

8th Annual
List

THE BC LABOUR MARKET
REPORT PRESENTS

Labour Market Year-in-Review 2010



Top 10 Reports and Research from 2010



1. A Guide to the B.C. Economy and Labour Market 2010
http://www.guidetobceconomy.org/Library/GTBCE_2010.pdf

This document is a valuable resource to learn about current trends, as well as the future outlook for the provincial economy and BC's labour market.

It examines how industries have changed over time and what is expected in the future. Readers are able to find information about trends in the workforce, industries, occupations, earnings, job locations and job outlooks.

2. BC Check-Up 2010: Provincial Edition
http://www.bccheckup.com/pdfs/bccheckup_2010_provincial.pdf

On an annual basis, the BC Chartered Accountants produce this unbiased report to provide independent, fair, and objective information to assist in decision-making. According to the association, organizers produce the BC Check-Up to make a positive public policy contribution to the province by stimulating debate and discussion about how to make BC a better place in which to live, work, and invest.

3. B.C. Economic Forecast 2010 - 2013
http://www.central1.com/publications/economics/pdf/ea/ea%202010_04.pdf

For over three decades, Central 1's Economic Analysis of British Columbia has been a highly respected source of information providing authoritative, non-politically biased economic analyses and insights on a wide variety of international, national and local issues affecting the provincial economy. The Economic Analysis of British Columbia is widely read by members of parliament, members of the legislative assembly, business people, and the media.

**2010: The Labour
Market Year-in-Review
Workshop**

7 separate one-day workshops
hosted around the Province.

February 2011

This is an essential review of last year's labour market information, for anyone working in the career development sector. All of the information in this list will be profiled, looking specifically at how to use it to assist job seekers and students.

- Surrey — Feb.4, 2011
- Kamloops — Feb. 10, 2011
- Prince George—Feb. 16 / 11
- Kelowna — Feb. 17, 2011
- Nanaimo — Feb. 24, 2011
- Victoria — Feb. 25, 2011
- Vancouver—Feb. 28, 2011

E-mail bclmr@telus.net or
Tel: 604-288-2424 for
complete details.

**This email has a PDF
attachment with more
details.**

4. Construction Looking Forward, 2010-2018

<http://www.csc-ca.org/pdf/CSC-LookingForward10Highlights-BC-EN.pdf>

British Columbia's construction markets are emerging from an abrupt and steep downturn that began in 2008 and rapidly gained momentum in 2009. Government stimulus programs targeting renovations helped to offset the sudden decline in new residential construction. Only 30 percent of expected infrastructure programs were estimated to have started in 2009, while industrial, commercial and utility construction all fell, carrying non-residential employment lower.

The Construction Sector Council (CSC) uses a scenario-based forecasting model to assess future labour market conditions. It consults with industry, including labour groups, contractors and owners, to validate the scenario assumptions and seeks input from governments on related analysis and construction project lists. This approach offers efficient access to project information and detailed first-hand assessments of labour supply and demand for individual construction trades and occupations. This scenario can be described in two periods: The Current Cycle (2008–2011) and Limited Expansion (2012–2018).

5. Demographic Profile of Tourism Sector Employees

http://cthrc.ca/~media/Files/CTHRC/Home/research_publications/labour_market_information/ttse/DemoPro_Full_Report_EN.ashx

The Demographic Profile of Tourism Employees report is developed every five years as new customized Census data is made available. It provides employment statistics for each of the industry groups included in the tourism sector, as well as demographic profiles of the tourism labour force by geography and industry group, for selected occupations.

To view the BC summary, click on this link: http://cthrc.ca/~media/Files/CTHRC/Home/research_publications/labour_market_information/ttse/Demopro_prov_BC.ashx

6. Immigrants Working in Regulated Occupations

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/2010102/pdf/11121-eng.pdf>

This study found that, in 2006, immigrants who studied for a regulated occupation outside Canada were less likely to be working in that occupation compared to both immigrants who studied in Canada and those who were born in Canada.

In 2006, there were 284,000 employed foreign-educated immigrants from fields of study that would normally lead to work in a regulated occupation. Of this number, 24% were working in their trained professions. In contrast, 163,000 Canadian-educated immigrants studied for work in a regulated occupation, with a match rate of 53%. The match rate among the Canadian-born was 62%.

While foreign-educated immigrants were less likely to work in the regulated occupations for which they held degrees, this discrepancy narrowed with time spent in Canada. However, even after 10 years in Canada, foreign-trained immigrants trailed the match rate of the Canadian-born by 27 percentage points, while Canadian-educated immigrants trailed by 6 percentage points.



7. Science Related Occupations

http://workbc.ca/docs/BC_Science_Related_Occupations.pdf

Science Related Occupations provides a detailed analysis of scientific careers as an area of tremendous growth in our labour market. In this study, technical and skilled health occupations (e.g., medical technologists, lab technicians, opticians and midwives) are also considered to be science-related since they require some scientific training and use scientific tools and equipment on the job. However, assisting occupations (e.g., dental assistants or nursing aides) were excluded since they do not typically require the use of scientific knowledge, tools or equipment on the job.

8. Small Business Profile - 2010

<http://www.resourcecentre.gov.bc.ca/pdf/SmallBusProfileEngWeb.pdf>

Small businesses are vital to the economy of British Columbia. Small Business Profile 2010 emphasizes the important role of small and medium -sized businesses in British Columbia's economy. The report examines new trends and key statistics in British Columbia's small business sector including: growth, employment, gross domestic product, women entrepreneurs, exports and regional distribution.

9. TechTalentBC 2010

http://www.bctia.org/files/PDF/2010_TechTalentBC_Labour_Study.pdf

Following a tough economic year where flat was often referred to as the new growth, British Columbia technology companies tend to be optimistic about their prospects for 2010 and beyond, signalling an economic recovery and including the prospects of returning to a labour shortage by 2011.

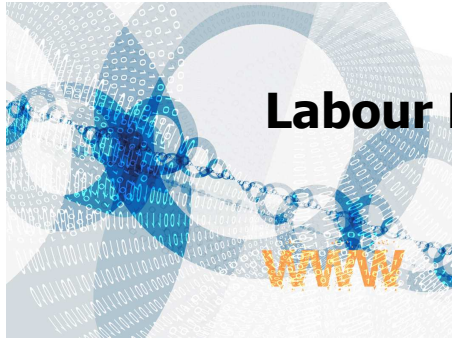
The conclusions in the report highlight a number of the findings of the third wave of the BCTIA's TechTalentBC Labour Demand Study. The study is a follow-up to two previous waves released in 2007 and 2008. These waves forecasted significant growth in headcount for the BC technology industry in the face of a labour shortage as the industry achieved peak employment in 2008.

10. Trade Occupations Outlook to 2019

http://workbc.ca/docs/BC_tradesoccupationoutlook_2009-2019.pdf

The BC Trade Occupations Outlook report provides an outlook for trade occupations for the province as a whole, as well as for its seven development regions for the period 2009-2019. The analysis is based on a representative list of 15 trade occupations covering 82 separate trades and over 85 percent of active B.C. apprentices as of June 30, 2010. Selected occupations are concentrated in two NOC skill types: Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations (NOC7), and Sales and Service Occupations (NOC6). The occupational forecast included in this report comes from the B.C. Labour Market Outlook: 2009-2019 report, which was produced from B.C.'s new Labour Market Scenario Model.





Top 10 Labour Market Websites from 2010



1. BC Labour Market Outlook 2009-2019

<http://www.workbc.ca/docs/BCLMOutlook.pdf>

This is a website / document developed in 2010 that provides an exceptionally clear understanding of the employment projections for a large number of occupations in BC. What makes this is a great resource is that it looks out over ten years, it provides information for BC as well as a number of large regions and it examines how much of the job creation will be as a result of economic growth and how much will be as a result of retirements. Among its short comings, the regions it examines are larger than the ones reflected in the Regional Employment Projections and it reviews a smaller group of occupations (only looking at the first three digits of the NOC code).

2. BC Regional Employment Projections

<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/repm.asp>

The Regional Employment Projections make the perfect companion to the BC Labour Market Outlook. They examine smaller regions, looking specifically at College Regions; dividing Metro Vancouver into two regions and Vancouver Island into three regions. It also examines hundreds of occupations for each of these regions, breaking down occupations to the full four digit NOC code. The shortcomings of these documents are that they only look at the period of 2009 to 2014 and while they provide excellent information about potential growth, it is only limited to economic growth and doesn't examine the impact of pending retirements, as the Outlook does.

3. BC Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.bcchamber.org/>

While the BC Chamber of Commerce does some excellent research that reflects the labour market perspectives of business owners, I find this website is most valuable as a tool for job seekers and students to connect with potential employers. On this website, the links to more than 100 chambers of commerce and boards of trade are listed and individuals can utilize these websites to produce lists of potential employers. I also think that Chamber of Commerce membership is a strong commitment to community and demonstrates a willingness to meet with people directly; as job seekers would certainly benefit from.

4. BC Wage and Salary Survey

<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/lss/labour/wage/>

One of the most frequently requested tools among career practitioners is a competent salary indicator. This website not only allows users to view salaries for a large group of occupations, but also breaks those salaries

down by region, what the probable entry salary would be and how much a person can earn after they've become quite skilled in the position.

5. BC Work Futures

<http://www.workfutures.bc.ca>

For as much as people criticize it, Work Futures remains one of the most commonly used career development sites in British Columbia. While I do agree with many of the common complaints, that it is too general and the information on salaries and employment projections are dated, I find this is an excellent tool for determining the male/female split, the prevalence of part-time employment and simply to better understand the day-to-day realities of the work. I also think this is the first stop for a person to develop their own resume. People are often too close to their own occupations to fully evaluate the skills they would need to reflect in their own resume. The primary problem with Work Futures is not that the information is of poor quality but that people don't utilize any other resources to compliment it.

6. Education Planner

<http://www.educationplanner.ca/>

My greatest concern with Education Planner is that it only reflects public education. I don't think anyone should consider an educational program without looking at ALL of the available education and a stop at Education Planner is a necessary first step. Its 'Career Developer' function is quite strong but its real strength is the ability to evaluate educational programs by field of study, subject area, region, institution, length of program, type of credential, university transfer, co-op / work experience, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and upgrading. Evaluating private schools against public schools requires a lot of leg-work among prospective students, but the value of this website in comparing and contrasting is unparalleled.

7. Guide to the BC Economy and Labour Market

<http://www.guidetobceconomy.org/>

Understanding the factors faced by job seekers is as much an issue of understanding occupations as it is understanding the economic sectors these occupations are aligned with. It is valuable to understand the occupations of Licensed Practical Nurse, Registered Nurse and Nurse Practitioner, but without a strong understanding of the challenges faced in the health care sector, how can you appreciate how these occupations will be impacted? Specifically, this website looks at the BC Economy (including an introduction, definitions and regional characteristics), major industries and the new economy.

8. Sector Councils, Alliance of

<http://www.councils.org/en/>

Sector Councils are among the most valuable, yet overlooked resources available in the career development sector. They are organizations specifically charged with developing a labour market strategy for their sector and they look specifically at industries essential to British Columbia such as forestry, mining, tourism, construction, trucking and information technology. And while they adopt a national perspective, they have a strong track-record of providing extremely specific and relevant information that relates to British Columbia.

9. Service Canada — 'Build Your Occupation Profile'

<http://www.labourmarketinformation.ca>

While we don't hear Service Canada talked about much these days, their

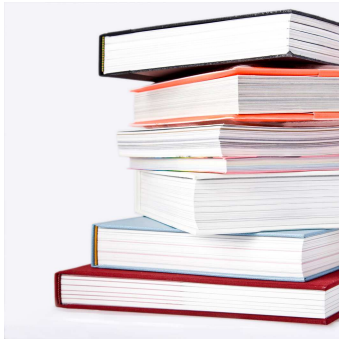


'Build Your Occupational Profile' website is a fantastic tool for looking at the details of specific occupations. It does an excellent job of looking at Essential Skills, but also addresses issues like salary, responsibilities and educational providers. It also allows you to search information specific to British Columbia as well as a number of the Province's local regions.

10. Small Business BC

<http://www.smallbusinessbc.ca/>

We're currently moving towards a generational skills shortage and self-employment will be the economic reality for many occupations that today are typically salaried positions. Small Business BC is without exception an authoritative resource in researching, marketing, financing and planning a new business, that may simply be a consultancy.



Top 10 Career Development Books from 2010

1. 2010 BC Job Search Guide

Orders: email bclmr@telus.net or tel: 604-288-2424

Summary: The first book in our list is a brilliant work that takes an informative and inspiring look at BC's own labour market; I know this because, I wrote it. In compiling the 2010 edition of the BC Job Search Guide, I wanted to provide readers with a comprehensive look at job search and career exploration in this Province, but still take into consideration new realities in job search and technology; the continued economic downturn; and a labour market that will be shifting greatly as baby-boomers begin to retire. In addition to thousands of relevant links and resources, readers can access information about methods for online job search that are local; opportunities for career exploration; methods to make effective educational choices; links to local employers and associations; opportunities for networking; employment supports offered during the economic downturn; and our extremely successful 10-step job search formula that can provide even the most disheartened job seeker new vision and purpose.

2. 250 Questions Every Self-Employed Person Should Ask

Amazon Link: <http://alturl.com/fek7y>

Summary: The first key to self employment is not having a good business plan or even a good business idea, it's knowing yourself and knowing what you're getting into. Each year, millions of people choose the path of self-employment—whether as freelancers, consultants, or microbusiness owners. And every year, they encounter pitfalls and detours along the way. When they have questions, where can they turn? This book answers 250 of the most critical questions about short- and

long-term success, such as: What are the specific tax benefits of being self-employed? What kind of insurance coverage do I need for a home-based business? What's a domain name, and where can I get one? When should I hire employees? Planning is key to any self-employment arrangement. This book addresses the foundational considerations that any entrepreneur should take into consideration.

3. Coach Yourself to a New Career: 7 Steps to Reinventing Your Professional Life

Amazon Link: <http://alturl.com/ncc44>

Summary: Readers need not fear taking the leap into a new career with this seven step program from best selling author and life coach Talane Miedaner. Whatever the situation or economic environment, Coach Yourself to a New Career gives readers the tools to take matters into their own hands by assessing their needs and strengths, finding the right work fit, weighing options and possible sacrifices, and preparing their family for transitions. Packed with expert advice and helpful examples from her many statistical clients—as well as her own career change process—Miedaner shows how anyone can reinvent their professional life.

4. Effectively Immediately

Amazon Link: <http://alturl.com/mhtpr>

Summary: If you're a recent graduate or new hire, Effective Immediately shows you how to excel at your first job and jump-start your career. As an up-and-coming professional, you'll learn how to transform yourself from entry-level employee into skilled, invaluable all-star during your first year on the job. -- Accomplished young professional Emily Bennington and her mentor, seasoned manager Skip Lineberg, empower readers to: 1. Establish yourself as a top performer from day one; 2. Use every task—even grunt work—as an opportunity to shine; 3. Earn the respect of your boss, colleagues, and clients; 4. Cope with conflict, mistakes, and toxic coworkers; 5. Land key assignments and gain greater responsibility; 6. Manage projects and lead teams like a pro. -- Packed with practical advice, useful resources, and wisdom from former newbies, this savvy hand-book gives readers the tools, knowledge, and confidence they need to reach their highest potential.

5. From My Perspective: A Guide to Career/Employment Centre Management

Link: <http://alturl.com/kufh9>

Summary: Just in time for the holiday season, as well as a massive retendering of Provincial contracts, From My Perspective touches upon fundamental issues such as staffing, financing, programming, profile establishment and maintenance, as well as essential ingredients for success such as effective networking, relationship management, marketing, time management, visioning, strategic planning and evaluation.

6. Get a Life, Not a Job: Do What You Love and Let Your Talents Work For You

Amazon Link: <http://alturl.com/r34gf>

Summary: A psychologist, career coach, and Rutgers University professor of Human Resource Management, Caligiuri uses her significant practical wisdom to turn the pie-in-the-sky notion of "doing what you love" into an achievable lifestyle. Caligiuri makes a convincing



case that, as employers no longer show any long-term loyalty to their employees, it's up to workers to take control of their own destiny. Thus she provides a progressive plan of attack focusing on empowerment and fulfillment. Chapters range from "Discover What Really Motivates You" to "Integrate Your Career with Your Life Priorities", with helpful questionnaires, exercises, and case studies of people whose multiple career "acts" have given them happiness as well as financial freedom (such as a nurse of 30 years who turned her love of sewing into a paying side business, or Caligiuri herself, whose career has included four acts). Though "do what you love" may seem like a luxurious conceit in a time of economic recession, Caligiuri provides a cumulative, practical plan for leveraging skills, talents, and interests to add income and value to life.



7. **Green Careers: You Can Make Money AND Save the Planet**

Amazon Link: <http://alturl.com/p9znr>

Summary: Green Careers is a compilation of biographical sketches of thirty young eco-entrepreneurs who, through their careers, have made the green revolution work for them. The author makes the point that not all of them are environmental activists, and that "the green job market has room for everyone." This is an important message for a young person who may have an interest but not yet a passion for an environmentally focused job.

8. **Inspire Your Career: Strategies for Success in Your First Years at Work**

Amazon Link: <http://alturl.com/p54fj>

Summary: This down-to-earth, insightful book will provide readers with: 1. Advice on a wide range of topics, such as, how to find mentors, how to build a network and how to deal with conflict; 2. Opportunities to self reflect and learn more about themselves; 3. Practical examples and illustrative stories throughout the book; and 4. A summary of helpful tips at the end of each chapter. Inspire Your Career will empower and inspire readers to discover their greatest potential at work.

9. **The Decade After High School: A Professional's Guide**

Link: <http://alturl.com/3buu4>

Summary: The transition from high school into educational and occupational pathways is a bewildering process for many young people and their parents. From the time they start kindergarten to the day they graduate from high school, most youth travel down a relatively straightforward path. They proceed systematically from one grade to another. Everyone their age is doing pretty much what they are doing school-wise, and career decisions are something for the distant future. -- The intent of this guide is to help young people and those who guide them, whether parents or career professionals, to understand the challenges facing high school graduates and the multiplicity of possible pathways they may follow when continuing their education and finding employment. -- In the discussions of the research findings, direct voice is given, as much as possible, to the experiences of the participants. To that end, the guide frequently quotes participants. As well, it shares information from other sources which helps to bring some insight into the experiences participants have shared with the authors.

10. Working for You Isn't Working for Me: The Ultimate Guide to Managing Your Boss

Amazon Link: <http://alturl.com/p5s78>

Summary: In their bestseller *Working with You Is Killing Me*, Katherine Crowley and Kathi Elster taught readers how to free themselves from emotional traps created by difficult colleagues. Now they apply their research and insights to the challenges of "toxic bosses." Sooner or later, we all work for someone we can't stand. When that happens, some people quit, some suffer in silence, and others cope by sulking, obsessing, avoiding, or retaliating. But it's better to take control by applying the four-step process in this book: 1. Detect: Am I crazy or is my boss driving me crazy?; 2. Detach: Accept that you can't change your boss, but you can take back your power. 3. Depersonalize: Learn to take your supervisor's behavior less personally; and 4. Deal: Devise a plan to get what you need, manage your boss, and move your career forward. -- Filled with concrete examples, this book will help readers take back their power from even the most challenging bad bosses, chronic critics, yellers, unconscious discriminators, control freaks, pathological liars, and more.



Top 10 BC Companies that are Hiring from 2010

	Growth 2007-2010	Current Workforce	Employees Hired Since 2007
1. New Gold Inc. 3110-666 Burrard St., Vancouver, BC V6C 2X8 Tel: 604-696-4100 Careers Website: http://www.newgold.com/Careers/default.asp	2909% Growth	1,053 Employees	1,018 New Employees
2. Great Basin Gold Ltd. 1108- 1030 West Georgia St., Vancouver, V6E 2Y3 Tel: 604-633-9113 Careers Website: http://www.greatbasingold.com/index.html?lf=1;pg=130	1096% Growth	2,799 Employees	2,565 New Employees
3. G.L.G. Life Tech Corp. Suite 519 World Trade Centre, 999 Canada Place, Vancouver, BC V6C 3E1 Tel: 604-641-1368 Website: http://www.glglifetech.com/Contact_Us/	497% Growth	1,296 Employees	1,079 New Employees
4. Aura Minerals Inc. PO Box 10434 - Pacific Centre, Suite 1950 - 777 Dunsmuir St., Vancouver, BC V7Y 1K4 Tel: 604-669-4777 Careers Website: http://www.auraminerals.com/Careers/default.aspx	724% Growth	1,162 Employees	1,021 New Employees
5. Absolute Software Corp. 1600-1055 Dunsmuir St., Vancouver, BC V7X 1K8 Tel: 604-730-9851	111% Growth	356 Employees	187 New Employees

Careers Website: <http://www.absolute.com/en/company/careers.aspx>

- 6. Western Coal Corp.** **95% Growth** **1156 Employees** **563 New Employees**
1000 - 885 Dunsmuir St., Vancouver, BC V6C 1N5
Tel: 604-608-2692
Careers Website: <http://www.westerncoal.com/careers/>
- 7. Eldorado Gold Corp.** **90% Growth** **2,636 Employees** **1,248 New Employees**
1188 - 550 Burrard St., Bentall 5, Vancouver, BC V6C 2B5
Tel: 604-687-4018
Careers Website: <http://www.eldoradogold.com/s/Careers.asp>
- 8. Fortress Paper Ltd.** **69% Growth** **627 Employees** **257 New Employees**
2nd Floor, 157 Chadwick Court, North Vancouver, BC V7M 3K2
Tel: 604-904-2328
Website: <http://www.fortresspaper.com/>
- 9. Sterling Shoes** **24% Growth** **1,301 Employees** **251 New Employees**
2580 Viscount Way, Richmond, BC V6V 1N1
Tel: 604-270 6114
Careers Website: <http://www.sterlingshoes.com/careers/default.html>
- 10. Lululemon Athletica** **16% Growth** **3,121 Employees** **438 New Employees**
105 - 5560 Trapp Ave., Burnaby, BC V3N 5G4
Tel: 604-215-9300
Careers Website: <http://www.lululemon.com/about/careers>



Top 10 Labour Market Stories from 2010



1. Hosting the 2010 Winter Olympics

In choosing the most significant labour market event of 2010, there were a number of contenders but I felt the hosting of the 2010 Olympics was clearly the favourite as it will continue to impact our labour market for years, and possibly decades to come. I'm sure I'm writing this to the chagrin of many readers in the Interior or on the Island who are still asking what the big deal is.

The impacts of the 2010 Olympics will shape British Columbia's international reputation forever. We aren't capable of examining the complete impacts of Expo 86, but I'm sure 25 years later most would agree that it was a watershed event that established the British Columbia as a world-class tourist destination, significantly grew our population and built international relationships with many emerging Asian economies.

We are already seeing the economic impacts of the 2010 Olympics. For the fifth month in a row, international visits to B.C. are up; with visitors from the U.S. climbing 6.1%; U.K. visitors climbing 3.8%; and visitors

from Australia climbing 3.8%. Early in 2011, the approved destination status being issued by the Chinese government is expected to be finalized and this will be an essential ingredient in diversifying not only BC's tourism sector but all business areas.

In the decade to come, the real benefit of the Olympics will be BC's ability to diversify its economy. Few people truly appreciate how reliant Canada and BC are on US consumers. This reality has changed slightly in the past 20 years, but what British Columbia most needed was a major catalyst for change. The financial troubles that are plaguing the United States will not go away quickly and BC needs to refocus on the expanding economies of the Pacific Rim.

Ten months later, few would disagree that the 2010 Olympics was one of the most successful Olympics ever and that it was received extremely positively on an international basis. It left us with three essential pieces of infrastructure including: the Sea-to-Sky Highway, connecting Vancouver with the province's most important tourist destination (Whistler); the Canada-Line, connecting Vancouver with North America's second busiest airport on the west coast (YVR); and the new Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre, a building specifically designed to host international events. This good will, the relationships forged by the business community behind the scenes and these pieces of infrastructure are exactly the elements we will need to prepare for a globally changing economy.

This past fall, PriceWaterhouseCoopers produced a report examining the economic impact of the 2010 Olympics. To view this report, click on this link: <http://www.fin.gov.bc.ca/reports/pwc-olympic-report6.pdf>. And while dry economic reports are good, if you want to get a real sense of how positive the world attention has been, may I suggest you view this segment hosted by Tom Brokaw for NBC, 'explaining Canada to Americans': <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrA4V6YF6SA>.

2. The Surprise Resignations of Gordon Campbell and Carole James

I know what you're thinking, Gordon Campbell and Carole James resigning? That will create only two jobs and poor Gordon and Carole will be busy job seeking; essentially cancelling out any new job creation. How can this be the second biggest labour market story of 2010? If there is one thing I've observed in looking at the labour market for nearly a dozen years, or following BC politics for three decades, it is that the Premier and Prime Minister have absolute power over the direction of government.

We've gotten to know Gordon Campbell over the past 17 years and we've known Carole James for more than seven, getting a strong sense of their individual goals and priorities. In six months, there will be two brand new leaders; one of whom will be the instant Premier of British Columbia. Two years later, the new New Democrat leader (*say that five times fast*) may be new, new Premier.

What are the goals and priorities of these individuals? Do they want to concentrate on education, health care, economic development, infrastructure construction, or social welfare? The Government of British Columbia touches our labour market lives more than any other institution. Just some of the ministries that regularly shape BC's labour market include: the Ministries of Social Development, Regional Economic and Skills Development; Tourism, Trade and Investment; Labour; Science and Universities; and Transportation and Infrastructure. The Province is



also a major employer, directly funding and/or administering eleven crown corporations and six agencies. They also fund all of BC's school districts; public colleges and universities; and hospitals.

Establishing a new leader for both parties will shape our labour market in ways we couldn't possibly imagine. It's an exciting time of change but I would also suggest that it's a mystery at this juncture as to what any new leader would make his or her priority.

3. The Employment Program of British Columbia is Born; Conceptually at Least

A year ago, the date March 2012 meant nothing to us. Today, it is the most talked about date in the career development sector. While it had been discussed for more than three years, in 2010 we finally got a look at the Employment Program of British Columbia; the new employment program being developed through Employment and Labour Market Services' (ELMS) Business Transformation process.

While the Business Transformation process appeared to move slowly in 2009, in 2010 it became difficult to keep track of all of the changes. In the spring we were treated to a framework for a cross-province collection of Employment Service Centres. In the Summer, ELMS conducted a traveling tour to illuminate and enlighten interested parties and in the fall we were given a Draft Copy of the Request for Proposals with the actual RFP expected to be released in spring of 2011.

Over the past year, I've had hundreds of conversations with individuals concerned about the future. This was particularly punctuated with the announced closure of numerous programs last month. My feeling is that this is an exciting time for individual career practitioners. The contract tendering process will no doubt be stressful for contractors and ELMS, but it shouldn't necessarily be so for individuals working directly with clients. Regardless of how the contracts are tendered, there will be a strong demand for skilled practitioners who are committed to their work and their profession. In your place, in the next year, I would work to build my competencies, complete certification and expand my repertoire of career development skills. If you're working in case management; perhaps there are opportunities to build your skills in workshop facilitation. If you're working in marketing; perhaps you can build your skills in understanding case management. For the frontline career practitioner, there is little you can do to control the future. Much like your clientele, the only real thing you can have meaningful impact over is yourself. Make the most of it!

4. Record exports to China in 2010

If you're been to your local WalMart or Superstore, I'm sure you have no doubt that we purchase a great deal of goods from China, but most would be surprised that export nearly \$2.6 billion worth of goods to the mega-nation. In the last year, while our economy has been struggling to grow faster than 2%, we've seen our exports to China grow by 12.9%. This is just a slice of the 251% our exports have grown in the past decade.

As we look at the actual products we're exporting to China, pulp and paper products are leading the way at \$893 million, followed by energy, solid wood products, agricultural products, machinery and equipment, and fish products. While the common thread running through all of these products is their reliance on natural resources, the list itself is a clear



indication that British Columbia's manufacturing sector is significantly supported by China's growing demand for goods.

5. Education Quality Assurance Brand Launched

There are more than two dozen schools in British Columbia offering a licenced practical nurse training program – which is the best? It's a tough question, of course, but at this point there hasn't even been a system to compare them. This year the BC Council for International Education, an independent society supported by the Province of BC, established the Education Quality Assurance (EQA) designation. The purpose behind the designation is to ensure that education in British Columbia meets certain standards and students who attend one institution can expect similar standards at another.

While the purpose of the designation is to assure international students that BC is a great place to go to school, my expectation is that it will be used for other purposes as well. I feel the government will eventually use it to determine which schools are eligible for student loans and could eventually create a level playing field whereby private and public schools are able to compete against one another for government subsidy of essential training programs such as nursing and teaching.

BC Council for International Education: www.bccie.bc.ca

6. Site C Project Moves Forward

The impossible project seems a little more possible. For nearly two decades commentators would dismiss the possibility of moving forward with Site C, a third dam on the Peace River, as being unworkable in a world of public consultation. In W.A.C.'s day, we just built dams and didn't particularly care what environmental damage we wrought or who we displaced. Well, apparently a lust for electricity to power IPODs, IPADs and iPhones has broken through the road blocks as the government announced last spring they will move forward on construction.

When I first wrote about this, I received a number of thoughtful emails, each arguing the damage the dam will cause, how it will be displacing farm land, and why this is a bad project. Nevertheless, eight months later it appears the project is still moving forward.

When complete, Site C is expected to create enough electricity for 400,000 homes and produce relatively clean energy for more than 100 years. The whole project is also expected to create 35,000 jobs. For my part, as a labour market observer, I think construction jobs are great, but fleeting. In the long-run dams, pipelines, transmission lines and storage facilities create very few long-term jobs. Compared with mining and forestry, these jobs are just a drop in the bucket. This said, the need for clean energy will also be essential to BC's future viability.

Site C Announcement: http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010PREM0083-000436.htm

7. Record Year for Infrastructure Construction

When the economy crashed and every leader from Stephen Harper to Barack Obama was rushing out to spend money on infrastructure, I fervently pointed out that this is crazy-talk. The economy needed immediate action and infrastructure money doesn't take root for years. Well, hurray, the money is here.



In 2010, two years too late, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure announced it was the busiest construction year ever. Last year, the ministry completed 400 projects, worth an estimated \$2 billion, which employed 8,000 people. In total, more than 60 bridges were replaced or rehabilitated and over 1,500 kilometres of highway was resurfaced. (Given the economic meltdown, they were quite literally bridges over troubled waters.)

To the ministry's credit, this work needed to be done, and I'm sure the 8,000 people who found work have no objections. If it had been up to me, in the fall of 2008, I would have invested the money in post-secondary education. It would have immediately injected the funds into the economy, through colleges and universities, and we would have emerged two years later with a far more skilled labour force – *but then nobody ever asks me.*

8. Labour Market Strategy Unveiled

So, we live in a world of globalization, technology, economic turmoil and Kim Kardashian. Each year it becomes harder and harder to predict what this volatile brew will produce. If only there was some way we could look into that future. Wait – there is!

Last year, the Ministry of Regional Economic and Skills Development released, 'Skills for Growth: British Columbia's Labour Market Strategy to 2020'. While I give the report a 'one' for its uncreative title, I give it a 'ten', well maybe a 'nine' for its attempt at bringing clarity to BC's emerging labour market – *I couldn't in good conscience give a government report a 'ten'.*

The report projects a 25% increase in the provincial GDP by 2017. Going hand in hand with this growth will be annual growth of 1.8% in employment, creating 450,000 new jobs, in addition to the jobs that will open as a result of people retiring. The strength of this report clearly illustrates that there is no doubt that we will see an ever-increasing skills shortage and the greatest challenge for business, government and individuals will be ensuring people have the necessary skills to fill the gap.

9. Record Fraser River Sockeye Run

When I speak with people about BC's economy, I will stress the importance of all of our resource based sectors including: forestry, wood processing, mining, oil and gas, agriculture and.... Hmm – what am I missing? Oh yes, and fishing. This is not to diminish in any way the value and importance of our commercial fishing sector, but it's just a sad reminder that this is a sector that's been perceived to be on the ropes for nearly two decades.

Surprise, surprise, one year after a dismal Fraser River sockeye salmon run, we emerge with a record high sockeye run in 2010. According to the Pacific Salmon Commission, an estimated 34 million fish participated in the run – although this doesn't take into consideration Stats Canada abandoning the long-form census, perhaps these numbers are fishy. Maybe salmon are reporting five or six salmon in their household, when in fact there's just two and a carp.

Personally, I think a lot of fish just forgot to spawn last year and when they saw a whole bunch of fish race by on their way up the Fraser River, they said, "oh yeah, spawning – gotta get right on that." My fish expert



friends (fish-sperts, as I like to call them) tell me this is not possible, so I'm simply left with the growing belief that perhaps British Columbia can maintain a viable, and sustainable, commercial fishing sector.

10. Aboriginal Gathering Places Open in More Than a Dozen Colleges and Universities

If you have ever examined the participation rates in post-secondary education, among Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals, it's simply embarrassing. For each increase in the achieved level of education, there is a corresponding decrease in the number of Aboriginals completing the education. Formal skills training is becoming an essential element in the vast majority of occupations, and this is a gap that must be filled.

To help address this, the majority of BC's public colleges and universities, (including UBC, SFU, UVic, UNBC and UBC Okanagan), spent more than \$13 million last year to establish Aboriginal Gathering Places on each of their campuses.

The centres are intended to provide additional support and networking opportunities for Aboriginal students, while drawing on cultural elements to enhance their learning abilities. While not necessary for all Aboriginal students, the gathering places are specifically intended to provide support to students who feel isolated in this environment.

