

**B.C. MINERS AND EDUCATORS  
A JOINT VENTURE**

**SUMMARY NOTES FROM BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

# TOPIC 1

## HOW CAN WE INCREASE STUDENT INTEREST IN MINING AT ALL LEVELS: ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY?

### Overall Comments

- Lacking proximity to industry
- Lacking work experience placement opportunities
- Educate the educators
- Make career awareness more of a priority in education
- Volatile employment prospects not seen as positive
- Access parents already involved in mining Industry needs to drive the machine
- Provincial mining week needs to be linked with education
- Bursaries for mining linked to career pathways
- Mineral Resource Education program needs to be communicated
- Promote new Science 11 & 12 courses
- Develop Mining Discovery Centres
- Emphasize “laddering” opportunities

### Sector Comments

#### **Secondary**

- Need opportunities that provide “hands on “learning
- Multiple employment pathways not reinforced
- General public perception of industry
- Provide more presentation on Pro D days
- Industry extend invitations to educators to attend their workshops
- Create Social Studies projects
- Create more formal liaison between mines and schools
- Utilize youth speaking to youth
- Industry educator exchanges
- Industry provide guest speakers
- Secondary school Work Experience issues require clarification

#### **Post Secondary**

- Need “true” work experience other than Co op

## **Industry**

- Attend Career Fairs
- Provide for on-site field trips
- Communicate with youth through multiple methods i.e. internet , Facebook
- Need to extend a “clean” image
- Expand Round Up to general public
- Employers and employees need to “sell” the mining industry
- Advertise to the schools
- Sell the “portability and progression” of a mining career
- Industry needs to provide awareness for Career Coordinators
- Develop “female” focus

## **What is the catalyst to change? What is the resistance to change?**

- Create more job shadowing opportunities
- Change perception that “Blue Collar” jobs are dead-end
- Need to build on career pathways for progression
- Develop distance learning opportunities
- Develop a mining certificate program
- Develop an “Education Map” – outlining skills required + compensation
- Develop mining specific courses
- Publicize Resources to educators

## TOPIC 2

# WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO UNDER-REPRESENTED SECTORS (FIRST NATIONS, WOMEN, AND IMMIGRANTS) AND HOW CAN INDUSTRY AND EDUCATORS WORK TO OVERCOME THEM?

### First Nations

#### **Barriers to Employment**

- Culture Clash
- Time/Re-numeration for Skill Upgrade
- Gap between education and industry
- Inventory of Programs Gov and industry - knowledge of supportive programs
- Lack of standardization in requirements for jobs
- Literacy
- Resources within community
- Capacity in the community – responding to the up and down in mining
- Communication of Access to employment
- Lack of scope – offering positions outside of apprenticeships
- Transportation – especially in remote FN communities
- Increasingly technical environment of mining – technology literacy
- Access to Training – Upgrading
- Racism – Policy
- Programs Funding – creation of programs which is later pulled – discrepancies in funding
- Driver's License
- Forestry –Mining – no credentials – grandfathered in the industry – skill no 'paper or ticket'
- Attrition in Education
- Education Culture – requires individuals to move away from community
- Age/Education – Grade 10, age18 to work in a mine
- Entry requirements, are they too steep? (common)
- Make opportunities to gain experience in mining prior to permanent employment offer (common)
- Cultural issue when individual who has new job returns to First Nations community and treated as outcast
- Is there reluctance for some aboriginals to leave their community?

## **Programs/Solutions/Ideas to address these barriers**

- Standardization of Credentials and Skills recognition
- Book Distribution in communities (DeBeers program) - increase in literacy
- PAL – community libraries out of VANOC trailers
- Integration of Numeracy and Literacy training into Technical training – making these skills relevant to employment (TRU)
- Certification in Community – model from Vancouver Island College – where their training module is taken into the FN Community
- Increasing the number of, and funding for, apprenticeships
- Collaboration with FN communities, employers and educators is key
- Distance Education Blended models – some online, some in-person training
- More integration
- ‘Best Driver’s Programs’ – ICBC – NWCR
- Learning Assessment – determine skill/knowledge gaps for tailored planning
- Age/Education formula – for example - over 20 but with grade nine – so not to dissuade individuals from completing education but to create a balance so workers are able to participate
- Tiered System – early pathways to trades – European education system
- Need to give lots of individualized encouragement – personalize it.
- Need to overcome fear of something new. Ease into it.
- Education, basic skills, system needs overhaul
- Ensure we get adequate input from aboriginal communities into what they want and what works for them
- Need to build trust and relationships in order to move forward (common)

## **Women**

### **Barriers to Employment**

- Flexibility for work schedule
- Male Dominant – Work Culture – homogeneous culture
- Social Recreational Opportunities – Camp
- Knowledge of Industry
- Potential Bias in Selection processes
- Childcare
- Socialization issues – attraction of women to the industry from a younger age (Tonka truck)
- Harassment Culture
- Awareness of Jobs/ Variety of jobs in the industry
- Traditional/Cultural barriers of women don’t work underground or in trades – need to overcome
- Need to get through to site HR and hiring manager who may not see importance of getting women and under-represented groups into the workplace (common)
- Government problem: “A program for women” or a “program for aboriginals” need to fund individuals – can’t fill a class of 16 with all women or all aboriginal.

### **Programs/Solutions/Ideas to address these barriers**

- Strong Policies and Application of policies with regards to Discrimination and Harassment
- Organizations setting recruitment goals for diversity – targets
- Daycare on site – or other safe alternative
- Foundation Program – TRU
- Scholarships/Debt Payments – geared at Women
- Networking Groups – Women in Trades, Women in Mining, Women in Engineering
- Career Events – for example, Women in Trades Career Fair
- Need to be able to market effectively to the mine supervisor as to why we should hire a certain under-represented individual (common)
- Avoid labeling in programming as it creates other issues – want to assimilate, not segregate (common)

### **Immigrants**

#### **Barriers to Employment**

- Qualifications for Employment
- Access to Skills Upgrading
- Stress of Transition - Work-Life Balance Issues
- Responsibility challenges – individual and employer and educator responsibilities to barrier removal
- Workplace Culture
- Language – pertaining to Career Advancement
- Credential Recognition
- Time Investment for Skill Upgrade (example - outside of work hours – ESL classes)
- Variety of Work Environments in mining – have different barriers – remote nature of work, corporate business culture vs. operations
- Knowledge of supportive programs (government, Industry programs)
- Stigma in asking for help – cultural differences
- Most immigrants relocate to big urban centers but mining is often in rural areas – may not know about mining. How do we connect better?
- Limited cultural support when living in non-urban areas.

#### **Programs/Solutions/Ideas to removing barriers**

- Host Program
- Language/ESL training
- Foundation Apprenticeship
- Employee Assistant Programs – accessibility/confidentiality of these programs
- Consider hiring cohorts/in groups to help provide own support, not isolated
- Tap into ethnic support organizations

- Is there opportunity to work with immigration Canada – as in early days when entire communities were born (i.e. Success)
- Look at what other industries are doing such as South African doctors

### **General Comments**

- Solutions need to be flexible – this is not a one size fits all
- Collaboration is key – with relevant stakeholders
- Dialogue

## TOPIC 3

# HOW CAN WE BUILD SUSTAINABLE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND EDUCATORS AND AMONG EDUCATORS THEMSELVES?

### Overall Comments

- Consistent messages to parents, students, career counsellors, instructors/faculty
- Build greater awareness of the industry and career opportunities
- Develop career pathways and mapping
- Coordinated and collaborative efforts will give all parties a stronger voice to lobby government for funding and policy change
- Need a “Mining Network” to create a united consistent voice
- We should think about a seamless transition in education (K-12, post-secondary) and between education/training and employment
- There needs to be a deeper understanding of the drivers and constraints for educators and employers
- The need for action is essential and immediate
- One-off efforts will not be effective; there must be on-going partnerships that are action-oriented
- Program advisory committees within institutions vary in their effectiveness. There is an opportunity to expand the role of PAC members in terms of mentorship and inter-generational knowledge transfer
- Co op opportunities are a key component of the industry-education partnership
- There is a need to have Champions within K-12, post-secondary and industry to ensure success
- Need to find ways to help training and education to be more nimble and flexible, especially in light of the highly cyclical nature of the mining sector

### Recommendations

- Create a Mining Network that will focus on building the sustainable relationships between industry and education and among education/training organizations themselves.
- Use the MABC HR committee as a “node” to interact with industry stakeholders.
- Education/training organizations will need to organize an equivalent network with which to engage with this industry committee