, guidance and counselling services as "occasional", significantly oriented towards information rather than guidance or counselling, and locally-based. (BC Response to OECD Study, May 2002)

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Shared perspectives and a more common understanding of the place and fit of career development research, programs and outcomes within a broader framework for individual employability, workforce development and economic growth.
- Recommendations and suggested actions with respect to a more planned and coordinated approach to connecting the career information, guidance and counselling needs of individuals with the human resource and workforce requirements of the employer in a wide variety of educational and workplace settings.

Effective career information and guidance systems are a key to making lifelong learning a reality for all. They can help to make the best use of human resources in the labour market as well as in education by allowing better matches between people's skills and interests and available opportunities for work and learning. They are important elements in active labour market policies and active welfare to work policies. (OECD, About Career Information and Guidance)

FACILITATION

- Suggested facilitators include Lynne Bezanson, who is the Executive Director of the Canadian Career Development Foundation, and has been recently involved as a researcher, consultant and contributor to the OECD Career Guidance Policy Review. Lynne has played Canadian host to, and acted as facilitator for the past two International Symposia on Career Development and Public Policy, and is currently planning and preparing to facilitate the Canada Symposium on Career Development and Public Policy, scheduled in November 2003.

SPONSORS AND CONTRIBUTORS

- *BC Career Information Partnership* is a network of career development stakeholders with representation from schools colleges, universities, organizations representing community service providers, career practitioners, federal and provincial governments and departments.
- The *British Columbia Chamber of Commerce*, through its local member chambers and corporate members, represents over 25,000 businesses throughout British Columbia. Its objectives are to develop and present a cross section of opinions of the BC business community to the government and to promote trade and commerce and improve the economic and human well being of BC and Canada.
- Funding for this initiative is being provided by *Human Resources Development Canada, BC/Yukon Region*.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

- *Keynote...* keynote address from a speaker who crosses the two 'divides' and sees the potential of bringing career practice expertise into the workplace, and vice versa
- *Career Practitioner Perspectives on Workforce Development...* panel of career practitioners will highlight the role and contributions of their sector to human resources and workplace requirements of industry
- *Human Resource Needs of Industry...* industry panel will discuss changing human resources needs of employers in the new economy and their expectations regarding the contributions of the career development sector towards meeting those needs
- *Building Linkages and Partnership Opportunities...* small group exercises will explore linkages and potential partnership opportunities relating to human resources, skills development and related issues
- *Common Goals and Strategies...* wrap-up session will review workshop outcomes, highlight priority needs and suggest future action on the part of stakeholders

Proceedings of the Round Table Discussion will be compiled and published to the World Wide Web – to ensure a wide distribution and availability of the results.