

Panel Discussion – The Future of Labour

March 7th, 2022

Attendees:

Eric Andersen

Kirby Brown

Katrina Carroll-Foster

Ben Clark

Karen Elliott

Jessamy Freese

Kieran Hale

James Hillier

Nicola Jones-Crossley

Richard MacKellar

Abby Majendie

Nadine Manson

Cameron McClure

Sarah McJannet

Yaser Mohammadian Roshan

Kate Mulligan

Kerry Neil

Natalie Perreault

Chris Pettingill

Dennis Silvestrone (moderator)

Robert Smith

Jennifer Stone

Greg Tooke

Andreas Truckenbrodt

Halia Valladares Montemayor

Louise Walker

Christina Walsh

Patrick Weiler

Patricia Westerholm

Laura Wittenzellner

Item 1: Introduction

Kate Mulligan, Economic Development Officer for the District of Squamish provided an introduction to the topic of labour market needs, existing and emerging challenges and opportunities, and the future needs of Squamish and the SLRD. She also introduced the moderator and panel and welcomed four new Economic Leadership Team members.

Moderator: Dennis Silverstrone

Panellists:

- Kirby Brown, GM, Sea to Sky Gondola
- Ben Clark, Senior Consultant, The Delphi Group
- Jessamy Freese, Owner, Sunwolf Riverside Resort & Fergie's Café
- Nadine Manson, Founder, BewildHer Fitwear
- Natalie Perreault, Program Manager, WorkBC
- Robert Smith, Manufacturing Engineering Manager, Quantum Technology

New ELT members announced and welcomed:

- Katrina Carroll-Foster, Co-founder & Partner at Kollektively
- Kim Stegeman-Lowe, VP, People, Technology & Sustainability for Western Group and former president of Squamish Terminals
- Sarah Goodman, Founder & CEO of Chiwis
- Greg Tooke, Co-Founder, Light Trail Consulting

Item 2: Future of Labour Panel Discussion

Topic	Questions	Discussion
Local workforce growth	<p>Given Squamish’s anticipated workforce growth over the next 10 years, what actions could be taken to help align local employment opportunities with these workers?</p> <p>I know this is a bit speculative, but do you think there will be a strong alignment between new workforce entrants in Squamish and in-demand occupations? Why?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local population growth does not necessarily equal local workforce growth. • Considering the number of residents working remotely and commuting, Squamish employers may consider increasing efforts to attract and retain staff. • Stability is essential: livable wages, affordable housing, long-term opportunities. • Infrastructural improvements are necessary: adequate childcare, transit availability.
Taking a systemic approach to inclusion and diversity in the workplace	<p>Given the planned level of immigration and disproportionate effects of COVID-19 on women and minorities in the labour force, what measures could or should be taken within your business, sector, or the broader community to facilitate greater diversity and inclusion in the local workforce?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing flexible schedule options to accommodate personnel’s individual situations. • Supporting existing community members with training and support as this provides long-term loyalty and local talent pool benefits. • Businesses should consider connecting with local organizations that support disadvantaged residents finding employment (e.g. Sea to Sky Community Services, Disability Services, WorkBC). • Fostering a company-wide culture of lifelong learning can help to reintroduce workers into employment, promote upskilling and increase job satisfaction.

<p>Shaping and adapting skills and competencies for a Circular Economy (=the economy of the future)</p>	<p>In your sector or across Squamish, can you think of new business opportunities or opportunities within the supply-chain to close the loop, thus building a circular economy?</p> <p>What skills, competencies, or labour profiles would lend themselves to developing or enhancing a more circular business, or adopting sustainable practices within your sector or more broadly across the community?</p> <p>Do you feel confident that these skills will be available? What do you think the employers, your sector, the community should be doing to develop these skills and competencies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important for businesses to consider the life cycle of products. • Dedicating time and resources to finding new opportunities for more sustainable business practices is difficult for small businesses. • Resources in the shape of guides, workshops, or knowledge sharing supported by local government, volunteers, organizations should be expanded and explored. • Membership to industry associations dedicated to sustainability can be effective to meet and report sustainability goals and efforts, as well as support brand presence. • It is important to understand where the business fits in with Circular Economy and how sustainable practices can be improved. • Focus on understanding concepts like waste hierarchies to create effective change. • Upskilling for the clean and circular economies is important, but the successes of these initiatives will be limited if the community is not provided with the underlying infrastructure (transit, internet access, childcare) and wraparound supports (basic skills for employment).
<p>Automation and workforce</p>	<p>What role do you see automation and technology playing in your industry, or more generally, across sectors in Squamish and how do you see this impacting on future labor force supply and demand?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automation is helpful for more manual tasks to free up human resource capacity for more complex and fulfilling tasks. • Industries like clean technology are focused on problem-solving and don't expect a major increase in automation.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automation is increasingly being utilized in sectors experiencing labour shortages, such as hospitality. • Automation and artificial intelligence will not replace humans, rather, work will shift. • Automation will create new jobs and will require new skills. Upskilling is essential for workers to allow them to adapt to the changing environment. • Automation can assist businesses to effectively manage human resources – especially in the current climate with limited resource supply, and a relatively high cost of living.
<p>Shifting workforce expectations and talent development</p>	<p>Given the significant need for new workforce entrants, which will be primarily filled by youth and immigrant populations, what do you think expectations will be among these workers? Expectations can include wages, work-life balance/lifestyle, education and training, workforce mobility, etc.</p> <p>What do you think employers should be doing now in preparation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The young workforce in Squamish, especially seasonal staff, prioritize work-life balance. • Employers must offer more than good wages – flexible schedules, benefits, community, support, and securing housing. • Employers may benefit by acknowledging their employees want to fulfill their individual potential. Recognizing and fostering individual talents is essential. • Offering flexibility in terms of tasks undertaken and positions offered, recognizing the individual interests of employees. • Different measures of success for a young workforce: focus on result-based work, rather than time spent at work. • Organisations require strong leaders for young workers, who recognize talents, and delegate responsibilities.

<p>Local labour attraction and retention + employment opportunities for young workforce</p>	<p>What role do you see for the remote or out-of-region workforce for your sector or for Squamish as a whole?</p> <p>Are there actions that companies or the community can take to tap into this labour pool?</p> <p>In what ways do you think this growing segment of workers can be leveraged in the future and how?</p> <p>While filling a critical role in our economy, what strategies can we take to create lasting career opportunities here in Squamish and the Sea2Sky?</p> <p>Are there good examples of this in practice here or elsewhere?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squamish will continue to attract people who want to reside here, but not necessarily find employment in the community. • Residents with remote jobs still support the local economy, but there is the risk of becoming a <i>bedroom community</i> with a large percentage of residents not working locally. • There are major benefits of employing locally, even though jobs could be done remotely: local knowledge, shared values, community support. • There is a risk of division between local and remote workforce. • Community work hubs might become increasingly relevant for Squamish. • It would be interesting for employers to learn about the current pool of remote workers, their skills, fields, and current occupations.
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