

# the JOB RESOURCE CENTRE BOW VALLEY LABOUR MARKET REVIEW

SPRING 2011 ISSUE

## Finding Keepers – 7 Tips to Retain Your Staff

Finding and keeping good workers is a perennial challenge in the Bow Valley. With economic recovery in Alberta gaining momentum, this challenge is expected to intensify. If you are an employer who has repeatedly hired, barely trained and then lost workers, you're probably all too familiar with the high cost of employee turnover. Not only is it a drain on your time, money and productivity but it affects the morale of your remaining staff as well.

So what can employers do to stem the tide of employee turnover? Here is a list of 7 tips to keep in mind during summer recruitment to improve your odds of keeping good workers. It all starts before they walk through your door.

**Take Time to Plan** – According to one survey, up to 70% of entrepreneurs reported investing as little as 5 minutes to plan before hiring. The results likely speak for themselves. Take time to analyze your needs and develop job descriptions for every job you plan to hire for. Planning will set you up to make sound hiring decisions.

**Be Objective** – Screen resumes based on the requirements identified in your written job description. If the job calls for “strong attention to detail” and you receive a resumé full of typos and grammatical errors, screen it out. This person is not for you even if they are the only applicant.

**Interview Well** – Craft a list of interview questions based on the requirements of the job. Ask each candidate the same questions and make notes so you can make a fair comparison. Questions that ask about past work behaviors such as “Describe a time you had to assist an irate customer” will help you assess if the person is able to do the job.

**Look For Fit** – Once you've found someone who meets the technical requirements of the job, consider fit. If your gut tells you this person may not get along with you or the rest of the team, hiring him or her may be an invitation to trouble down the road.

**Offer Fair and Competitive Pay** – As the economy turns around, expect to see wages starting to move up as employers once again find themselves having to compete to attract and retain good employees. Now's the time to review your pay rates so you don't get left behind in the coming battle for talent.

**Check References** – Many job candidates look good on paper and interview well. Check references without fail before making offers.

**Avoid Hiring Out of Desperation** – A mismatch between the job and the person is one of the leading causes of turnover. Today's rash hiring decision can become tomorrow's headache.

Think your hiring practices could use some fine tuning?  
**Call Scott Devnick at the Job Resource Centre** 403-678-6601 in Canmore or 403-760-3311 in Banff for helpful, free of charge advice.



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# BOW VALLEY LABOUR MARKET REVIEW

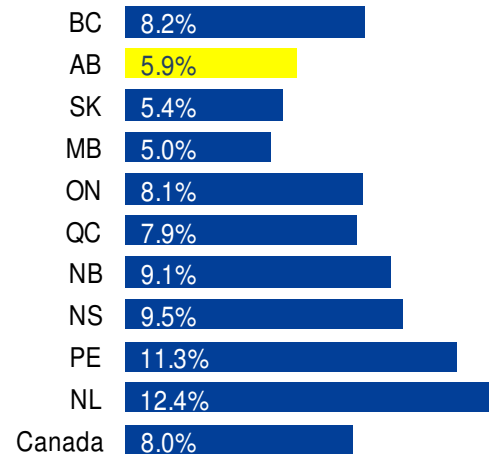
## Labour Market Trends

**Unemployment Rates:** Alberta's unemployment rate was 5.9% in January 2011. This was the third lowest rate in the country behind Manitoba and Saskatchewan. While the unemployment rate for the Bow Valley historically has been lower than the provincial rate, according to Statistics Canada it was the same, 5.9%, down slightly from 6.0% one year ago.

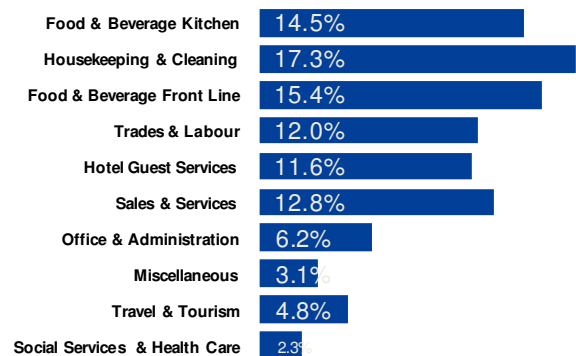
**Occupational Demand:** Between August 2010 and January 2011, there were 959 job orders received at the Job Resource Centre representing 1,992 positions. Compared to one year ago the number of job orders increased by 19%. Food & Beverage (front line and kitchen positions combined) was the most dominant occupational category accounting for almost 30% of all job orders followed by Housekeeping & Cleaning.

**Average Wages:** Across all sectors, the wages of Bow Valley jobs posted at the Job Resource Centre, taken as a simple average, decreased slightly, 0.9%, compared to one year ago. The highest average wages were in Office and Administration at \$16.90 per hour. Trades & Labour, typically among the highest paying categories, fell to an average of \$15.62 from \$18.04 per hour from the same time last year.

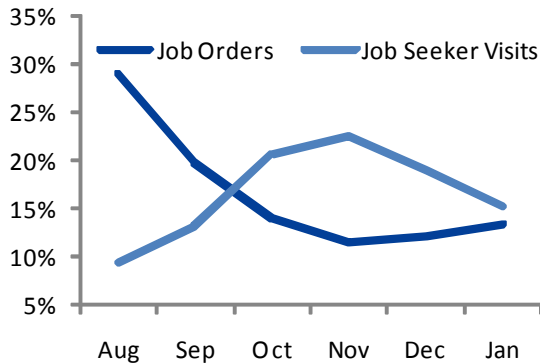
Provincial Unemployment Rates January 2011



Occupational Demand August 2010 to January 2011



Job Supply and Demand



## BOW VALLEY AVERAGE WAGES

	NUMBER OF JOB ORDERS	AVERAGE WAGE Spring 2011	AVERAGE WAGE Spring 2010
Food & Beverage Front Line ( <i>servers, hosts, bus persons, delivery drivers</i> )	148	\$10.57	\$ 9.64
Housekeeping & Cleaning ( <i>room attendants/housemen, laundry, cleaning</i> )	166	\$12.33	\$11.63
Food & Beverage Kitchen ( <i>cooks, dishwashers, kitchen helpers</i> )	139	\$12.46	\$12.44
Trades & Labour ( <i>apprentices, hotel maintenance, labourers, landscaping</i> )	115	\$15.62	\$18.04
Miscellaneous ( <i>instructors, fitness, assorted opportunities</i> )	30	\$13.26	\$14.39
Sales & Services ( <i>grocery, retail, marketing</i> )	123	\$12.46	\$13.09
Office & Administration ( <i>clerical, reception, data entry, computer support</i> )	59	\$16.90	\$17.27
Hotel Guest Services ( <i>front desk agents, night auditors, bellmen, security</i> )	111	\$12.49	\$11.66
Social Services & Health Care ( <i>social workers, caregivers, massage therapists</i> )	22	\$14.00	\$15.74
Travel & Tourism ( <i>interpreters, guides, tour operators, bus/van/taxi drivers</i> )	46	\$14.65	\$12.04
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>\$13.47</b>	<b>\$13.59</b>

Based on job orders placed with the Job Resource Centre in Banff and Canmore (August 2010 - January 2011)

# BOW VALLEY LABOUR MARKET REVIEW

## News and Events

**Spring Hiring Fair** – Don't miss the Annual Spring Hiring Fair in Banff on May 10th. Employers, this is your opportunity to jumpstart your summer recruitment. Last year over 300 eager job seekers were in attendance. Call Scott Devnick at the Job Resource Centre (403) 678-6601 for more information.

**Preventing Violence in the Workplace** –Join Ross Arrowsmith of Alberta WCB on the morning of April 15th in Canmore for an informative and humorous look at what employers can do to prevent potentially violent situations in their workplace. Admission is free. Pre-registration is required. Call Scott Devnick at (403) 678-6601 to reserve your seat.

**Take Charge of Your Career** – Ever wondered what kind of work would be a good fit with your personality? Attend this free of charge workshop and discover more about yourself and career opportunities you may not have thought of. March 15th, 6:30 to 8pm.at the Job Resource Centre in Canmore. Call (403) 678-6601 to pre-register.

## Renting a Home

What is happening in the local rental housing market? From a survey of advertisements in local newspapers between August 2010 to January 2011 we made the following observations:

AVERAGE RENTAL RATES	BANFF	CANMORE
1 Bedroom	\$1,061	\$ 924
2 Bedroom	\$1,428	\$1,193
3 Bedroom	\$1,863	\$1,504
Studio/Bachelor	\$ 969	\$ 676
Roommate/Shared	\$ 589	\$ 546

- Compared to a year ago, average rental rates have gone down slightly, by 1% in Banff and 3% in Canmore.
- Overall, it continues to be more expensive to rent in Banff than Canmore.
- Rental opportunities were more abundant in Canmore than Banff. Of 2,433 advertisements, 75% were for properties located in Canmore.

## What Matters in a Job

Workers in the Bow Valley are a diverse group. They come from all over the world, sometimes for a season, sometimes to settle and call this place their home. Employers have watched them come and go for decades often wondering what it would take to keep them longer.

To get some insight on the local workforce, we asked 100 workers from Banff and Canmore to tell us what mattered most to them in a job. The top 5 qualities they chose from a list of 13, ranked in order were:

1. Work that is challenging or meaningful
2. Being valued and respected
3. A good boss
4. A chance to learn and grow
5. Fair pay

Much research has been done on job satisfaction and as it turns out, workers in the Bow Valley are no different than their counterparts elsewhere in Canada. It is the intrinsic qualities of a job, being challenged and treated well that seem to matter the most. In fact, 97% of the people we polled chose one of the top three factors on the list. Perks such as ski area passes, weekends off and Facebook breaks while nice to have, were at the bottom of the list for all but a handful of local workers.

A word of caution -while 'fair pay' was ranked 5th on our list it is dangerous to assume that money doesn't matter. The bottom line is that fair pay and economic security are basic needs; if these basic needs are not met all of the other factors will quickly lose their meaning as a reason to stay in a job.



**ALBERTA MINIMUM WAGE**  
Alberta's minimum wage is \$8.80 per hour.

## Development News

### Canmore

- Building permits for 2010 totaled \$38,297,000; a 15% increase over 2009, yet the second lowest total in the past decade. 74% of permits were for residential while 24% were for commercial construction. (*Town of Canmore 10 Year Stat Report, 2010*)
- Council voted to approve the Town of Canmore's 2011 operational budget with an overall increase of 2.3%. The Town's chief financial officer said the budget took into consideration that the Town expected growth to continue to decline and that the loss of growth put increased pressure on existing properties in relation to tax revenue. (*Canmore Leader, January 26, 2011*)
- More than 100 people showed up at the Canmore Seniors' Centre for an information session regarding the proposed seniors' housing community in Spring Creek. The facility was planned to have around 115 suites. Ideally construction would begin in the fall. (*Canmore Leader, February 2, 2011*)
- Regional transit implementation is taking steps forward but if it is to proceed, it won't be, as first predicted offering service by the middle of 2011 but rather later in the year or early 2012. The priority identified in the business plan is to create a service between Banff and Canmore that would initially see eight round trips each day. (*Canmore Leader, December 22, 2010*)

### Banff

- Feedback from a recent Banff Lake Louise Hotel/Motel Association member survey indicated that local hoteliers have guarded expectations about growth in the local tourism economy in 2011; opinion is split equally as to whether 2011 will track with 2010 results or whether there will be further economic contraction or growth. (*"The Views" Banff Lake Louise Hotel/Motel Association, Fall 2010*)
- A deal has been struck between Brewster management and the union representing 110 bus drivers and mechanics. The union had asked for a 3% increase in pay and settled for a 2% increase for three years, thereby avoiding a lock out. (*Banff Crag and Canyon, February 1, 2011*)
- The owners of Wild Bill's Legendary Saloon, a locally owned operation, are calling it quits, saying the cost of doing business in the resort town is simply proving to be too high, particularly in tough economic times. The staff of approximately 40 was told on January 8th. (*Rocky Mountain Outlook, January 13, 2011*)
- Over the past five years (2005-2009) there were 4,243 Temporary Foreign Workers (TFW) destined to the Town of Banff or an annual average inflow of 849 TFWs. The number of TFWs destined to the area accounted for 3.3% of TFWs destined to the province. (*"The Views" Banff Lake Louise Hotel/Motel Association, Fall 2010*)

## About The Job Resource Centre

We specialize in helping people find jobs and new careers. We also support employers in their efforts to hire, develop and retain employees. All of our services are available in English and French and are *free of charge*.

**Services for Job Seekers:** personalized career coaching, professional resume writing assistance, a job board with local opportunities, job placement assistance, student advice, training opportunities, access to computers, fax machines, telephones and a resource area. Additional services include assistance with Employment Insurance applications and information services for foreign workers.

**Services for Employers:** job posting service, HR consulting, hiring fairs, labour market information, workshops, an interview room for employer use and foreign worker program information services.



CANMORE  
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the  
**JOB  
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**Government  
of Alberta** ■