

the JOB RESOURCE CENTRE BOW VALLEY LABOUR MARKET REVIEW

SPRING 2010 ISSUE

Managing the Downturn

The last 18 months have not been an easy ride for Bow Valley employers. Seeing the fall of large and small companies has solidified the fact that no business is immune to financial turmoil. From the receivership of K2 Developments and Three Sisters Mountain Village to the closure of smaller retail operations, the economic downturn has had varying effects on businesses of all sizes. Bow Valley employers have faced their own individual challenges of the downturn, with most showing just how flexible they are in their approach to reorganize and adjust through tough times.

Local employers have used many different strategies to survive. Some were forced to make staffing cutbacks through layoffs, hiring freezes and reduced working hours. Others cut expense accounts and employee perks such as company vehicles and corporate event tickets, unaffordable once boom times were over. Group benefit packages also were affected in some cases, adding to the stress and uncertainty experienced by many employees.

Recently, the Globe and Mail reported that for the first time in 20 years more than half of Canadian employers planned to cut training budgets. Short-term, this might seem like a good way to balance out the budget, but in the long-term staff morale, retention, quality of service to customers and ultimately the business could suffer. Many employers may not be aware of internal low cost options for providing staff training including mentoring, job sharing and coaching. Locally, a number of training options are available through Bow Valley College at little or no cost to employers.

Some employers have taken advantage of the federal government's Work-Sharing program. This program is designed to help employers and workers avoid temporary

layoffs when there is a reduction in normal business activity that is beyond the control of the employer. This measure provides income support to workers eligible for Employment Insurance benefits who work a temporarily reduced work-week. Work-Sharing agreements must be agreed upon by both employee and employer, and approved by Service Canada.

For companies that have made it through the last year and a half, the worst may be over. The recent ATB Business Sentiments Index, while no predictor of the future, indicated that optimism is on the rise among Alberta entrepreneurs. Employers who strategically fine-tuned their operations, took advantage of available resources and were able to maintain a long-term view may find themselves in a better situation once the economy makes a full recovery.

In Banff and Canmore, employers looking for advice on the hiring, developing and retaining of staff in a tough economy are invited to contact Employer Services Consultant Scott Devnick at the Job Resource Centre (403) 678-6601.



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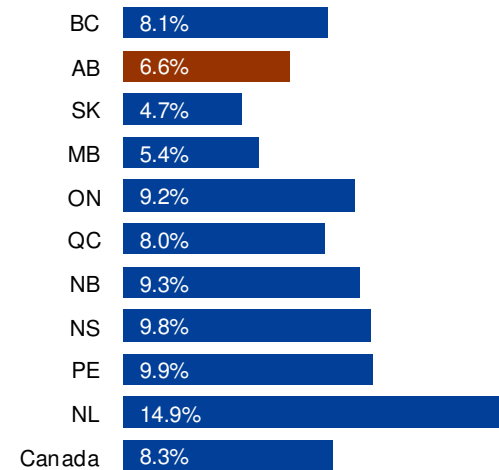
Labour Market Trends

Unemployment Rates: Alberta's unemployment rate was 6.6% in January 2010. This was the third lowest rate in the country behind Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The unemployment rate for the Banff Region according to Statistics Canada was 6%, up 2% from one year ago. Unemployment rates for the Bow Valley have historically been lower than Alberta provincial rates.

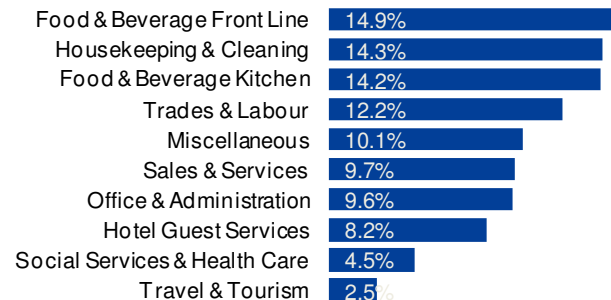
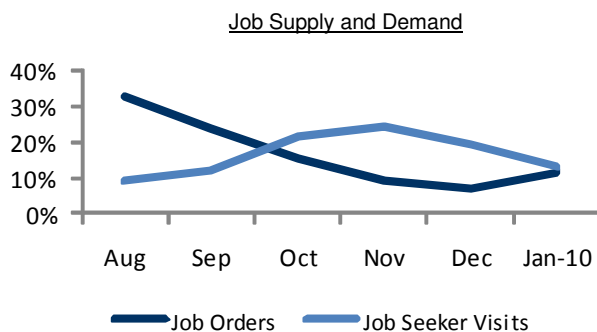
Occupational Demand: Between August 2009 and January 2010, there were 805 job orders received at the Job Resource Centre representing 1,198 positions. Compared to one year ago the number of job orders increased by 5%. Food & Beverage was the most dominant occupational category accounting for almost 30% of all job orders followed by Housekeeping & Cleaning. Social Services and Health Care emerged as a significant occupational category over the past six months, outpacing Travel & Tourism.

Average Wages: Across all sectors, the average wages of Bow Valley jobs posted at the Job Resource Centre rose slightly, 1.3%, compared to one year ago. The highest average wages were in Trades and Labour at \$18.04 per hour. Front-line Food & Beverage positions continued to pay the lowest average wage at \$9.64 per hour before gratuities.

Provincial Unemployment Rates January



Occupational Demand, Aug. 2009 - Jan. 2010



BOW VALLEY AVERAGE WAGES

	NUMBER OF JOB ORDERS	AVERAGE WAGE Spring 2010	AVERAGE WAGE Spring 2009
Food & Beverage Front Line (<i>servers, hosts, bus persons, delivery drivers</i>)	120	\$9.64	\$9.30
Housekeeping & Cleaning (<i>room attendants/housemen, laundry, cleaning</i>)	115	\$11.63	\$12.51
Food & Beverage Kitchen (<i>cooking jobs, dishwashers, kitchen helpers</i>)	114	\$12.44	\$12.69
Trades & Labour (<i>apprentices, hotel maintenance, labourers, landscaping</i>)	98	\$18.04	\$17.01
Miscellaneous (<i>instructors, fitness & assorted opportunities</i>)	81	\$14.39	\$15.98
Sales & Services (<i>grocery, retail, marketing</i>)	78	\$13.09	\$12.07
Office & Administration (<i>clerical, reception, data entry, computer support</i>)	77	\$17.27	\$15.84
Hotel Guest Services (<i>front desk agents, night auditors, bellmen, security</i>)	66	\$11.66	\$12.10
Social Services & Health Care (<i>social workers, caregivers, massage therapists</i>)	36	\$15.74	n/a
Travel & Tourism (<i>interpreters, guides, tour operators, bus/van/taxi drivers</i>)	20	\$12.04	\$13.27
TOTAL	805	\$13.59	\$13.42

Based on job orders placed with the Job Resource Centre in Banff and Canmore (Aug 2009- Jan 2010)

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News and Events

Employer Services – All Employers large or small face challenges related to hiring, developing or keeping staff. If you are looking for low cost ways to hire new staff, wondering about going rates of pay in the Bow Valley or have any staffing related questions contact Scott Devnick at the Job Resource Centre for a free-of-charge consultation at (403) 678-6601 in Canmore or (403) 760-3311 in Banff.

Cross-Cultural Differences in the Workplace – Join Cross-Cultural trainer Jean Godfrey for a two-hour workshop designed to help employers understand and make the most of cultural diversity in their workplaces. Ideal for supervisors working with multicultural teams. Wednesday, March 3rd, 1-3 pm. Workshop is free of charge but pre-registration is required. Call Scott at (403) 678-6601.

Employment Standards Workshops - Employers and employees, get a better understanding of your rights and obligations in this hands-on workshop on March 26th.

Take Charge of Your Career – Are you out of work? Thinking of changing jobs? Make sure your next move is a fit with who you are and where you want to be in the future. Talk to a Career Coach at the Job Resource Centre in Banff or Canmore for one-on-one career advice, training information and job search assistance.

Renting a Home

What does it cost to rent a home in the Bow Valley? A survey of advertisements in local newspapers from August 2009 to January 2010 determined the following average monthly rental rates:

RENTAL RATES	BANFF	CANMORE
1 Bedroom	\$ 966	\$ 958
2 Bedroom	\$1582	\$1208
3 Bedroom	\$2065	\$1540
Studio/Bachelor	\$ 918	\$ 733
Roommate/Shared	\$ 594	\$ 554

Over this six month period 2,934 properties were advertised, a 50% increase over the same period last year. Rents were found to be higher in Banff in every category. Compared to one year ago, average base rents decreased by approximately 14% in Canmore and 2% in Banff.

Bow Valley Soft Skills

In a highly competitive job market, soft skills are increasingly sought out by employers in addition to basic technical abilities. Soft skills refer to personality traits and social graces that enable a person to interact well with others. Friendliness and dependability are examples. Soft skills complement technical skills such as the ability to drive a truck or use a computer and often make the difference in long-term career success. Based on a survey of career advertisements, Bow Valley employers were most often looking for:

- Organizational Ability
- Attention to Detail
- Strong Communication Skills
- Team Player
- Ability to Work Independently

Alberta Wage Survey

A new survey provides a glimpse into Alberta's labour market showing the average wages earned and job vacancy rates, by occupation, industry and region. The survey results can help employers determine fair pay scales and guide individuals when making career and educational plans. Survey highlights include:

- Alberta's average hourly wage is \$23.80
- 48% of recruiting employers reported having difficulty hiring for one or more occupations

The survey was commissioned by the governments of Alberta and Canada and WCB and can be accessed at www.alis.alberta.ca/wageinfo.



ALBERTA MINIMUM WAGE

Alberta's minimum wage is to remain at \$8.80 per hour through 2010.

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Development News

Canmore

- The total of building permits for 2009 was \$33,291,550 a 67% decrease from 2008 and an 85% drop from two years ago. For 2009 84% of permits were for residential construction while 14% were for commercial construction. (*Town of Canmore 10 Year Stat Report, 2009*).
- A recent Bank of Montreal report identified Canmore as a “hotbed” community for small business growth and activity. In the report, Canmore ranked 3rd nationally among small communities and was said to have 57.9 small businesses for every 1,000 people living in the community. (*Canada’s Small Business Juggernaut, BMO Financial Group, October 2009*)
- Spring Creek Mountain Village developer Frank Kernick is getting ready for Stage Two of his \$500 million redevelopment project. The project which is slated to begin in 2013 includes apartment housing, townhouses and live-work studios, along with employee housing required for the two hotels to be built. (*Rocky Mountain Outlook, January 21, 2010*)
- Mayor Ron Casey delivered his annual address on the state of Canmore, saying the community is entering a new phase in its development and one with a more manageable pace. “We are entering a phase where we have used up most of the land that is developable, has servicing and subdivision and is ready to go.” (*Rocky Mountain Outlook, January 21, 2010*)

Banff

- The Small Business Association of Banff is launching a new campaign to encourage residents to buy local. The campaign aims to show Banffites they don’t need to travel to Calgary to do their shopping, and that by spending money locally, they’re helping keep Banff in business. (*Banff Crag and Canyon, December 22, 2009*)
- The Banff Lake Louise Hotel Motel Association is feeling the pressures of a difficult economy. They are the largest industry in Banff and the largest employers, but they are facing the pressure of increased rates and costs. The hotels and motels are forced to make cuts internally and with the bad economy employees are struggling without wage increases. (*Banff Crag and Canyon, December 8, 2009*)
- The federal government has promised \$21.2 million for infrastructure upgrades and environmental protection improvements in Canada’s mountain national parks. According to Environment Minister Jim Prentice “these investments will not only improve visitor safety but keep Canada’s economy going”. (*Banff Crag & Canyon, February 2, 2010*)
- Banff Lake Louise Tourism is readying some made-in-Banff plans to encourage Chinese tourists to come to the mountains after China announced that Canada received Approved Destination Status. (*Banff Crag & Canyon, February 9, 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: one-on-one career coaching, professional resume writing assistance, a job board with local opportunities, student advice, training opportunities, access to computers, fax machines, telephones and a resource area. Additional services include assistance with employment Insurance and Social Insurance Number applications and information services for foreign workers.

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



CANMORE
710 10th Street, (403) 678-6601

the
JOB
RESOURCE
CENTRE

BANFF
314 Marten Street, (403) 760-3311

Government
of Alberta ■