

Provincial Labour Market Symposium

Building Healthy Labour Markets in Newfoundland and Labrador

April 2007

SUMMARY REPORT



www.labourmarketcommittee.ca

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On October 30 and 31, 2006, the Labour Market Committee and the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment co-hosted “Building Healthy Labour Markets in Newfoundland and Labrador”, the province’s first labour market symposium.

The development of healthy labour markets is essential to help ensure that individuals and organizations throughout Newfoundland and Labrador are ready to take advantage of the opportunities in our provincial economy and to meet emerging challenges.

However, reports of skill shortages in the province and the rest of Canada are emerging daily. The growing number of “help wanted” signs in communities throughout the province and the increasing competition for workers from employers in other provinces attest to the growing urgency of this concern. Demographic and technological trends will increase these pressures over the next ten to fifteen years, here and among other industrialized countries throughout the world. Labour market decision makers need to collectively understand what is happening and collaborate when dealing with the challenges. Otherwise, the province may face significant risks that could limit continued social and economic growth.

The provincial labour market symposium was intended to provide a forum for key labour market stakeholders to identify opportunities for partnership and collaboration and discuss labour market issues and trends that are impacting the development of healthy labour markets in the province. The outcomes of the symposium are also intended to help identify priority areas and potential strategies to assist individuals and organizations with their labour market planning and decisions.

Over 285 key labour market decision makers from across the province and 60 national and provincial panelists participated in the two-day labour market symposium. An online evaluation and feedback provided during the symposium revealed that the event met and surpassed participants’ expectations.

The main issues and strategies discussed during the symposium related to:

- Provincial labour market environment, the economic and labour market outlook; population decline and out-migration; skill shortages; productivity, labour market well-being and education; and rural-urban differences;
- Labour market partnerships;
- Increasing participation of specific populations (e.g., persons with disabilities, women, youth and immigrants) and overcoming labour market barriers such as adult literacy, low-paid work;
- Education, skills development and lifelong learning such as workplace learning and skills development, skilled trades and apprenticeship, the Skills Task Force, early learning and childcare and prior learning assessment and recognition;
- Facilitating school to work transitions in the secondary and post-secondary education systems;
- Career development; and
- Sector and employer issues and initiatives.

Priority areas and future directions to support the development of healthy labour markets in Newfoundland and Labrador include:

- Out-migration, Retention and Attraction (including youth);
- Post-Secondary Education (access and targeting to labour market needs);
- Minimizing Barriers for Under-represented Groups;
- Awareness Campaign/Local Opportunities;
- Employer HR Supports, Recruitment and Retention;
- Understanding Labour Market and Skill Shortages;
- Apprenticeship;
- Labour Market Partnerships and Roles;
- Wages;
- Workplace Training;
- Economic Development/Local Strategies;
- Literacy and Essential Skills;
- Career Planning and Development;
- Workplace Quality;
- Addressing Barriers for Persons With Disabilities;
- Employment Insurance Program;
- Attitudes;
- Personal Income Taxes;
- Prior Learning and Assessment; and
- Immigration.

INTRODUCTION

On October 30 and 31, 2006, the Labour Market Committee and the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment co-hosted “Building Healthy Labour Markets in Newfoundland and Labrador”, the province’s first labour market symposium.

During this two-day event, over 285 key labour market decision-makers from across the province and 60 national and provincial panelists came together to discuss current trends, issues and strategies to support the development of healthy labour markets in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Purpose of the Report

This report provides an overview of the symposium proceedings and a summary of findings, including key themes and current initiatives that were discussed during the sessions and symposium evaluation results. The report is intended to inform stakeholders throughout the province. It is also intended to serve as a building block to facilitate stronger partnerships and new initiatives that are required to address current concerns and support the development of healthy labour markets in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Background

The provincial labour market symposium was a joint initiative of the Labour Market Committee of the Strategic Partnership Initiative and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Funding support was provided under the Canada/Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement.

The Labour Market Committee (LMC) of the Strategic Partnership Initiative (SPI) was established in May 2005. It is a partnership of business, labour and government representatives who work together to identify and respond to human resource and labour market challenges facing the province.

A key objective of the LMC is to facilitate and strengthen labour market partnerships in Newfoundland and Labrador. These partnerships are necessary to develop a common understanding of the province’s labour market challenges and opportunities, and to effectively respond to them.

To help achieve this objective, the committee has been a key partner in the implementation of the “Strengthening Partnerships in the Labour Market” initiative with the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment. Activities carried out under this CA/NL LMDA-funded initiative included regional labour market information workshops (Fall 2005), the development of regional labour market reports (Winter 2007) and the hosting of the provincial labour market symposium.

Further information about the committee, its mandate and current activities are available at www.labourmarketcommittee.ca. A membership list for the Labour Market Committee is provided in Appendix A. Further information about the “Strengthening Partnerships in the Labour Market” initiative can be obtained by contacting the Labour Market Development Division as outlined on the inside cover of this report.

Symposium Overview

The development of healthy labour markets is essential to help ensure that individuals and organizations throughout Newfoundland and Labrador are ready to take advantage of future opportunities and to meet emerging challenges.

However, reports of skill shortages in the province and the rest of Canada are emerging daily. The growing number of “help wanted” signs in communities throughout the province and the increasing competition for workers from employers in other provinces attest to the growing urgency of this concern. Demographic and technological trends will increase these pressures over the next ten to fifteen years, here and among other industrialized countries throughout the world. Labour market decision makers need to collectively understand what is happening and collaborate when dealing with the challenges. Otherwise, the province may face significant risks that could limit continued social and economic growth.

“Building Healthy Labour Markets in Newfoundland and Labrador” was selected as the theme for the provincial symposium to encompass the wide range of issues and strategies that need to be considered in order to ensure individuals and employers are prepared to meet the labour market challenges that lie ahead and to maximize opportunities.

The symposium was intended to provide an opportunity for information sharing about trends, issues and initiatives to:

- Help ensure employers in our province are prepared to compete by having access to a skilled workforce; innovative strategies for recruitment and retention; workplace training; and continued development of productive, high-quality workplaces;
- Ensure individuals in the province are prepared to fully participate in the labour market and ensure that workers have opportunities to develop their skills throughout their careers;
- Support the development of strategies to increase employment skills and help minimize barriers that currently limit participation of many groups in the labour market, including women, persons with disabilities, youth and Aboriginal groups;
- Help strengthen partnerships at every level among business, labour, government, education and communities to support strategic and consistent investments and approaches; and
- Ensure individuals, students, parents, workers, employers, policymakers and others have access to good information and supports to help them plan and make solid career, training and human resource decisions that will improve employment outcomes.

Structure of the Symposium

The provincial labour market symposium was held over a two-day period during which Dr. Graham Lowe and Labour Market Committee members facilitated a series of six plenary sessions and twelve concurrent sessions. In these sessions, 60 national and provincial panelists and 285 participants discussed current labour market issues, trends and initiatives for the province.

The subject areas for the plenary and concurrent sessions included:

Plenary Sessions

- Setting the Context: Future Labour Market Outlook
- Defining Success: Perspectives on Healthy Labour Markets
- Increasing Participation: Overcoming the Barriers
- Strategic Investments: Education, Skills Training and Lifelong Learning
- Strategic Investments: Work and the Workplace
- Skills Task Force

Concurrent Sessions

- Labour Market Partnerships
- Education, Skills Development and Lifelong Learning
- Sector Strategies
- Maximizing Workforce Participation
- Achieving Excellence in Student Learning
- Human Resource Strategies, Apprenticeship and Workplace Training

Local agencies also set up displays to demonstrate a variety of labour market planning tools, supports and services that are available in the province.

Appendix B outlines the symposium agenda and panelists.

Participants

Approximately 285 labour market stakeholders participated in the symposium. They represented over 134 labour, business, government and community agencies, post-secondary institutions and students throughout the province and the country. A list of participating organizations is included in Appendix C.

Symposium Evaluation

One month after the labour market symposium, participants were invited to complete an online evaluation. Eighty-six people responded to questions about the quality and structure of the symposium and their experiences. Participants also had the opportunity to identify key priorities for the development of healthy labour markets in the province.

Organization and Scope of this Report

The remainder of this report includes a summary of common themes, issues and initiatives discussed during the symposium, a summary of the symposium evaluation results and suggestions for future directions.

The report is not intended to provide a detailed account of the symposium proceedings or summary of all presentations given during the sessions. All presentations are available at *www.labourmarketcommittee.ca*.

SUMMARY OF PROVINCIAL LABOUR MARKET SYMPOSIUM: COMMON THEMES, ISSUES AND CURRENT INITIATIVES

During the provincial labour market symposium, 60 presenters and 285 participants engaged in discussions that covered a broad spectrum of labour market issues. This section provides a summary of key themes and issues that emerged during these discussions, as well as examples of best practices, current initiatives and resources that are available to support the development of healthy labour markets in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Appendix B outlines the symposium agenda and panelists. All presentations from the symposium are available to download on the Labour Market Committee's website at www.labourmarketcommittee.ca.

What We Heard: Labour Market Environment

It is important that individuals and stakeholders develop a common understanding of the current labour market landscape and the key challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. This common understanding will assist in the development of successful responses to support healthy labour market development in the province.

To better understand provincial labour market challenges and opportunities, there is a need to focus on "where we have been", "where we currently stand" and "where we are going in the future."

The major forces of change affecting many areas in the province are demographics, advancing technologies and competitiveness. These trends, and the challenges associated with them, are not unique to Newfoundland and Labrador. They are also occurring in many other places across Canada and the rest of the world. However, there are differences in the issues and challenges facing the province in terms of magnitude or intensity of the challenges.

Economic and Labour Market Outlook

- Newfoundland and Labrador has experienced strong economic growth and improving labour market conditions since 1997.
- Participation and employment rates have been increasing and unemployment rates have been decreasing. However, the province still lags Canada on these key indicators.
- The rapid loss of workers in the fish processing sector over the past decade has been one of the key factors affecting economic performance and competitiveness in the province.
- Investments in energy and mining have significantly contributed to output and GDP growth, but not necessarily employment growth.
- The completion of the construction phases of the White Rose and Voisey's Bay projects will result in a slight lull in the province's labour market during 2006 and 2007.
- Future employment growth will be driven by the private sector. Call centers, in particular, will be mainly responsible for employment gains among younger workers. Major projects such as the Hebron oil field, the development of the Lower Churchill and construction of the new refinery in Long Harbour (Voisey's Bay Hydromet facility) also hold strong potential for future employment growth. Declines in manufacturing and seasonal work, increases in the services sector and full-year work and a rise in skill levels among workers will support the shift to a knowledge-based economy.

Population Decline and Out-migration

- The province has experienced population decline over the past decade and this trend is expected to continue over the next 15 years (up to 2021).
- Population decline has been impacted by a decrease in the number of births in the province and falling fertility rates. In 2005, the number of deaths exceeded the number of births in the province for the first time.
- Population projections are also influenced by migration trends. Although out-migration has risen in the past couple of years, it is expected to slow as labour market conditions improve in the future.
- Predicting the future is a difficult challenge and economists are generally conservative in forecasting future trends. For example, many would not have predicted the baby boom following the war.
- Current population projections are based on a number of assumptions, including fertility and migration levels. The assumptions for fertility rates are not expected to change.
- However, a variety of other factors may have a significant impact on these projections. Examples of these include increased immigration, recruitment strategies used at Memorial University to attract more graduate students from outside the province and outside Canada or new major project developments.
- Demographic changes will likely lead to labour shortages as the number of retirees increase over the next decade.
- This trend can have a positive impact in providing increased employment opportunities for young people and marginalized workers. As population declines and aging continues, participation rates will have to increase among these populations to help address demands that will arise from retirements.
- There are also other demographic issues to consider. Population decline means fewer resources will be required for housing, water treatment, roads and other components linked to population growth.

Addressing Skill Shortages

- In the Atlantic Provinces (especially in Newfoundland and Labrador), the aging population, continued out-migration and strong employment growth in Western Canada have contributed to the growing problem of skill shortages in the region.
- The economy of Atlantic Canada was described as a “push-pull economy”, where there is a strong “pull” from Alberta (although Alberta comprises about 10 per cent of Canada’s labour force, it accounted for nearly 40 per cent of interprovincial migration in Canada).
- The province and Atlantic region will not be able to compete for workers with low-wage jobs in the future.
- In past, wage subsidies have been commonly used to attract business investment and help minimize unemployment. New instruments and measures to attract business in sectors paying higher wages will be required to attract and retain workers.
- The call center industry was used as an example of the potential impacts that wage subsidy programs could have in the future. All Atlantic Provinces currently offer wage subsidies to this industry, which employs approximately 32,000 employees in the region. Although the industry has experienced employment growth, the subsidies tend to correlate with low levels of compensation and may help account for productivity challenges. Furthermore, wage subsidies may pose competitive pressures for employers in industries that do not receive them.

- An increased focus on enhancing the education and skills of the current and potential workforce is also required to address future skill demands. It was acknowledged that formal education and credential recognition systems are sometimes essential. However, it is very difficult to measure the skills and attributes that an individual brings to the workplace. New assessment instruments are necessary to measure skills acquired through informal and non-formal learning as a means of determining employee suitability.
- Despite improving labour market conditions, there is still a high proportion of marginalized or under-utilized workers. Strategies to increase participation among these groups could help address skill shortages.
- In addition to competitive wage rates, employers will need to implement strategies to ensure workplace quality in order to attract and retain workers.

Productivity, Labour Market Well-being and Education

- Economic indicators for Newfoundland and Labrador lag Canada. In turn, indicators for Canada lag the United States. Productivity measures, in particular, are an ongoing concern for businesses, governments and workers.
- In order to improve productivity outcomes for the province, there must be a stronger focus on the relationship between productivity, overall labour market well-being and education.
- Increases in wages and human capital (measured by average educational attainment) point to improving labour market well-being within the province in recent years. However, indicators for the province are still lower than the rest of Canada.
- There has also been decreases in labour market equality among workers, as shown through increasing inequality in hourly wages and the incidence of low-wage employment.
- It must be recognized that overall labour market well-being is strongly influenced by individual/worker level well-being. This, in turn, can be impacted by a wide range of factors such as workplace quality, trends of increasing work hours, job sharing, flexible work hours and family friendly practices. Workers' sense of community, quality of life and workplace flexibility can also impact their individual well-being.
- There has been a growing focus on the need to increase the number of skilled tradespeople in the province in response to potential skill shortages. However, it is equally important to focus on university education to improve productivity and, in turn, prosperity.

Rural-Urban Differences

- Urban-rural issues are a challenge for the province and the rest of the country. Compared to Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador has the highest proportion of its labour force in rural areas (i.e., communities with less than 10,000 people).
- Large gaps continue to exist between urban and rural areas with respect to key labour market indicators such as unemployment.
- Productivity outcomes for Newfoundland and Labrador are also influenced by rural labour markets. There is a strong positive correlation between urbanization and productivity increases.
- Increasing urbanization was not viewed by all as the best approach to address productivity issues. Many people value the rural way of life. There is a need to discover more about the relationship between urbanization and productivity and identify how strategies such as clustering and networking can be replicated in rural areas.

- There is a need for more regional data. Both industry and public policymakers need to understand regional information, yet data from the local regions is often not available. For example, according to some sources, the average age of Marystown workers is 55 years. However, this is affected by mobility and seniority clauses and may not fully reflect the local environment. Getting this type of regional information will require a collective and collaborative effort.

What's Happening Now ...

Wine Industry in Rural Areas of British Columbia

- ✓ One success story discussed concerned a rural clustering strategy among wineries in rural areas of British Columbia. Businesses were able to come together to create cooperative ventures and develop the wine industry in rural areas while remaining competitive.

Agrifoods Model

- ✓ One example of a successful partnership in the province that was discussed was the Agrifoods Model. In this model, the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development (INTRD), the Rural Secretariat, the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) and eight employers (export-oriented food manufacturers) work together using a network/cluster approach to regional development to build opportunities in rural areas.

What We Heard: Labour Market Partnerships

Many different individuals and organizations play a role in the provincial labour market. It is important to recognize the various perspectives among these stakeholders to facilitate successful partnerships among workers, government, business, labour, post-secondary and community groups. These partnerships are critical to support the development of healthy labour markets, labour market well-being and economic success, now and in the future.

A variety of strategies can be used to facilitate these partnerships. However, a common element for success is the inclusion of all stakeholders, particularly those at the community level. It was also recognized that Government has a key role to play in facilitating labour market partnerships with business and labour and in providing funding opportunities.

What's Happening Now ...

Community Education Network

- ✓ The Community Education Network (CEN) is a partnership of agencies that has been in operation since 1991 on the southwest coast of Newfoundland and Labrador. This partnership promotes education in the region. It has established six strategic directions to guide its work with individuals and agencies including: prevention and early intervention; youth initiatives; career development and employment; community literacy; community leadership; and participatory communications.

- ✓ The Network directly employs between 150-200 people annually in Regional Economic Development Zones 9 and 10 and also sponsors and/or brokers 11 programs. The Network has supported the development of eight new programs in partnership with school guidance counsellors.
- ✓ Workforce education is advanced through the Network partnerships and helps to ensure opportunities for job training, skills development and mentoring.
- ✓ The partnership also sponsors employment assistance services in five locations in the area including the Northern Peninsula, Port aux Basques and Stephenville.
- ✓ Partnerships like the CEN help build capacity and leadership in communities and lead to resiliency, which is a key to long-term sustainability for communities. The volunteerism component of the Network provides individuals with opportunities to work with community-based groups and gain experience.

Northern Peninsula Business Network

- ✓ The Northern Peninsula Business Network was incorporated in 2002 with the aim to strengthen the business community in the area and enhance its ability to compete locally and globally.
- ✓ The focus of the Network is to facilitate exporting for its ten business members. Members do not directly compete with each other, but complement each other in products and services – food manufacturing, cable, financial services, tourism and forest products.
- ✓ The Network enhances opportunities for cooperative development through joint ventures and efforts. Since its formation, the members have invested over \$7.4 million, borrowed \$5.1 million, and employed 123 full-time and 256 seasonal employees.
- ✓ The Network has conducted professional development in partnership with educational institutions. Funding from an Export Development Initiative will assist each member in the creation of an export development plan during 2006/07.
- ✓ In order to build more strategic partnerships such as the Northern Peninsula Business Network it is critical that all partners involved support the process. The Network believes that its model works very well because of its partnerships. It is an example of how rural communities can achieve success by understanding what works in these settings.

Harris Centre: Partnering for Regional Policy and Development in Newfoundland and Labrador

- ✓ Part of the role of Memorial University's Harris Centre is to act as a broker of knowledge in bringing the teaching, research and outreach activities of Memorial University to regional partners to foster economic development.
- ✓ This brokerage function has allowed the Centre to successfully co-ordinate the efforts of Memorial University, regional groups and other stakeholders such as government for the mutual benefit of all parties.
- ✓ Regional workshops have been conducted in various economic zones, where the university's research relevant to the zone is summarized as well as opportunities offered to identify and prioritize emerging research ideas. These pro-active workshops allow partnerships to emerge with the people living and working in the communities. Two key themes commonly emerge in these workshops – governance and career counselling.
- ✓ A natural extension of this work is the Memorial University Regional Inventory (MURI), an Internet-based query tool (available January 2008) that will allow stakeholders to search and find out about relevant research being undertaken and whom to contact for further information.

- ✓ Another project of the Harris Centre is the Knowledge Impact in Society (KIS) program, an initiative between the Centre, the College of the North Atlantic and the Rural Secretariat and its nine regional councils. KIS will provide access for stakeholders to quality social sciences and humanities research at Memorial.

Strategic Partnership Initiative

- ✓ The Strategic Partnership Initiative (SPI) is a high level partnership between government, business and labour that was established to provide a forum for social dialogue on key competitiveness issues facing the province.
- ✓ The SPI provides a unique opportunity for business, labour and government to work together toward common interests, in particular, the well-being of people in the province.
- ✓ The SPI began in 2002, modelled on the accomplishments of the European Social Partnerships in Ireland. It is led by the Strategic Partnership Committee, comprised of representatives from all three stakeholders.
- ✓ A Strategic Partnership Secretariat was established to study competitiveness in this province compared to other jurisdictions. In response to this research, four sub-committees were established to address priorities in the area of taxation, investment capital, industrial relations and labour market development.
- ✓ The Labour Market Committee of SPI is the co-sponsor of the labour market symposium in partnership with the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment.

Canada/Newfoundland and Labrador Labour Market Development Agreement

- ✓ The Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) originated in 1996. It allocates \$130 million per year for programs in the province each year under Part II of the Employment Insurance (EI) Act to assist EI-eligible clients in increasing their attachment to the labour market. It currently covers about 14 per cent of the Newfoundland and Labrador workforce.
- ✓ The LMDA is co-managed in Newfoundland and Labrador. Planning, design, management, decision making, monitoring and evaluation are joint federal/provincial activities. Organizations and departments at both the federal and provincial levels play a role. HRLE is the provincial co-chair of the LMDA. Service Canada acts as the federal co-chair, as well as maintains responsibility for direct delivery in accordance with the business plan prepared for the LMDA.
- ✓ Only EI-eligible people are covered under this agreement. Therefore, many of the people facing barriers (e.g., women, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples) to labour market participation are not eligible for support.
- ✓ While Newfoundland and Labrador has benefited from the LMDA, the investments need stronger connections to the economy and to outcomes. Better data collection is required to ensure that people are receiving the training needed for the labour market. Given the ten-year timeframe since the signing of the LMDA, the existing rules governing it may be outdated. There is an opportunity to examine whether the current practices are the best options available to facilitate its mandate.

- ✓ One issue raised was how to increase research capacity to help meet demands of an integrated and competitive economy and foster innovation at all levels. These areas are part of the business plan but do not necessarily fit with the existing LMDA, which is designed to cover EI clients. While the LMDA will continue to support EI clients, there may be opportunities and rationale for additional funding to adequately address these issues.

What We Heard: Increasing Participation and Overcoming Labour Market Barriers

Labour market partners in the province need to work together to maximize the participation of all individuals to improve employment outcomes and help address future labour supply challenges. However, many groups still face barriers that significantly limit their full participation and capacity to take advantage of emerging employment opportunities.

One of the key labour market barriers facing many individuals is a lack of basic literacy and essential skills. Some groups are disproportionately impacted by this or other labour market barriers, including persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples, youth and women. Policy development needs to ensure that the needs of these groups are addressed to help increase their labour market participation.

Adult Literacy

- Basic adult literacy skills are critical for entering and advancing in the labour market. Literacy training has benefits for both employers and workers. There is global recognition by industrialized nations of the need for literacy in the workplace, with literacy defined as “the ability to understand and use printed information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community to achieve one’s goals and to develop one’s knowledge and potential”.
- Low adult literacy levels are a particular concern for individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador, as indicated by scores from the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) which were among the lowest in Canada.
- If Newfoundland and Labrador increases its literacy rates, the likely benefits include higher incomes and higher GDP. However, there appears to be a disconnect between government agencies and other stakeholder groups on these issues.
- The federal government’s recent decision to cut adult literacy programs does not appear to consider the benefits of these programs for individuals facing barriers to participation. Literacy issues are likely to be addressed in the federal government’s skilled trades agenda under “essential skills” programs. However, these will be employer-based.
- Other governments, including England, Australia and New Zealand, have made significant investments in literacy.
- A strategic and targeted approach, which is comprehensive, multi-sectoral and flexible, is required to allow maximum benefits and outcomes.
- There is a need for government to play a role in workplace literacy to ensure that workplaces do not have to create their own infrastructure. There also has to be more emphasis on literacy training within the public educational system.
- Adult literacy programs have been traditionally shaped by schooling-modelled policies rather than by the needs of employers or adult learners. However, they should be viewed as tools for workers and employers and should be part of everyday training and professional development, with government policy and funding support.

- Funding for more Adult Basic Education (ABE) in rural Newfoundland and Labrador is needed to address current accessibility issues for users. One potential alternative is to provide private colleges with funding for ABE. Another alternative raised was to have ABE programs implemented at the community level.

What's Happening Now ...

School or Tool: Adult Literacy's Role in Creating a Healthier Labour Market

- ✓ Two historical Canadian examples of workplace literacy training successes are Frontier College and the Antigonish Movement. In these cases, literacy was viewed as a means to promote economic and personal change.

Literacy Newfoundland and Labrador

- ✓ Literacy Newfoundland and Labrador is a newly formed coalition with a goal to link literacy to the labour market. Part of the Literacy Coalition's work is developing strong connections on literacy through partnerships.

Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour

- ✓ Part of the work of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour (NLFL) is the promotion of workplace and literacy training to maximize workforce participation.
- ✓ NLFL promotes workplace literacy through its involvement with its partners and through literacy projects. Two projects include the Advancement of Workplace Literacy and the Development of a Partnership Model for Workplace Literacy in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Low-paid Work

- Policies to address low income and poverty should also consider low-wage workers. Over time, low-wage workers are less likely to move into higher-wage jobs. This is especially true for women.
- Education is strongly associated with income levels and positive labour market outcomes. Those with only a high school education are most often employed in low-wage jobs. However, education is not a guarantee for high wages. Among some populations, such as persons with disabilities, there is still a high proportion of individuals with higher levels of educational attainment that earn low wages.
- A multi-faceted approach is needed to help vulnerable low-paid workers that includes a foundation of basic support for all, as well as strategies and supports to build human capital, improve employee benefits and increase wages.
- Some policy suggestions that would help improve outcomes for low-paid workers include increasing the minimum wage, enhancing incentives to move from welfare to work, actively enforcing the Employment Standards Act and reforming Employment Insurance (EI) to improve access for non-standard workers.

Persons with Disabilities

- Rates of unemployment are very high for persons with disabilities. Some of this is due to employers' attitudes. Many persons with disabilities are offered low-paying jobs that require few skills despite the fact that they may have held well-respected positions before they encountered their disability.
- Persons with disabilities often need access to individualized supports in order to engage in activities of daily living as well as to participate in the labour force.
- There is a need for increased participation by persons with disabilities and policies to ensure appropriate employment supports are available. These policies should be viewed as labour market issues, not welfare issues.
- Government agreements often do not consider or include the needs of persons with disabilities. In fact, some policies exclude persons with disabilities, as in the case for the Provincial Nominee Program for immigrants, which screens out candidates with disabilities and medical conditions.
- The true cost of post-secondary education is disproportionately higher for persons with disabilities and this needs to be considered by the federal and provincial governments in their discussions of post-secondary education.
- The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's Poverty Reduction Strategy supports the needs of persons with disabilities and others by providing incentives to enter the labour market. One particular example of this is the implementation of an extended drug card benefit.
- However, there is still a need for a federal/provincial plan that provides supports to persons with disabilities. While individuals receiving Income Support (IS) receive a drug card as a benefit, many persons with disabilities not receiving IS do not have this benefit available to them. Often persons with disabilities have high drug-related costs that do not allow them to work because they need the benefit of a drug card and other supports provided by IS.
- Employment Insurance (EI) Part II funding should be made available to fund employment supports for persons with disabilities.

Women

- Changing trends in the labour market are providing opportunities for women. These trends include: an aging skilled workforce, new technologies, greater demand for communication skills and employment equity requirements for large development projects such as Voisey's Bay.
- While labour market participation among women has been increasing in the last 25 years, there are few women in industrial training and equity initiatives are needed such as those for Voisey's Bay and White Rose.
- Women are under-represented in science and engineering at both school and work. There is also a "leaky pipeline", where women employed in science and engineering are under-represented at the higher levels of organizations.
- Canadian statistics on full-time female undergraduates employed as engineers show that while progress was made from 1975 to 2001 (increasing from 4 per cent to nearly 21 per cent), since 2001, the numbers have been declining. Foreign female graduates represent many of the women at the master's level.
- Barriers to women's participation include workplace attitudes, lack of support, lack of information, inadequate training, systemic exclusion and lack of confidence.
- To recruit women into science and engineering, it is important to involve key players, including the 8-12 educational system, universities, government, industry, professional associations and outreach programs by community groups.

- In Alberta, labour market participation among women has declined recently in spite of the economic growth. Alberta now has the lowest participation of women in the labour market as well as the lowest educational attainment of women.
- Newfoundland and Labrador's Poverty Reduction Strategy will have positive effects on women, however, there are still areas that can be improved. For example, women need access to workplace learning to gain employment skills. Changes in Employment Insurance (EI) policies would also help, such as a reduction in the minimum number of hours for EI qualification to help bring more women into the EI Part II System.

What's Happening Now ...

Women in Science and Engineering (WISE)

- ✓ WISE develops, implements and communicates strategies to raise participation of women in science and engineering. It offers benefits at various levels: individual opportunities for economic success; industry access to skilled workers; government benefits of job creation of jobs and increased wealth; increased university empowerment to further societal goals and maintain/increase enrollments; and promotion of fairness and equity.

Province of Quebec

- ✓ Quebec has led the way in progressive initiatives that can support women in the labour market, including its childcare policy and one per cent payroll tax for workplace education. It was also the only province to increase its International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) scores.

Women in Resource Development Committee

- ✓ The Women in Resource Development Committee (WRDC) is working to open doors for women to break down these barriers, through partnerships, mentor networks, awareness, general sensitivity and the Orientation to Trades and Technology (OTT) program. The WRDC's OTT program provides women with hands-on career exploration opportunities and can act as a bridge to training for traditionally male-dominated occupations.

Youth

- There is a need to discuss a variety of strategies to increase opportunities and support energized and powerful groups, including youth, in the labour market.
- When dealing with Generation Y, it is important to change the attitude, message and recruitment strategies to be effective, such as: "It's about making a life, not a living".

What's Happening Now ...

FINALLY!

- ✓ FINALLY! is a youth-driven organization, empowering youth to be active participants in decision making and implementation of policy and programs. The organization's involvement in social and economic issues provides an opportunity for youth to build a viable future in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Immigrants

- Newfoundland and Labrador receives less than 0.2% of the 250,000 individuals who come to Canada each year. The province's retention rate from 494 immigrants in 2005 was only 36 percent.
- One of the current ways to address economic and labour market priorities is through the Provincial Nominee Program, which allows for both highly skilled workers and entrepreneurs to be nominated.
- The Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) has only processed 60 candidates compared to the more than 400 people that have been designated under the program due to the lack of staffing. There is a need to increase the number of employees dedicated to the program.
- There is a need for corporate strategies to encourage participation in cultural sensitivity training and diversity planning. Ways to maximize the participation of immigrants in the Newfoundland and Labrador labour force include diversity policies and practices, working with the Association for New Canadians (ANC), mentoring, apprenticeships and partnerships to initiate English as a Second Language workplace training, in addition to postsecondary offerings and offerings from ANC.

What's Happening Now ...

Provincial Immigration Strategy

- ✓ The Newfoundland and Labrador Immigration Strategy will be launched in 2007. It was developed with assistance from key stakeholders and included both provincial consultations and a provincial immigration symposium.
- ✓ Other key awareness activities include development of an immigration website, publication of a newsletter for newcomers and a Diversity Magazine and increased support for the ANC. There is also an opportunity to support return migration of expatriate Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, however, this is not within the mandate of the immigration strategy.

What We Heard: Education, Skills Development and Lifelong Learning

Education, skills development and lifelong learning are essential components of healthy labour markets. To ensure successful employment outcomes and to support an environment where employers are globally competitive, a strong workforce learning culture is needed. This learning culture needs to encompass education and skills training beginning in early childhood and extending throughout an individual's working career.

The nature of work and required workplace skills are undergoing rapid change. Strategic investments in workplace training, prior learning assessment, and proactive human resource planning will be fundamental components of healthy labour markets.

Increased access to continuous career planning and development supports, increased awareness of opportunities and skills demands, and expanding methods of assessing the skills training needs of both workers and employers are required.

Workplace Learning and Skills Development

- Canada has been criticized as not being competitive because it is failing at education and training, in particular basic skills and workplace training. While the country has had over two decades of economic growth, there is more polarization and inequality in the workplace today than ever before.
- Canada has one of the highest proportions of working-age people with post-secondary education among OECD countries. Yet there is still a significant proportion of its working-age population with low skill levels. This limits access to job-related training, results in lower productivity levels and lower wages and impacts community and regional prosperity.
- Workplace skills and training programs are solutions for both employers and employees. However, Canadian data shows that employee training is a low priority in comparison to other countries. In the United States, workforce development includes Industry Clusters, Business Consortia, Job Migration Mapping and public/private sources of customized just-in-time job training. In the United Kingdom, the National Skills Strategy promotes free training in the workplace and paid time off for employees participating in job-related training.
- More recently, a number of Canadian skills-related strategies aimed at employee training have evolved including the Innovation Strategy, Workplace Skills Strategy, Sector Council Program, Workplace Skills Initiative (WSI) and National Credit Review Service (Pilot Project).
- To address future skills demands, Canada needs to increase its focus on workplace learning and workers' skills development issues (i.e., upskilling). The country also needs to maximize the skills and talents of everyone, including marginalized and disadvantaged groups such as Aboriginals, immigrants, persons with disabilities, women and visible minorities.
- Public policy interventions for workplace training are needed and an obligated system is required. Canada is falling behind in all of the rankings in comparison to countries that have implemented these types of strategies. Where most workplace training initiatives exist, it is currently the employer's responsibility.
- A potential policy solution for this is the creation of training leave funded by the EI system. Premiums are being cut when they could be used to support training.
- A mandatory levy for training is not something that many employers would support in Newfoundland and Labrador. Some employers feel that such an initiative would not support their productivity and competitiveness. This is particularly true for the 60 per cent of businesses in the province that have less than five workers. At the same time, small businesses will need to do their share and training may be a strategy for growth.
- In some cases collective bargaining has created training inequalities, especially between larger, unionized environments where collective bargaining has helped increase training opportunities and smaller to medium-sized companies where unionization is not common.

- A better approach is also required for the development of worker training systems that includes a thorough analysis of labour market information (LMI) in the beginning stages. LMI is more useful in the details than in the aggregate. However, much of the LMI is incorrect or incomplete.

What's Happening Now ...

Essential Skills at Work

- ✓ The Essential Skills (ES) Project is a pilot partnership between the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) and Canadian Manufacturing and Exporters (CME) involving ten sector employers. The goal of the project is create a greater awareness of essential skills and to help employers assess and raise the essential skills of employees.
- ✓ Essential skills are the foundation for workers' skill sets and determine the individual's capacity for learning in higher skill areas. People with higher essential skills tend to be unemployed for less time and are less likely to be involved in workplace accidents. However, key issues for small business employers are time off to participate and flexibility.
- ✓ The program focuses on determining what essential skills are needed to meet the requirements of the job and then offering intervention targeting those areas. Research has shown that essential skills intervention significantly affected the pass rate of individuals at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology. This effect is considerable since the total cost of training 42 unsuccessful program participants was \$266,700.
- ✓ The progress on the project to date includes workplace meetings and presentations as well as increased interest outside the manufacturing sector. Partnering with manufacturers is important to understanding key priorities, appropriately assessing employees and development of an implementation plan.

Bridging the Gap

- ✓ Bridging the Gap (BTG) is a community model of workplace education and lifelong learning. It is a community-based approach which integrates human resource development with social and economic development.
- ✓ The BTG Model, initiated in the 1990s, serves six economic zones and 12 private business partners. It promotes individual essential skills and employability, business and industry development and community capacity building. In addition, it maximizes workplace opportunities by linking the workforce to business needs.
- ✓ As an employment versus education model, BTG is an alternative to ABE. The program provides trained and qualified workers for new or expanding businesses. It involves 40 weeks of classroom and practical training, credited through CNA.
- ✓ The best practices of this model include:
 - Involving all partners from the outset: business, labour, government, individuals, counsellors, and educators;
 - Conducting ongoing evaluation and information sharing, including learning from past projects;
 - Hiring employment counsellors;
 - Having a local community learning network team;
 - Engaging the private sector and organized labour; and
 - Working with an accredited post-secondary institution.

- ✓ For long-term sustainability, the partnership relies on the National Rural Secretariat. The BTG Provincial Model Steering Committee is also exploring other initiatives with NL/Canadian Manufacturing and Exporters Association and the College of the North Atlantic.

Skilled Trades and Apprenticeship

- A significant portion of Canada's aging workforce will retire by 2015. As a result, Canada will be facing a significant labour shortage (nearly 1 million workers) by 2020.
- Fewer young Canadians are seeking careers in the skilled trades and, as a result, there will not be a sufficient number of people in these occupations to meet current and future demands. This trend is largely due to deep-rooted negative perceptions about apprenticeship and careers in the skilled trades that are held by many, including parents and career counsellors.
- The number of people pursuing skilled trades versus university programs should ideally be driven by labour force demand. A career in the skilled trades should be listed as one of a number of options, and not the only option, for students.
- There is a need to encourage employers in small and medium enterprises to provide apprenticeship opportunities. Many employers mention the cost of training and lost productivity as barriers to increasing the number of apprentices. However, training should be viewed not as a cost, but as an investment.
- Detailed information on a cost/benefits analysis done by the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum shows that for every dollar invested by the employer there is a net return of 38 per cent. The study also found that hiring apprentices ensures skilled labour and a lower turnover rate.
- Training demonstrates a commitment to tradespersons and helps to address high turnover rates and skills availability. However, new entrants often compete with someone with no training or experience involved in the underground economy. The model of the Professional Fish Harvesters' Certification Board is one way to reduce some of these problems.
- A lack of incentives is creating problems in the system with too many unskilled people entering the workforce who cannot effectively and efficiently do the work required of them.
- There is a need to have compulsory certification to ensure a high level of quality control, security and expertise. Compulsory certification encourages a safe and fair industry, discourages the underground economy and can lead to fairer and more stable work.
- The majority of the apprenticeship programs in Newfoundland and Labrador are Red Seal certified, which means the trade certification is recognized throughout Canada. While participation in apprenticeship programs has increased, the number of journeyman certificates has decreased.
- While apprenticeship is provincial, journeyman/red seal certification is a national responsibility. Once an apprentice leaves the province, there are no guarantees of program completion since there are differences between the provinces in what trades require certification. In terms of mobility and transferability, this creates confusion and frustration among students.
- There are concerns about the financial and geographical barriers for students wanting to enroll in a skilled trades program. In some programs, the cost of tools and equipment has to be paid in advance by students. The proportion of students enrolling in skilled trades programs is lower in rural areas of the province. While there has been a 30 per cent increase in seats in the public system and government funding in the last budget for the skilled trades, government needs to ensure accessibility and affordability in the system.
- Other issues facing the apprenticeship system include:
 - Debate over the delivery methods of the apprenticeship program;
 - Facilitating mobility of apprentices and recognizing hours worked between Newfoundland and Labrador and Alberta;

- The lack of journeypersons to properly administer government's apprenticeship program, which requires a 1:1 journeyperson to apprentice ratio; and
- The need for emphasis and promotion of the wage subsidy program, which offers a 60 per cent subsidy when the apprentice can be employed for 72 weeks.
- Supervisory skills have been identified as a significant skills gap among skilled tradespersons. Plans are underway to address this. At the Provincial Apprenticeship Board level, where the common apprenticeship curriculum is designed, there is an entrepreneurship course. A post-journeyperson training is also available to provide additional skills and business training upon demand. The Marine Institute's Bachelor of Technology is another way for people who have completed technical programs to gain business knowledge.

What's Happening Now ...

Promotion Campaigns

- ✓ A media campaign was recently launched to target positive messages about skilled trades occupations to youth between the ages of 13 and 18. Most people in this age group have not yet decided about their career choice. The campaign was advertised through television, movie theatres and magazines. No major differences were seen in the impacts for urban and rural youth.
- ✓ The promotion of skilled trades as viable career options is expected to increase the number of people interested in skilled trades, along with the number of employers willing to hire apprentices. This can create long-term jobs and, in turn, contribute to a long-term solution to the supply and demand of skilled labour.

Skills Task Force

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador established a Provincial Skills Task Force in Spring 2006 to identify skills requirements among industry, particularly related to major project developments, and to identify necessary responses for the post-secondary system. The Task Force includes 22 members representing industry, labour, government, post-secondary institutions and other key stakeholders.

The Skills Task Force sought input from stakeholders throughout the province, including eleven individual sector consultations, seventeen regional consultations and 30 briefs from interested groups.

Key issues identified by the Skills Task Force include continuing out-migration, low levels of basic skills among workers, challenges in the apprenticeship program for the skilled trades, and the need to address geographic or funding barriers some individuals and groups face when they wish to participate in training opportunities.

Some preliminary findings of the Task Force included:

- ✓ A lack of basic health care, tourism and social services in smaller communities;
- ✓ The need for both trades training and basic essential skills training;
- ✓ The need for greater accessibility for training, particularly in Labrador;

- ✓ The need for greater participation of employers in the apprenticeship program;
- ✓ A way to accessing funding for non-EI-eligible individuals;
- ✓ Apprenticeship and skilled trades are areas of particular interest for the Task Force and stakeholders involved in consultations:
 - strong communication and partnerships between post-secondary education and industry are needed;
 - issues facing female apprentices need to be addressed; and
 - the relatively low pay levels of public sector tradespeople needs to be examined.

The report from the Skills Task Force should be available in early 2007.

Early Learning and Childcare

- A strong link has been found between participation in high quality childcare settings and subsequent success in school. These positive effects can last well into adulthood. Children who receive high quality childcare are more likely to be high school graduates and pursue post-secondary education.
- Early Learning and Childcare (ELCC) should be considered a public good, much the same way public education is viewed. It is a strategic investment in children that stimulates learning and development and helps build stable adults that interact well with their peers and work productively.
- While much is known about what works well in ELCC, two recent studies from the OECD and UNESCO show Canada lags behind and is the lowest spender on ELCC among the OECD countries.
- ELCC initiatives can produce considerable benefits to society as long as they are set up properly. In a cost benefit analysis by two economists at the University of Toronto, it was determined that for every \$1 invested in ELCC, the benefit to society was \$2.
- Indicators of good quality ELCC include teachers with post-secondary training, good salaries for educators, quality programs that integrate play with learning, management who have high levels of ECE training, strong regulations and free or subsidized daycare spaces.
- Early childcare and learning should place a focus on developing skills such as social awareness, social skills, self-regulation, ability to communicate and resolve conflicts and an enthusiastic approach to new activities.

What's Happening Now ...

Childcare Services in Newfoundland and Labrador

- ✓ In Newfoundland and Labrador, childcare is regulated by the Childcare Services Act and other regulations. Regional health boards license, inspect and monitor new programs.
- ✓ The provincial government has developed a number of initiatives to address early childcare and learning including: more affordable childcare, improvement of program quality and inclusive practices, greater capacity in rural and remote areas and improved wages and working conditions for the childcare workforce.
- ✓ A provincial sector study related to childcare workers funded by the Industrial Adjustment Service fund will begin soon and is designed to help determine needs and define directions to improve the conditions of the childcare workforce.

Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition

- Current research and trends show that with the changing nature of work, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) is needed to allow individuals to reach their full potential and for organizations and countries to effectively address their human resource requirements.
- Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) at its most basic level is the recognition of “what someone knows and can do”.
- PLAR is a public policy issue and needs government attention. The recognition of adult learning - the knowledge and skills of citizens - is critical to both address skills shortages and social inclusion.
- The lack of recognition of foreign credentials is also a costly barrier to improving the province’s productivity and competitiveness. A Conference Board of Canada study determined the cost of not recognizing workers’ foreign credentials was between \$4-5 billion in Canada. Some regulatory bodies are taking action to address this barrier.
- Recognition of prior learning is an issue at all universities in Canada, including Memorial University. The assessment for credit transfers is a very difficult process. New ways to evaluate and measure levels of formal and informal education are needed.
- Long considered to be an academic pursuit, PLAR is now driven by labour market demands and used by sector councils and others who develop industry standards.
- Credentials are often viewed by employers as the only way of ensuring that a person is qualified. However, it makes no sense and is daunting for adults to relearn what they already know and do. Prior learning assessment should precede any training to ensure this does not happen.
- One use of PLAR in industry is to assess the need for training. PLAR is ultimately a tool with many uses and potential applications, including recruitment, process verification, training needs identification, internal promotion, regulatory and certification compliance, performance management and succession planning.
- An opportunity for PLAR in Newfoundland and Labrador is in the recruitment of skilled trades workers from rural areas. By using PLAR and then addressing the gaps, there may be an opportunity for shorter but effective training. The provincial government is currently exploring different ways of offering curriculum to meet the needs of both employers and workers.

What’s Happening Now ...

Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA)

- ✓ The Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA) is a national association that facilitates the advancement of prior learning assessment and recognition.
- ✓ Examples of PLAR work in Canada include the Halifax PLA Centre and the Canadian Career Development Foundation. In the US, the Council on Adult Experiential Learning has been quite influential in policy development and practices for PLAR.

Government of Manitoba:

- ✓ The Government of Manitoba recently formed the Department of Manitoba Competitiveness, Training, and Trade as a response to an increased emphasis on workforce issues.
- ✓ Recognizing previous learning and increasing continuous learning will help deal with skill shortages. In 2001, a framework for PLAR ensured practices in post-secondary education, adult community training, employment services and the workplace were systematically implemented.
- ✓ A Workplace Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Committee (WPLAR) was established to oversee and guide the implementation of PLAR in industry. It is also mandated to conduct research, deliver practitioner training, undertake demonstration projects and raise awareness.

What We Heard: Education and Facilitating School to Work Transitions

Secondary System

- High school drop-out rates are still a major challenge facing Newfoundland and Labrador. A significant number of young people have less than high school education. Yet, encouraging high school dropouts to complete high school is a challenge.
- Many individuals (including those interested in skilled trades) have learning styles that are not reflected in current high school teaching methods. A possible solution is to implement methods used in adult learning programs for youth at risk of dropping out of the high school system.
- Recent changes in graduation requirements have been implemented to better reflect the current labour market in the province and to better prepare students entering the workforce. Although requirements for core subjects were left intact, new requirements were introduced in: Career Education and Career Development; Physical Education; and Fine Arts.

What's Happening Now ...

- ✓ In 2005, the Department of Education of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador implemented a new mandatory career education course in all high schools.
- ✓ Career education has been implemented throughout the whole K-12 school system. Career modules are integrated into the courses for students at the junior high school level. All guidance counsellors are required to attend in-services and workshops and complete other courses in order to obtain adequate training in career education.
- ✓ One major change in the curriculum is the implementation of Skilled Trades and Technology Programs. In the 2006-2007 school year, a pilot program implementing these courses was introduced in 30 high schools across the province.
- ✓ A Youth Apprenticeship Program has also been implemented that will allow students to accumulate apprenticeable hours in high school that can be transferred to the college system. This type of program is already implemented in New Brunswick, where students can accumulate up to 400 hours in a trade.
- ✓ There is a need to change the attitudes and perceptions of parents with respect to the skilled trades. The Department is working on a promotional campaign to ensure that females and their parents see skilled trades as a viable option.

- ✓ The Mentoring-Teacher Ambassador Program is a workplace training program for teachers who are teaching skilled trades courses. They are assigned to work sites to job shadow people with journey person certifications. The program provides teachers with a better understanding of the complexity and responsibility in jobs that require college and apprenticeship training.
- ✓ Other industry partnerships include INCO, which has flown Aboriginal students to its site to expose students to the work environment and the development of the apprenticeship book used in the Career Development course by industry, business, labour and education.

Post-Secondary Education

- There is a need to further increase accessibility to post-secondary education. Many people cannot afford the cost of education. Across Canada, universities with the lowest tuition tend to be least accessible due to limited spaces. However, in this province, tuition fees have been kept low and spaces for students have been available.
- Strategies, such as more government funding for scholarships and bursaries is necessary to help respond to this challenge.
- Concerns were raised with respect to increasing the accessibility of post-secondary education to adults who have completed adult basic education programs.
- There are also opportunities for skills recognition, as well as the continued use of technology, to increase accessibility for rural students.

What's Happening Now ...

Private Colleges

- ✓ Private career colleges in Newfoundland and Labrador can deliver training on demand to industry and are able to respond quickly to new technologies. Not-for-profit union schools are particularly important to the availability of training programs designed specifically for contractors. These schools include the Operating Engineers College, UA Training Centre and the Carpenters/Millwrights College.
- ✓ However, improvements in the private career college system are necessary. Investment in learners will help to ensure that those enrolled at private colleges get more respect and credibility. The delivery of training programs needs attention and the programs could be shorter and more flexible.
- ✓ Challenges facing all private training institutions across the province include:
 - Increasing the number of programs with hands-on-training and the level of hands-on-training within programs; and
 - Increasing the number of properly trained supervisors (especially in the construction industry).
- ✓ Due to rapid increases in technological change, more investment in computer-related training for skilled workers is also crucial for the future success of private career colleges.
- ✓ One of the major concerns among private career colleges is related to the number of skilled workers since both young and older workers are leaving the province. The concern is not whether there will be enough training programs, but whether there will be enough people to enroll in these programs.

College of the North Atlantic

- ✓ The College of the North Atlantic (CNA) has implemented its 'Access for Success' Program throughout its 17 campuses and in Qatar. The program ensures students access their programs of choice as well as tracks student progress. Assessment of a student's prior learning and recognizing achievements are important in determining the best program for students. Various inventories are used to assist with assessment of students' needs with respect to career development and academic achievement.
- ✓ Finding suitable job placements for graduates is also a significant component in helping students succeed at CNA, and is carried out through Student Development Offices, through alumni contacts and through job postings on the college's website.
- ✓ Providing adequate services and accommodations for students with special needs is a major challenge being addressed by the college. Regional coordinators are available at each campus and there are campus-based assistance and accommodations. Peer tutoring and extra assistance is available to all students who need it.
- ✓ Approximately 300 courses at the college can be completed online through Distributed Learning. Adult Basic Education (ABE) is one of the significant components in providing internal transferability at the CNA from one program to another. However, the transition from Adult Basic Education to post-secondary programs at the college needs improvement.
- ✓ CNA also has external transfer agreements with a number of universities. There are concerns regarding the inability to directly transfer credits from the College of the North Atlantic engineering program to Memorial University. Students who complete a diploma in Engineering Technology at CNA and wish to obtain a university degree in engineering are recommended to go to Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario because there is a better transfer agreement than with Memorial.
- ✓ Articulation and transferability of courses are needed for lifelong learning, but it has been challenging to develop these relationships with agreements inside the province. Due to constraints of the accreditation processes for MUN, options for building partnerships among non-university institutions could be explored.

Memorial University: Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science

- ✓ The engineering program at Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN) includes five accredited undergraduate programs (civil, computer, electrical, ocean and naval architectural, and mechanical), with options in Oil and Gas Engineering in all programs.
- ✓ MUN offers the only ocean and naval architectural engineering program among all universities in Canada. It is also the only undergraduate university in Canada with a Canadian Research Chair in Offshore and Underwater Vehicles Design. Process Engineering is a newly accredited undergraduate program that will be available in the near future with support from INCO and the INCO Innovation Centre.
- ✓ MUN is one of only two universities in Canada with mandatory co-operative programs in engineering. In the Winter 2006 semester, almost half of the work-terms were in the oil and gas industry. A major change recently implemented in the undergraduate programs allows students to enter Term 1 directly from high school, permitting students to graduate in five years (including 6 co-operative work-terms).

- ✓ Employers recognize the abilities of MUN engineering work-term students and assign them tasks as if they were full-time staff members.
- ✓ However, the number of engineers per capita in Newfoundland and Labrador is half the size of Ontario and one-quarter the size of Alberta (where there is one engineer for every 100 people). The under-representation of females in engineering continues to be one of the major challenges facing the engineering program.
- ✓ An increased focus on engineering-business education is critical for the future success of the engineering program at MUN. This type of focus on entrepreneurship and business-oriented skills could also be implemented in skilled trades programs. Many of the entrepreneurs who are graduates from the MUN Engineering program developed engineering research projects completed during their studies into business opportunities.

Marine Institute

- ✓ The Marine Institute of Memorial University of Newfoundland implemented a project in 2004, Vision 2020, which focused on the types of programs needed to reflect the needs of the workforce in the province in 2020.
- ✓ As part of the Vision 2020 initiative, consultations were held throughout the province with representatives from educational institutions, business, labour and government. One of the common themes raised during these consultations was the issue of skill shortages.
- ✓ The ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle) Program was created as a result of the Vision 2020 initiative. ROVs are becoming increasingly important in the oil and gas industry and in this province, ROVs are important in the maintenance of the Hibernia and Terra Nova oil platforms. The ROV program at the Marine Institute was developed based on a similar program in Louisiana. The program is expected to start in January 2007.
- ✓ An example of one of the partnerships made with industry for the ROV program is with a local company, GRI Simulation Inc., which donated an ROV simulation model to enhance the ROV program. The company is also willing to accept students enrolled in the ROV program for an 8-week work term.
- ✓ Another successful partnership of the Marine Institute has been developed with the Aboriginal communities of Conne River, Labrador and Nunavut. The partnerships are mainly in the commercial fishing industry, involving the Innu and Métis in Labrador and the Conne River reserve. The Marine Institute has also been involved in training Aboriginals in Nunavut in the offshore fishing industry and marine transportation.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

- ✓ In 2005, the Province released a White Paper on Education. Educational funding implemented as a result of the recommendations allowed an extension of post-secondary tuition freeze for the 2007/08 school year as well as increased research capacity at public post-secondary institutions.
- ✓ The most recent budget (2006/07) included \$100 million for new investments human resource needs and skills development. Of this, \$40 million has been directed towards post-secondary education.

- ✓ Funding for post-secondary education includes:
 - investments in apprenticeship, science and technology programs;
 - expansion of the CNA Happy Valley-Goose Bay Campus to support the growing Aboriginal population;
 - expansion to the CNA Prince Phillip Drive Campus;
 - a \$1.5 million targeted wage subsidy program to assist employers in hiring apprentices to allow more of them to qualify for journey person certification;
 - a Career Awards program to facilitate technology transfer for MUN and CNA student placements where they will best learn;
 - revisions to the ABE curriculum to match the improved high school curriculum; and
 - piloting the Futures in Skills Trades and Technology Program at the K-12 level in 25-30 schools this year.

What We Heard: Career Development

- The role of career development and counselling is not well understood and changes in the approach to career development are needed. Education, coupled with work experience and good career advice, creates opportunities for a productive work life.
- Young people today are more selective and have many opportunities available to them. They are pursued by employers and are more flexible in their career paths. For example, in 1999 when MUN held a career fair, only 26 employers participated. In 2006, 107 employers participated, some of whom offered signing bonuses.
- Cooperative education is important for high school programs. However, it is often a challenge for schools to get the resources to offer these programs. More partnerships are needed among labour, industry and the non-profit sector in order for this to succeed.
- On-the-job training, cooperative education and other practical experience should be encouraged as part of career preparation and career development.
- The number of individuals with multiple career paths is also increasing, particularly among those with a desire to change careers at retirement. This requires access to career counselling and support during the transition.
- Career development should be viewed as an important part of social and economic development. Funding should be available to increase the number of career advisors, provide meaningful summer employment and cooperative education experiences and allow greater access to career support services at all education institutions.

What We Heard: Sector and Employer Issues and Initiatives

The Alliance of Sector Councils

- The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC) is composed of individual sector councils that are established among industry groups and a broad range of stakeholders to address human resource issues within specific industries.
- Sector councils have established working groups and committees to address top priorities. TASC is working on labour market issues for specific sectors related to the Newfoundland and Labrador labour market. For example, the School Boards working group is planning to work with the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education to help develop a generic curriculum to ensure students are prepared for the needs of industry.

Voluntary/Non-profit Sector

- The Voluntary/Non-profit (VNP) sector is often not considered part of the workforce, yet 7.2 per cent of all workers are in this sector.
- There are a number of key human resources challenges in the sector, including access to funding, recruitment and training. One opportunity for recruitment in this sector is among retiring workers. They may decide to leave full-time employment but may not be ready to leave the workforce entirely.
- The HR Council for the VNP is part of the Alliance of Sector Councils and works to address some of these challenges.
- Training initiatives are also now part of a retention strategy for the VNP. There are a number of areas under consideration including experimenting with clusters or organizations to help promote training and learning among people who work in similar jobs.
- Stella Burry Community Services (SBCS) is a well known voluntary service sector in St. John's for clients who have mental health and addictions issues. It develops partnerships with local employers to hire clients and also operates an Employment Resources Centre in partnership with HRLE.
- Over 80 employees of SBCS have served a client population in excess of 500 individuals. Programs available to clients include: pre-employment preparation, Adult Basic Education Level 1 and carpentry and woodworking. Over 80 former clients are now employed with a variety of employers in the area.
- A future focus for SBCS will be to create social enterprise opportunities that are linked to labour market shortages. A potential partnership with the Carpenters' Training Institute to offer pre-apprenticeship training is being explored.

Health Human Resources

- The Department of Health and Community Services accounts for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's largest expenditures. Part of this is influenced by increasing payroll costs.
- Other human resources issues include:
 - Aging Workforce: The average age for primary health occupations is 42 years and in some occupations it is over 50 years. Retirements will have a significant impact on the health care system.
 - Recruiting and Retention: New graduates are placed in the worst jobs in the system. However, they have large debts and want permanent positions. A lack of permanent positions, mobility of younger workers and the demand from the private sector are affecting the supply available for the public service. This has been seen recently with pharmacists. There is also a high turnover rate among foreign-trained physicians.
 - Quality of Work: Excessive overtime is required for many positions, there is a lack of employee supports for continuing education and people often do not get to use their full range of skills.
 - Rural recruitment: Targeted recruitment for rural areas appears to be working.
- One issue raised concerned the hiring of skilled tradespeople in the health system. A suggested approach for government was to ensure that only registered apprentices and journeypersons were hired.
- Moving forward, the HR focus will be on strategic planning, re-engaging stakeholders and targeted recruitment and retention.

Attracting and Retaining Talent in the Public Sector

- The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is the province's largest employer with approximately 40,000 employees, 35 collective agreements and 6 unions. The current 4.7 per cent turnover rate is expected to increase in the future and will be influenced heavily by retirements.
- Government needs to develop and implement strategies to attract and retain talent. It also needs a mix of generic and specialized planning to handle the future issues. There are opportunities to bring new skills sets into the province through an immigration strategy.
- Succession planning was implemented three years ago across government departments to address the expected changes in the labour force. Targeted recruitment strategies for "hard to fill" positions are being developed. An update of the Human Resources Strategy - Workforce Planning, Environmental Scanning and Strategy Development will be completed by March 31, 2007.
- Other initiatives which need further exploration include executive leadership development, job fairs/specialized search initiatives, an immigration strategy and increased opportunities for secondments, developmental opportunities and temporary assignments.

CHBA-EN's Workplace Mentoring Proposal for the Residential Construction Sector

- The issues facing the Newfoundland and Labrador Homebuilders Association and its 180 member firms include: the underground economy, skills shortages and new graduates who do not meet the requirements of the association. The industry is taking the lead on a proposal to address these issues.
- The CHBA-EN Workplace Mentoring proposal is aimed towards the 18 to 29 aged under-employed and unemployed groups.
- The project is a workplace-based model of career orientation, mentorship and training designed to increase awareness of the opportunities in the skilled trades and the residential construction sector. At the end of the project the participants will attend post-secondary institutions under the existing apprenticeship system to continue their training.
- The proposed project will include planning and preparation of the curriculum, ongoing sessions in 12 trades fields and specializations and five-week placements.
- The Association is also working with the Women in Resource Development Committee to address issues related to participation by women in the residential construction sector.

Tourism Labour Market in Newfoundland and Labrador

- The tourism industry contributes significantly to the economy of Newfoundland and Labrador. The industry accounts for 26,000 direct jobs and 21,200 indirect jobs in the province.
- One of the challenges in the industry is hiring and retaining staff in rural areas. A goal of Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador is to lengthen seasonal periods in rural regions. Target groups for the hospitality industry's initiative include retired workers and youth. Retired workers are untapped resources and experienced workers can also mentor youth.
- In a number of occupational groups, demand will soon exceed supply of workers. To address this issue, HNL has developed an industry action plan. This plan will showcase the range of occupations within the tourism industry and the various pathways that can lead to advancement.

Human Resources Strategies and Initiatives in the Mining Sector

- Voisey's Bay Nickel Company (VBNC) is currently planning to help address anticipated skills shortages in the next 10 years. Its approach to workforce development to support its projects includes targeting Aboriginal peoples and women for recruitment. It also undertook a study of engineers to determine what they look for in a career. The main motivators included career growth within the company, opportunities to travel and the availability of training and advancement. Salary was much further down the list.
- VBNC's Aboriginal workforce development initiatives include a model for an Aboriginal training program to build capacity in the community and skills development of the Aboriginal workforce. VBNC has also created entry-level positions that allow Aboriginal workers to learn the required entry-level skills and then provides opportunities for them to build upon these skills.
- VBNC views its Aboriginal program as a success and it is now part of the company's business model. Fifty-one percent of its employees are Aboriginal and there has been a strong positive impact from the program on the community and its people.

Marine Careers

- The Marine Careers Secretariat has developed an action plan to enhance the image of the industry, create marine career awareness and provide marine human resource development and access to marine training.
- Two studies have been completed: the Marine Career Opportunity Study and the Public Perceptions Survey. The Marine Career Opportunity Study identified an aging workforce among ship's officers in Eastern Canada. It also identified a bottleneck of third and fourth class engineers. In addition to this study, the International Marine Federation (BIMCO) projects a shortfall of 46,000 ships' officers by 2010. Other hard-to-fill positions include crane operators, superintendents, electrical technicians, electronics technicians, instrumentation technicians and safety managers.
- The Public Perceptions Study found that there is little awareness and interest in the marine industry among parents and high school students and pointed to the need to promote marine careers and support recruitment initiatives. With reference to education and training, specific initiatives are needed to increase enrollment in programs and to enhance access to pre-employment programs and upgrading programs.

Skills Education and Training in the Oil and Gas Sector

- The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) considers labour market development to be very important to the industry. Seventy "difficult-to-recruit" positions were identified by a study in 2002, an issue which is compounded by the fact that the training institutions producing these graduates are at full training capacity.
- In Newfoundland and Labrador, the industry is losing employees to Western Canada. The challenge will be to have more trained and educated workers in the face of competition from other industries and regions. One of the ways to overcome this is to offer input to federal and provincial governments on issues and initiatives related to skills, education and training and worker shortages.
- CAPP's HR and CEO Task Group's focus areas include labour demand modelling, immigration, worker mobility and industry promotion. CAPP works with the Petroleum Industry Human Resource Committee (PIHRC), which has undertaken a large number of labour market and human resources projects for the industry.

Train, Develop and Retain: Preparing for Voisey's Bay Operations

- The very first step to developing a training plan is understanding the workforce needs of the company. This includes which occupations are involved, the numbers and the related human resource policies.
- In the case of Voisey's Bay Nickel Company (VBNC), the workforce is mainly residents from Labrador. While VBNC also had a labour agreement, the company needed to learn more about its workforce.
- A web-based skills inventory database was developed to help identify present and future skills gaps. It allowed the company to give full consideration to issues such as cost, base skills and time to learn, when designing the training.
- Training delivered to employees was both institutional and community-based. Training included job training, as well as life skills and personal financial management training. VBNC found that community-based training worked best because of existing support systems.
- A gender sensitivity and cultural awareness training program is offered to all employees with specific training programs tailored for company employees.
- Flexibility of the training programs to suit the learning needs of the audience was an important tool used by the company to combat retention issues. Language and literacy barriers often discouraged participants so activities outside of training were also important to program retention.

Strategies for Meeting Workplace Skills and Human Resource Demands: Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro

- Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro (Hydro) is highly involved in the apprenticeship training and technician training programs. It has developed its own apprenticeship training program to fit unique business needs. This program, the Hydro Operator, is specific to the industry. While it does not have a journey person designation, it does have a similar structure to the provincial apprentice training.
- Twenty-five per cent of Hydro employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years, with this number increasing to 40 per cent in the next 10 years.
- Since Hydro's workforce is highly skilled, with a three to five year learning curve, the replacement and transfer of skills presents a challenge. One of the main ways of combating this challenge is to bridge people into employment and train them for specific jobs. This is facilitated by Hydro's graduate development program in place.
- The Y Generation has a set of unique differences, such as not staying with a company very long and also having more expectations of their employers. This presents a challenge for Hydro that is being addressed by efforts to engage the workforce.

Human Resources: Small Business and Retail Service Sector

- Some of the recruitment techniques used by the McDonald's Restaurants owned by Bennett Restaurants include in-store signage, job fairs and an employee referral program. Twenty per cent of recruitment is done through the employee referral program
- The company also benefits from international partners for advertising and recruitment campaigns and use a web-based pre-screening for applicants.
- The company recognizes that positions offered are mostly transition jobs, and not career choices for the majority of their employees. The normal demographic of employees for McDonald's is 18 to 22 years old. However, in recent years this has been changing. McDonald's hires many individuals not normally targeted for recruiting, including clients from the Association for New Canadians and single mothers. Positions with McDonald's provide flexible schedules and can fit these people's lifestyles.

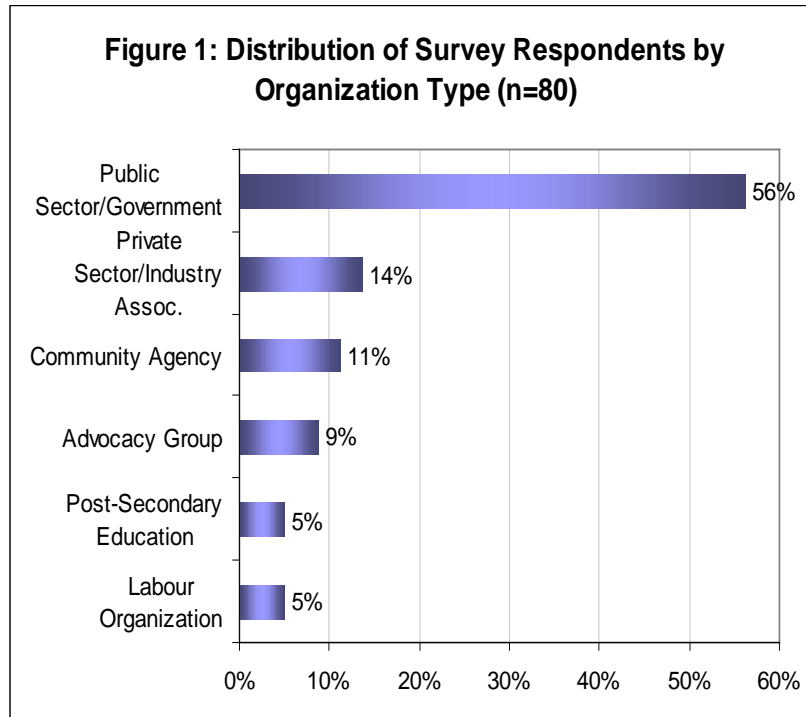
- While the emergence of the many call centres originally affected recruitment and retention of employees, many have returned from call centre jobs due to the flexible schedules in their restaurants.
- The number one reason for employees leaving is not related to pay or hours, but rather a feeling of not being valued by management. The key to retention is having the employee want to work for the manager, not for the restaurant.

Iron Ore Company of Canada: Securing Our Future Together-Building Our Workforce of Tomorrow

- It is important for all Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOCC) employees to know about mission and values of the company. IOCC builds employee commitment and leadership through employee sessions, pay plans and surveys.
- IOCC recognizes that it is facing staffing problems in the future. It has recently initiated a new IIF program (Investing In the Future) to streamline job vacancies. The Human Resources plan also includes a team leader development program, developed in-house to accommodate the training requirements for front line supervisory roles. These roles are all filled by local employees.
- One particular issue facing IOCC with apprenticeship is difficulty maintaining the 1:1 ratio of journeypersons to apprentices.
- In the past, IOCC could rely on HR offices all over the world for staffing. However, all areas are experiencing skills shortage problems. In anticipation of pending retirements, IOCC currently has 70 extra people over its budget to replace positions as people retire. This is one of the techniques they are using to combat the upcoming skills shortage and knowledge loss from the retirement of current workers. Another technique that has been used is having retired workers come back to supervise large projects.
- To recruit outside of Labrador City or the province, experience has shown that it is most effective to target people with five to ten years experience who are originally from Newfoundland and Labrador and want to return. However, people who have moved away for work do not want to return unless they can get stable, full-time employment. Recruiting efforts have also targeted groups who would like to enjoy the quality of life offered by Labrador City.

EVALUATION RESULTS

In December 2006, participants in the provincial labour market symposium were invited to participate in an online evaluation. In total, 86 people responded to the survey (31 per cent of participants). As shown in Figure 1, the distribution of respondents by organization type was representative of those who participated in the symposium.



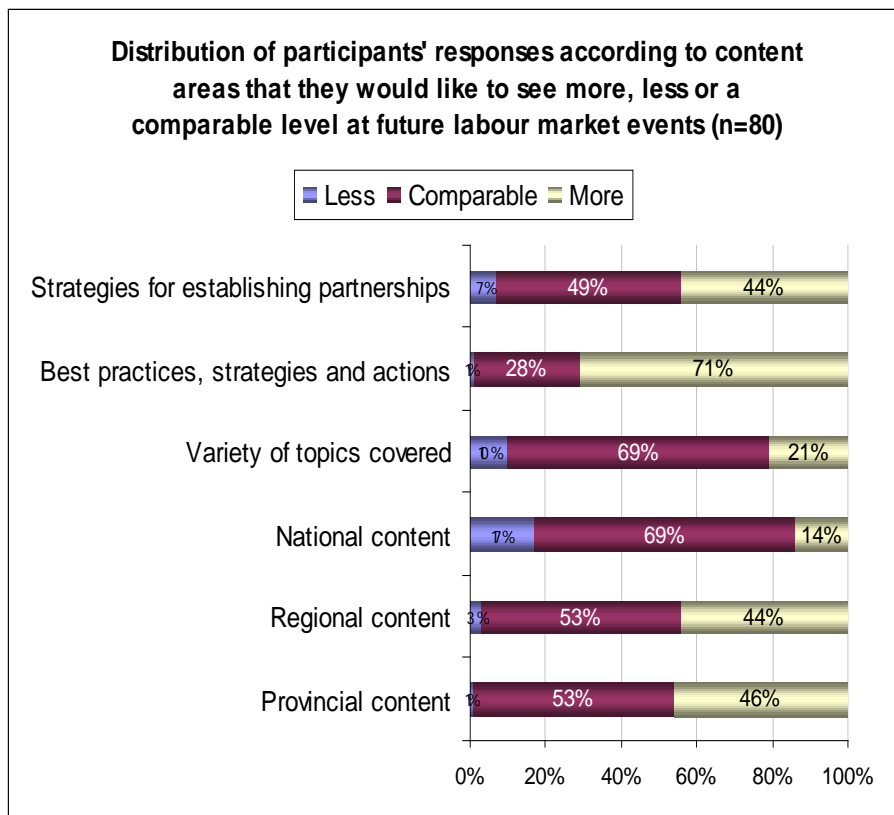
The online survey included a number of questions related to participants' learning experience and the overall quality of the event. The results were overwhelmingly positive.

- Between 83 per cent and 94 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their participation in the symposium:
 - Helped increase their understanding of participants in the provincial labour market and the challenges they face;
 - Provided information that was relevant and useful;
 - Provided information that they can use in their work;
 - Exposed them to new ideas, concepts and strategies;
 - Introduced them to new people who may be potential partners for future labour market initiatives;
 - Was a valuable use of their time;
 - Met or exceeded their expectations; and
 - Helped increase their understanding of the role of the Labour Market Committee.

- 62 per cent of respondents had visited the Labour Market Sub-Committee website to review presentations given during the symposium.
- Between 87 per cent and 96 per cent of respondents rated the symposium a 4 or a 5 (5 being the highest satisfaction rating) in terms of their satisfaction of the overall quality, expertise of presenters and quality of the content.
- 95 per cent of respondents would be likely (38 per cent) or very likely (57 per cent) to attend a symposium in the future.
- 64 per cent of respondents indicated they were likely (38 per cent) or very likely (26 per cent) to implement new activities or actions over the coming year as a result of information they heard at the symposium. 32 per cent were unsure of their future intentions.
- 84 per cent to 97 per cent of respondents rated the symposium a 4 or 5 (highest rating possible) in terms of the quality of the location (93 per cent), meals (84 per cent), registration process (97 per cent) and organization (96 per cent).

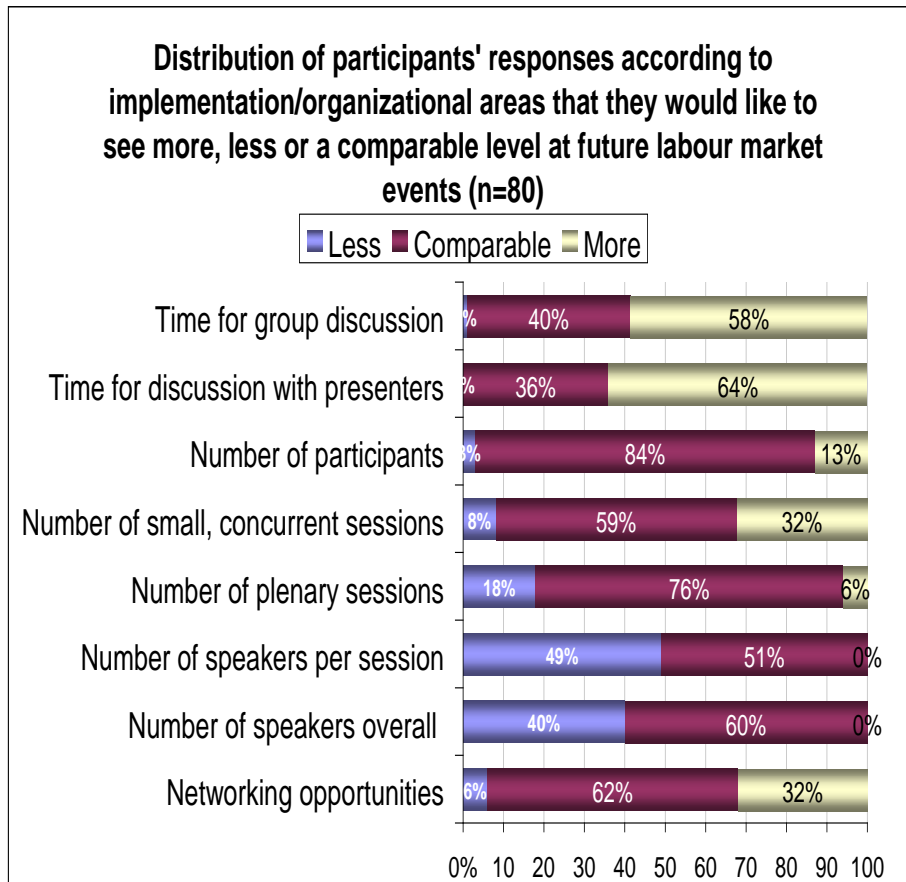
Respondents were also given an opportunity to make recommendations for future events. In terms of content for future events, Figure 2 shows that respondents were fairly evenly split on whether they either wanted more, or a comparable level of provincial content, regional content and strategies for establishing partnerships. A majority (69 per cent) of respondents indicated they wanted a comparable level of national content and a variety of topics covered and 71 per cent would want more content on best practices, strategies and actions.

Figure 2



In terms of the structure and organization of future events, as shown in Figure 3, 59 per cent to 84 per cent of respondents wanted a comparable number of participants, networking opportunities, plenary sessions, speakers, and concurrent sessions. The majority of respondents wanted more time for group discussion (58 per cent) and discussion with presenters (64 per cent). There was a fairly even split on the number of speakers per session that respondents would like to hear at a future symposium.

Figure 3



Fifty-one respondents in the online survey provided general comments. The most common comments included positive feedback on the event and organization, the need for other similar events and the need for more time for discussion and more of a focus on strategies and actions. There were a few suggestions to add an additional day for future events such as the symposium. However, no one suggested shortening the number of days for the event or the number of speakers.

The online survey provided respondents with the opportunity to identify key issues, opportunities or strategies that labour market partners needed to prioritize to support the development of healthy labour markets in Newfoundland and Labrador. The results of these questions are discussed in the next section on Future Directions.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This report was prepared to inform participants at the provincial labour market symposium and stakeholder groups about priority labour market issues and trends and to provide examples of current initiatives that can help address them. The report is also intended to help guide stakeholders, including the Labour Market Committee, with their labour market planning and decisions.

What We Heard: Labour Market Priorities

During the Labour Market Symposium and in the online evaluation, participants identified a number of priority areas that need to be addressed by labour market partners in order to support the development of healthy labour markets in Newfoundland and Labrador. Table 1 outlines the top priorities identified by symposium participants and respondents in their online evaluation.

A number of organizations and partners currently have a mandate to address these priority areas and activities are underway to help address many of them. After taking this work into account, the Labour Market Committee will be focusing on ten priorities in their workplan for the next several years. These are indicated by the shaded rows in Table 1.

Appendix D provides a detailed table of the Labour Market Priority Areas and examples of the various strategies and more detailed needs put forward by participants in the Labour Market Symposium and online survey respondents.

LABOUR MARKET PRIORITIES FOR PARTNERS

Out-migration, Retention and Attraction (including youth)
Post-Secondary Education (access and targeting to labour market needs)
Minimizing Barriers for Under-represented groups
Awareness Campaign/Local Opportunities
Employer HR Supports, Recruitment and Retention
Understanding Labour Market and Skill Shortages
Apprenticeship
Labour Market Partnerships and Roles
Wages
Workplace Training
Economic Development/Local Strategies
Literacy and Essential Skills
Career Planning and Development
Workplace Quality
Addressing Barriers for Persons with Disabilities
Employment Insurance Program
Attitudes
Personal Income Taxes
Prior Learning and Assessment
Immigration

APPENDIX A: LABOUR MARKET COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ms. Brenda Caul
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Ms. Marilyn Tucker
President
Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council
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APPENDIX B: AGENDA AND PANELISTS

Reception: October 29, 2006

- Mr. Wayne Penney (Assistant Deputy Minister, Human Resources, Labour and Employment)
- Hon. Paul Shelley (Minister, Human Resources, Labour and Employment)
- Ms. Marilyn Tucker (President, Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council)
- Ms. Lana Payne (Communications Officer and First Vice-President, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour)

DAY 1: OCTOBER 30, 2006

Symposium Facilitator: Dr. Graham Lowe

Welcome and Opening Comments

- Dr. Doug House (Deputy Minister, Provincial Development Plan and Chair of the Strategic Partnership Committee)
- Mr. Reg Anstey (President, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour and labour representative of the Strategic Partnership Committee)
- Mr. Denis Mahoney (Chair, Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council and business representative of the Strategic Partnership Committee)

Plenary Panel Discussion 1 - Setting The Context: Future Labour Market Outlook

- Ms. Elizabeth Beale (President and CEO, Atlantic Provinces Economic Council)
- Mr. Ken Hicks (Senior Economist, Department of Finance, NL)
- Professor Doug May (Labour Market Economist, Memorial University of Newfoundland)

Plenary Panel Discussion 2 - Defining Success: Perspectives on Healthy Labour Markets

- Dr. Andrew Sharpe (Executive Director, Centre for the Study of Living Standards)
- Mr. Jim Milway (Executive Director, Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity)
- Ms. Alison Earle (Assistant Deputy Minister, Rural Secretariat)

Plenary Panel Discussion 3 - Increasing Participation: Overcoming the Barriers

- Mr. Michael McCracken (Chair, CEO and Co-founder, Informetrica Limited)
- Mr. Ron Saunders (Director of the Work Network, Canadian Policy Research Networks)
- Mr. Ray McIssac (President, Newfoundland and Labrador Association for Community Living and Manager, Bay St. George Community Employment Corporation)
- Ms. Laurell Ritchie (Canadian Autoworkers Union)

Plenary Panel Discussion 4 - Strategic Investments: Education, Skills Training and Lifelong Learning

- Mr. Douglas Watt (Senior Research Associate, Conference Board of Canada)
- Ms. Beverlie Cook (Project Manager, Canadian Apprenticeship Forum)
- Mr. Rob Shea (Assistant Professor, Post-Secondary and Adult Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland)
- Ms. Martha Friendly (Senior Research Associate and Coordinator of the Childcare Resource and Research Unit, University of Toronto)

DAY 1: OCTOBER 31, 2006

Plenary Panel Discussion 5 - Strategic Investments: Work and the Workplace

- Ms. Bonnie Kennedy (Executive Director, The Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment)
- Mr. Andrew Cardozo (Executive Director, The Alliance of Sector Councils)
- Mr. David Robertson (Director of Work Organization and Training, Canadian Autoworkers Union)
- Ms. Lynne Toupin (Executive Director, Human Resources Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit Sector)

Concurrent Sessions - Labour Market Partnerships

- Dr. Doug House (Deputy Minister, Provincial Development Plan and Chair of the Strategic Partnership Committee)
- Mr. Reg Anstey (President, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour and labour representative of the Strategic Partnership Committee)
- Mr. Denis Mahoney (Chair, Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council and business representative of the Strategic Partnership Committee)
- Mr. Mike Alexander (Regional Executive Head, Service Canada)
- Mr. Wayne Penney (Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment)
- Dr. Rob Greenwood (Founding Director, Leslie Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development, Memorial University of Newfoundland)
- Ms. Beverley Kirby (Director, Community Education Network)
- Ms. Carolyn Lavers (Economic Development Officer, Northern Peninsula Business Network)

Concurrent Sessions - Education, Skills Development and Lifelong Learning

- Dr. Allan B. Quigley, Professor, Adult Education, St. Francis Xavier University
- Ms. Kim Gillard (Executive Director, Literacy Newfoundland and Labrador)
- Ms. Christine McLean (Child Care Services Program Consultant, Department of Health and Community Services)
- Ms. Sandi Howell (Provincial Coordinator, Prior Learning and Assessment Recognition (PLAR) and Essential Skills for Competitiveness, Training and Trades, Government of Manitoba)
- Ms. Rachelle Cochrane (Assistant Deputy Minister, Post-Secondary, Department of Education)
- Ms. Deanne Howe (Essential Skills Coordinator, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (NL) and the College of the North Atlantic)

Concurrent Sessions - Sector Strategies

- Ms. Nancy Healey (Executive Director, Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador)
- Mr. Wayne Scott (Manager, Human Resources, Voisey's Bay Nickel Company)
- Captain Rick Strong (Marine Services Manager, Seabase/Maersk and Member of Marine Careers Secretariat)
- Mr. Paul Barnes (Petroleum Industry Human Resource Committee and the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers).

Concurrent Session - Maximizing Workforce Participation

- Ms. Ann-Marie Anonsen (Executive Director, Women in Resource Development Committee)
- Ms. Rhonda Tulk-Lane (Executive Director, Futures in Newfoundland and Labrador's Youth)
- Ms. Nellie Burke (Director, Immigration Policy, Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment)
- Ms. Marie White (Senior Research and Evaluation Consultant and Associate, Goss Gilroy Inc.)
- Dr. Cecilia Moloney (Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Memorial University of Newfoundland NSERC/Petro-Canada Chair for Women in Science and Engineering)
- Ms. Michelle Brown (Random North Development Association)
- Ms. Margie Hancock (Literacy and Workplace Training Coordinator, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour)

Concurrent Sessions - Achieving Excellence In Student Learning

- Dr. Ray Gosine (Dean of Engineering, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador)
- Mr. Gerald Anderson (Marine Institute)
- Mr. Colin Forward (Dean, Industrial Trades, College of the North Atlantic)
- Mr. Larry Slaney (Training Coordinator U.A. Training Centre)
- Ms. Marion Fushell (Assistant Deputy Minister; Primary, Elementary, and Secondary Branch; Department of Education)
- Mr. Eldred Barnes (Director of Program Development; Primary, Elementary, and Secondary Branch; Department of Education)
- Mr. John Barron (Program Development Specialist; Primary, Elementary, and Secondary Branch; Department of Education)

Concurrent Session - Human Resource Strategies, Apprenticeship and Workplace Training

- Mr. Gus Doyle (Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Newfoundland and Labrador Regional Council of Carpenters, Millwrights and Allied Workers)
- Ms. Denise Hanrahan (Director, Institutional and Industrial Education, Department of Education)
- Mr. Bob Marshall (Superintendent, Training and Employee Development, Voisey's Bay Nickel Company)
- Mr. Gerard McDonald (Vice-President, Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro)
- Ms. Cathy Bennett (Owner/Operator, Bennett Restaurants)

Plenary Panel Discussion 6 - Skills Task Force

- Mr. Bob Ridgley (M.H.A., St. John's North and Co-Chair of the Skills Task Force)
- Ms. Rachelle Cochrane (Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Education and Co-Chair of the Skills Task Force)

Closing Comments:

- Hon. Kevin O'Brien (Minister, Department of Business)

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

- Academy Canada
- Appleby Consulting
- Association for New Canadians
- Association of Registered Nurses of NL
- Association of Seafood Producers
- Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC)
- Avalon Employment Inc.
- Barry Group Inc.
- Bennett Restaurants
- Burin Peninsula Supported Employment Services
- CAN/CME
- Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment
- Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP)
- Canadian Auto Workers
- Canadian Coalition of Women in Science & Engineering
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business
- Canadian Federation of Students
- Canadian Home Builders' Association – Eastern NL
- Canadian Labour Congress
- Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters
- Canadian National Institute for the Blind
- Canadian Paraplegic Association
- Canadian Policy Research Networks
- Canadian Union of Public Employees
- Carpenters Union
- CAW – Canada
- CBDC Avalon West
- Celtic Business Development Corporation
- Central Dairies
- Centre for Management Development
- Centre for the Study of Living Standards
- City of St. John's
- College of the North Atlantic
- Community Business Development Corporation
- Community Centre Alliance
- Community Education Network
- Community Services Council NL
- Compassionate Home Health Services
- Conference Board of Canada
- Department of Business
- Department of Education
- Department of Finance
- Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Department of Health and Community Services
- Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment
- Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development
- Department of Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs
- Department of Municipal Affairs
- Don Gallant and Associates
- Eastern Health
- Economics and Statistics Branch, Department of Finance
- Employment Insurance Commission
- Federal Labour Market Ministers, LMI Secretariat
- FINALLY! Futures in Newfoundland and Labrador's Youth
- Fish, Food and Allied Workers/CAW
- Fit for Work
- G. J. Cahill
- Gonzaga High School
- Goss Gilroy Inc.
- Government of Manitoba
- Graham Lowe Group
- Harris Centre, Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador
- HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit Sector
- HRSDC/FLMM LMI Working Group

- Human Resources Skills Development Canada
- Humber Valley Community Employment Corporation
- Humber Valley Resort
- Husky Energy
- Ignite Partners
- Industry Canada
- Informetrica Limited
- Institute for Competitiveness & Prosperity
- Iron Ore Company of Canada
- JBC Management Services
- Labour Market Committee
- Labour Relations Agency
- Literacy Newfoundland & Labrador
- Marine Institute
- Mariner Resources Opportunity Network
- McInnes Cooper
- Memorial University of Newfoundland
- Merit Construction
- Metro Business Opportunities
- Murphy Centre
- Nearshore Atlantic
- Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Career Colleges
- Newfoundland and Labrador Building and Construction Trades Council
- Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council
- Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture
- Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Cooperatives
- Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour
- Newfoundland and Labrador Health Boards Association
- Newfoundland and Labrador Refining Corporation
- Newfoundland Association for Community Living
- Newfoundland Association of Public and Private Employees
- Newfoundland Association of Technology Industry
- Newfoundland Ocean Industries Association (
- Newfoundland Personnel Inc.
- North Atlantic
- People First of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Provincial Advisory Committee Support Employment
- Provincial Apprenticeship and Certification Board
- Public Service Commission of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Public Service Secretariat, Executive Council
- Random North Development Association
- RDEE TNL
- Robertson Surette
- Rural Secretariat Region, Corner Brook-Rocky Harbour
- Rural Secretariat, Executive Council
- Rutter Technologies
- Seabase/Maersk Limited
- Service Canada
- Sharing Our Cultures
- Single Parent Association of Newfoundland
- Skills Canada – Newfoundland and Labrador
- Sobeys
- St. Anthony Basin Resources Inc.
- St. Francis Xavier University
- St. John's Board of Trade
- Stella Burry Community Services
- Telelink Call Centre
- The Alliance of Sector Councils (TASC)
- U.A. Plumbers/Pipefitters Local 740
- U.A. Training Centre
- University of Toronto
- Voisey's Bay Nickel Company Limited
- Women in Resource Development Committee
- Women Interested in Successful Employment
- Women's Policy Office

APPENDIX D: LABOUR MARKET PRIORITIES

Labour Market Priority Areas: Examples of Issues and Recommendations Put Forward by Participants in the Labour Market Symposium and Respondents to the Online Evaluation
Out-migration, Retention and Attraction
Reducing out-migration and retention of workers
Need to conduct a survey of people leaving the province to work in Western Canada
Labour mobility
Need to keep in touch with out-migrants
Repatriate those living in other provinces and other countries who might wish to come back to NL but are unaware of the opportunities that exist here.
Increase and identify opportunities for contract work to enable workers to remain and return to valuable work in Newfoundland and Labrador
Need for an analysis of out migration
Government should subsidize re-location costs to bring people back to NL
Need for a youth retention strategy
Need to increase workplace learning opportunities for youth
Need to reach rural youth about local possibilities
Need to promote alternative academic choices for our youth
Access to Post-Secondary Education
Need to increase access to post-secondary training
Need to have local trainers speaking on their challenges
Need for affordable post-secondary education
Need for equal access to skills training
Need for developing a skilled labor force
Need for educating all residents to meet future possibilities
Need for more involvement in the schools
Need for enhancing training/education to make more relevant and responsive to industry
Need for refocusing college training to skill shortages
Government long-term training plan be adjusted to ensure it meets the long-term needs of Newfoundland and Labrador's labour market and not just offering training programs that train people for jobs elsewhere

Minimizing Barriers for Under-represented groups
Need for addressing labour market barriers for under-represented groups
Need for addressing labour market barriers for women and other under-represented groups particularly in higher paying skilled trades
Provide more incentives for people to work and come off of social supports
Focusing on issues related to low-wage workers
Ensure social safety net does not deter employment
Creating access to jobs for under-educated persons
More flexible working environments that allow working mothers to participate more in formal labour markets
Dealing effectively with diversity
More programs/training to enable previously marginalized members of society to enter formal labour markets
Expanded role of women in the labour market and in decision-making at all levels
Increasing labour pool, especially women
Explore Community Economic Development/Entrepreneurial initiatives that promote hiring/training of under-represented groups (e.g., co-op/micro-enterprise,etc.)
More focus on female participants in trades
Awareness Campaign/Local Opportunities
Increased awareness about current and future job opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador
Highlight benefits of working/living in Newfoundland and Labrador
Newfoundland and Labrador LMI and emerging opportunities
Defining and building on the Newfoundland and Labrador advantage
Increasing awareness and developing strategies to make Newfoundland and Labrador employers “employers of choice”
Positive media attitude
Focused campaign to keep labour in the province
Importance of employment
Good LMI information to students and influencers
Employer HR Supports, Recruitment and Retention
Supporting employers with recruitment, retention and human resource planning
Sharing best practices for recruitment and retention

Increasing opportunities for employers to network/develop collaborative strategies to address human resource needs
Education for employers regarding HR policies
Financial support for business to improve HR practices and training
HR development in SMEs
Support sector attraction strategies
Development of visionary human resource management strategies
Support for local companies for training funds
Understanding Labour Market and Skill Shortages
Address concerns beyond traditional skilled labour and include technology sector issues
Involve working people (i.e., blue collar/instructors)
Labour issues are across all sectors not just trades
One stop Internet site for all labour market issues
Use Construction Sector Council statistics
Common, current data sources
Collecting LMI and putting it in one place
Real labour shortages
Identifying occupations which will have skill and labour shortages
Government conduct a complete supply/demand analysis for all occupations so that long-term training priorities can be determined
Newfoundland and Labrador has good diagnostics on its labour market so need to use it to implement action
Forecasting of labour demand for provision of training
Having a good understanding of our labour force and their needs
Apprenticeship
Recruiting apprenticeships and tradespersons
Increasing and promoting apprenticeship participation by employers
Support of apprenticeship training
Strengthen apprenticeship opportunities
Development of a provincial 'youth' apprenticeship program
Compulsory certification of trades

Partnerships/Roles
Partnership development
Need buy-in of all players, e.g., employers, labour, and governments
Relationship building - Industry/Education/Government
Networking - sharing of information
Establish a union/management/education, private sector, non-profit group to focus on the issues
Increased practical labour market partnerships on a regional basis
Sharing of best practices is essential
Engaging and maintaining communication with stakeholders (continuing to take a collaborative approach)
Developing stronger business, labour, government and community-based partnerships that have a labour market focus
Wages
Increase wages for trades and minimum wage
Increasing wages
Increase minimum wage
Wages must increase in the construction sector
Competitive wages
Increase wage subsidy programs
Workplace Training
Increasing workplace training and education
Increasing support and incentives (for employers and employees) for workplace training
Developing opportunities for literacy and essential skills development in connection with workplace training
Increasing employer responsibility to workplace training
Skills enhancement and increasing workplace essential skills to meet the needs of the local labour markets
Skills development for part-year workers
Economic Development/Local Strategies
Ensuring that the Province remains competitive in order to attract the skill sets that are needed for overall growth of the economy and society
Identify best practices for labour issues on local/regional basis

Increased knowledge on local/regional projects/employment opportunities
Addressing rural employment issues
Encouraging private investment and export
Integrating social and economic development
Improve opportunities for business to secure contracts from inter-provincial employers to carry out work here
Lower Churchill - other economic engines
Support for smaller growing rural based industries
Literacy and Essential Skills
Increasing opportunities for literacy training and essential skills
Increase literacy and education levels, especially among youth
Increasing supports for career planning and development
Increased career development support in the K-12 system
Identify exemplary career development programs that exist in high schools and expand those programs to reach a greater number of our students throughout NL
Development of transitional partnerships between the K-12 system and post-secondary educational and employment opportunities
Mandating that co-operative education programs be available to all high school students throughout Newfoundland and Labrador
Workplace Quality
Increasing quality of workplaces
Balance in work and family
Increase accessibility of workplaces
More accommodating workplaces with respect to families, flexible working schedules, etc.
Strategies to increase employees overall mental health
More flexible work hours
Re-thinking how and to whom work is assigned (i.e., do we need more nurses, or more nurses doing “professional work” and more nursing assistants in support roles?)
Development of work environments where individuals are valued, trusted and respected
Addressing Barriers for Persons with Disabilities
Increase awareness of systemic barriers people with disabilities face
Addressing labour market barriers for persons with disabilities

Supported employment of persons with disabilities
People with disabilities should receive more opportunities
Employ more persons with disabilities
Become further informed regarding the successes of individuals with developmental disabilities working with supported employment
Promote hiring individuals with disabilities
Provide substantial resource funding to community-based supported employments corporations
More involvement from private business
Employment Insurance Program
Employment Insurance program (minimizing dependency and increasing flexibility)
Changes to EI system to allow more training opportunities for youth
EI reforms to support retraining and upgrading
Change the present culture of a right to EI or income support
EI changes for increased productivity
Attitudes
Be positive vs. negative
Fostering the ability to think creatively beyond current trends and strategies
Be proactive not reactive
Focus on the attainment of individual and organizational goals
Create opportunities to collectively find solutions, not simply identify problems
Much is happening nationally to address skills issues, need to tap into that expertise and not reinvent the wheel
Personal Income Taxes
Reducing personal income taxes
Prior Learning and Assessment
More recognition of prior learning as it relates to qualifications of experienced workers
Implementing strategies for prior learning and assessment
Immigration
Immigration policy needs to be improved

Increasing efforts to attract skilled immigrants
Becoming a desirable destination for immigrant skilled workers and entrepreneurs.
Attracting and retaining immigrants in Newfoundland and Labrador
Promote cultural diversity and sensitivity training

