



# **BUILDING RESILIENCY in the WEST KOOTENAY MANUFACTURING SECTOR**

Executive Report

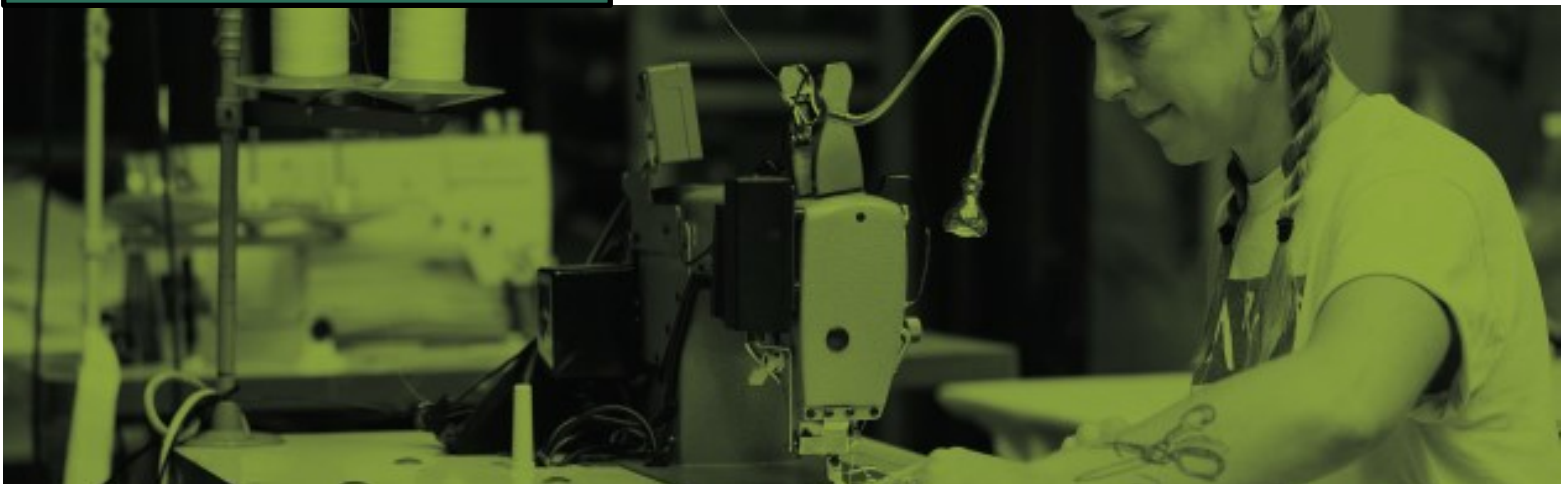
October 2019

Canada



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

This program is funded by the Government of Canada  
and the Province of British Columbia.



# Acknowledgements

The Building Resiliency in the Manufacturing Sector Labour Market Project (LMP) wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the following individuals.

Our Volunteer Stakeholder Committee:

Katt Britton, Kootenay Career Development Society

Jocelyn Carver, Kootenay Career Development Society

Liz Cohoe, Lillie & Cohoe Designs

Michael Hoeher, Export Navigator

Terri MacDonald, Selkirk College

Tom Thomson, Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce

Terry Van Horn, Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation

Cam Whitehead, Kootenay Association of Science and Technology

Andrea Wilkey, Community Futures Central Kootenay

Thanks also goes to Zoë Creighton, Vincent Deslauriers, Rose Hoeher, Peter Jeffrey, Marc Lavin, Don McCulloch, Jessica Nordlander, Kelvin Saldern, Kevin Suggitt, and Tammy Verigin-Burke.

We would like to acknowledge the 33 manufacturers who participated in one-on-one needs assessment interviews and 28 additional manufacturers who participated in project events. A full list of interviewees can be found in Appendix A.

Finally, we would like to thank the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction for their ongoing funding and support of this project.

This report was prepared by Rob Andrew and Savina Kelly on behalf of the Kootenay Career Development Society.



This program is funded by the Government of Canada  
and the Province of British Columbia.

# Table of Contents

I) Introduction .....	1
II) Employer Needs Assessments .....	4
III) ) Project Activities Report .....	13
IV) Summary and Recommendations .....	24
Appendix A—Interview Participants .....	28
Appendix B—Interview Guide .....	29
Appendix C—HR Toolkit Recommended Policies .....	33
Appendix D—Healthy Workplace Environment .....	36
Appendix E— Recruitment Guidelines .....	37
Appendix F— Retention Strategies .....	39
Appendix G— Regional Resources .....	45
Appendix H—North American Industry Classification .....	47

# I) Introduction

## **Project Purpose:**

The goal of the Building Resiliency in the West Kootenay Manufacturing Sector LMP was to update and advance the findings and recommendations that emerged from the 2017 LMP, foster capacity building and resiliency in the manufacturing sector and provide support to job seekers in their efforts to secure and maintain employment in manufacturing. Since the publication of the 2017 study, two large scale area manufacturers, Can Filters and Pacific Insight, moved their operations out of the area.

## **Background & Context:**

The 2017 West Kootenay Manufacturing Study, led by the Chambers of Commerce in Castlegar and Nelson, undertook a consultation with the region's manufacturers to gain a better understanding of their human resource challenges in terms of attracting and retaining workers as well as employee training needs. They also wanted to research how local manufacturers utilize various productivity tools and resources that are commonly used in the manufacturing sector.

The study concluded with ten key findings and five recommendations to help the region's local manufacturers address their labour force development requirements.

## **Key Findings:**

1. Over 50 percent of manufacturers in our region expect to see employment growth over the next three years; finding skilled employees was identified as their primary human resource challenge.
2. Local manufacturers are concerned about the lack of access to housing for workers as it affects their ability to recruit and retrain workers.
3. Manufacturers believe that access to human resources best practices, especially when it comes to recruitment and screening of potential employees, would help them improve their success with retraining new employees.
4. There are a variety of best practices from other jurisdictions that could be replicated to better support the sector in terms of human resource management.
5. Less than 30 percent of manufacturers in the region have a good understanding of mainstream operational excellence and continuous improvement concepts and strategies.
6. Job specific training was identified by manufacturers as the greatest training need and that their preferred method of delivering training was at the workplace. Furthermore, companies expressed difficulties in accessing locally offered employee training sessions.
7. Studies from across the globe, as well as the consultation with local manufacturers, support the notion that there is disconnect between the skills being taught in the education system (K-12 and post-secondary) and the skills that manufacturers require.

8. International research supports the idea that there is a negative perception of jobs in the manufacturing sector – the stereotype is that manufacturing jobs are low paying, mundane, and lack opportunities for advancement.
9. Local manufacturers are keen to partner in promoting manufacturing as a career opportunity for our youth as well as education the community on the importance of the sector in supporting our local economy.
10. Local manufacturers see great value in meeting with each other in order to learn about different effective strategies in managing human capital.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Improve Education and Training Opportunities for Local Manufacturers
2. Create a Mechanism for Manufacturers to Network
3. Enhance the Profile of Manufacturing within the Region
4. Improve Communication of Existing Programs and Services
5. Improving Productivity and Competitiveness

### **2019 Project Methodology:**

For consistency in data analysis, the geographical focus of this LMP was the same as the 2017 West Kootenay Manufacturing Study. The areas covered within the West Kootenay region encompassed Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) Areas E, F, G, H, I and J. This area included the locations of Balfour, Blewett, Castlegar, Crawford Bay, Fruitvale, Genelle, Harrop, Kaslo, Meadow Creek, New Denver, Pass Creek, Six Mile, South Slokan, Slokan, Taghum, Thrums, and Ymir, among others.

For the purposes of defining the manufacturing sector, the definitions of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) - were again used specifically the subcategories 311-339 (see Appendix H). The project started with the list of 64 manufacturing businesses used in the 2017 study and from there culled 11 businesses and added 55 businesses for a total base of 108 regional manufacturers.

From this subset, over 50 employers were contacted and 33 completed one-on-one needs assessments interviews (see Appendix A for full list) and had an additional 28 manufacturers participate in project career fairs, lunch & learns, and seminars.

Data gathered from manufacturer outreach was used to identify changes in outlook from the 2017 study and to highlight the most pressing and addressable concerns of the West Kootenay Manufacturing sector. This feedback was used to guide the compilation of external legacy resources that might be of most benefit to the sector.

For those who participated in the one-on-one needs assessments, individualized feedback was provided with recommendations of appropriate programs, training, or funding streams based on their particular needs. For this purpose, a list of resources was created that would specifically benefit manufacturing sector participants. These resources included local, regional, provincials, and federal organizations.

Initial lunch & learns were broken down to specific sectors (apparel and food & beverage) to lower the barriers of a peer group discussion. The themes that emerged from these meetings not only instructed the final outcomes and recommendations of the project, but also guided the format of the remainder of the project events.

## II) Employer Needs Assessments

A key component of this LMP was direct contact with Manufacturing employers, with the goal to provide direct resources based on their needs. In order to assess these needs we developed an interview guide for one-on-one employer interviews. This was done partly in reference to the findings of the 2017 study and partly through a literature review and research of manufacturing trends, patterns, and predictions.

More than 50 employers across the West Kootenay region were contacted; of those, 33 participated in one-on-one interviews, either in person or over the phone.

The employers that participated in the formal interviews were provided a follow up email and a letter with resources and recommendations based on needs identified during the initial interviews.

A full list of interview respondents can be found in Appendix A. Please see Appendix B for the interview guide.

### a) Respondent Profile:

<b>Location:</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Castlegar & Area	4	13%
Crawford Bay	2	6%
Harrop Procter	1	3%
Nelson & Area	19	61%
Salmo	1	3%
South Slokan / Crescent Valley	4	13%

<b>Number of Employees:</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
1-2	7	23%
3-10	11	35%
11-20	7	23%
21-50	2	6%
51-100	2	6%
100+	2	6%

<b>Manufacturing Type:</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Construction	3	10%
Food and Beverage	7	23%
Metal	5	16%
Printing	3	10%
Wood	3	10%
Other	10	32%

<b>Market Reach:</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
International	5	16%
Local	13	42%
National	7	23%
North America	6	19%

<b>Market Method: *</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Contract	7	23%
Online	4	13%
Retail	17	55%
Wholesale	12	39%

**\* All that apply**



## b) Familiarity

Respondents were asked their familiarity with both WorkBC Services, and the 2017 West Kootenay Manufacturing study.

<b>Familiar with Work BC Services?</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	13	42%
Somewhat	11	35%
No	7	23%

For those that expressed familiarity, the most commonly cited program was the Wage Subsidy. Five businesses indicated that they had already used the Wage Subsidy in the past.

<b>Familiar with 2017 Manufacturing Study?</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	8	26%
No	23	74%

Thirteen of those interviewed also participated in the 2017 survey. Six of those thirteen (46%) expressed familiarity with the 2017 study. It is unknown in how many cases the specific person interviewed was different than in 2017.

## c) Interest in Project Activities

Interviewees were gauged on their interest in participating in Lunch & Learns and Manufacturing Career Fairs as part of the LMP. Those who were interested in Lunch & Learns were also asked if they had specific topics that they wanted covered.

<b>Interest in Lunch &amp; Learns?</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	9	29%
Possible	15	48%
No	7	23%

The majority of respondents made their interest contingent on the time and the topic of discussion. Five businesses specifically indicated that this was their busy season and they were unlikely to attend, despite interest.

Specific topics of interest included:

1. Technological Innovation
2. Leadership
3. Human Resources
4. Peer Groups
5. Sustainability

Interest in Career Fairs?	#	%
Yes	2	6%
Possible	8	26%
No	21	68%

The most commonly cited reason for not being interested in career fairs was that the companies were not currently hiring at this time. As with the Lunch & Learns, several interviewees also indicated that this was their busy time of year.

## C) Review of 2017 Manufacturing Study Top Ten Findings

Interviewees were asked which of the 2017 top ten findings were relevant to them.

1. **Recruitment; finding skilled workers:** Does the employer find it difficult to find skilled or unskilled workers?

Approximately half of respondents indicated this was a significant challenge for them. Of those, the workplace fit and proper certification/training were most frequently cited issues.

*“Connected with post secondary institutions and regularly seeks and secures funding for summer interns and student positions; they get a lot of walk-ins and resume submissions even without posting for positions; sometimes the walk-ins end up being a great fit and are hired on; otherwise rely a lot on word of mouth (network connections); higher turnover with seasonal/casual positions.”*

*“No. People bouncing around more of an issue.”*

*“Hire interested individuals who can learn onsite. Hire skilled workers for specific contracts.”*

*“Looking for right people. Able to train in house. WK Tech Training helpful. Soft skill training more important.”*

*“Yes, challenging to find the right mix of emotional intelligence, trainability, and long-term commitment.”*

2. **Lack of affordable housing for employees:** is there an awareness of current housing incentives? Is housing affecting recruitment/retention?

There was general acknowledgement of the growing issue of housing affordability, but only seven respondents indicated that it was a serious concern for their staff.

*“Castlegar housing is more accessible and affordable, but that is starting to change.”*

*“Yes, not just for employees.”*

*“Yes, rental housing hard to come by.”*

*“Not an issue with their staff, but acknowledges it is an issue in the community.”*

3. **Access to HR Best Practices for recruitment and screening:** Is there a HR policies or a hiring manager? Is there a recruitment strategy or familiarity with WorkBC services and supports?

Approximately half the respondents believed that they had these practices already in place, but almost everyone indicated that they would appreciate further support and resources.

*“A lot of interest in industry. Hiring and recruitment have been easy.”*

*“Access to Corporate HR materials, but always open to more.”*

*“Difficulties with attitude motivation and lifestyle choices that affect employee longevity”*

4. **Access to HR Best Practices for employee retention:** Offer fair/competitive wages, benefit packages and other non-financial incentives?

Once again there was significant interest in resources and assistance on this topic—even among those who already consider retention a strength.

*“Not a primary concern for permanent, skilled and knowledge workers; most are attracted to lifestyle; non-financial benefits like flexible schedule.”*

*“They have a retention task team. Have an anonymous survey-monkey exit interview and get great feedback.”*

*“Yes; concerns with creating usable workplace policies that protect all individuals (harassment, safety etc.) but not at the cost of the employer (i.e. concerns over claims of wrongful dismissal or harassment in the workplace); documenting communications or disciplinary actions are time consuming and the employer feels vulnerable.”*

*“Benefit package for long-term employees, flexible hours, rotations, fair wages.”*

5. **Access to methodologies to improve Operational Excellence:** Awareness of business analysis/ management strategies, financial literacy, professional development for management and/or owners, and funding for training/up-skilling?

There was a wide variance among respondents in awareness of programs and resources that may be of benefit to them, but the majority of businesses had either worked with a local/national organization or with an industry association.

*“The owner has consistent work and has been successful in terms of producing quality products and developing a strong reputation in the community; at this stage, after 18 years of self employment, the owner is not looking to expand or adopt new technologies.”*

*“Working with KAST, Accelerator Okanagan, National Research Council, IRAP.”*

*“Always interested in learning. Succession planning may be part of next steps.”*

*“Would like access to business support, mentorship and training in leadership.”*

6. **Job specific training strategies:** Training in place? Recruitment practices for specific skill sets? Clear understanding of what kinds of skills/training are necessary for the role (essential/soft skills, industry certifications etc.)?

Most respondents said that their training was primarily on-the-job and developed over time. Many were interested in the potential training support and wage subsidies offered through WorkBC and other organizations.

*“People move around a lot so that they are familiar with multiple positions within the company.”*

*“Training is on-site and task specific. Working on cross-training for succession planning and reducing knowledge loss.”*

*“Onsite training for the most part; access to training and funding for training for current staff would be beneficial. IT training and development would be helpful.”*

*“Highly skilled workers are typically freelance contractors and are hired for specific projects; recent changes in core staffing resulting in a smaller, more agile structure.”*

*“Onsite training, but look for customer service skills.”*

7. **Collaboration with post-secondary institutions and training programs:** What training exists and what training would be of benefit? What opportunities are available to collaborate with post-secondary and make programs more industry-driven?

Among those who held strong opinions, there was a consensus that local post-secondary training was not responsive to local industry needs but that there was still value in maintaining a working relationship with the educational institutions.

*“Post secondary – have hired machinists and millwrights. But they can only employ so many electricians. Just hired three millwrights.”*

*“Has been contacted by post-secondary training institutions and recent graduates for apprenticeship opportunities but again, is not in the position to expand or hire at this time.”*

*“Finds post secondary institutions and formal training is too slow in response to technology changes in employment fields.”*

*“Yes, strong relationship with local high schools and colleges. Scholarship programs available.”*

*“Noted that MTI drivers are well-qualified, but hard to hire drivers straight from training. They have no experience and are a risk liability.”*

*“On advisory council with KSA.”*

8. **Promoting manufacturing careers:** Value in addressing misconceptions about the manufacturing industry (branding/image)?

*Very few respondents considered this an issue in attracting talent. In many cases, the specific manufacturing sector they were in was unique enough to not hold any pre-conceived notions among the workforce.*

*“That misconception is gone when they see the facility. Everything is so technology and machine-based. Everything is watched environmentally.”*

*“Finding people interested in beer manufacturing not an issue.”*

*“The work is highly specialized, so not an issue.”*

*“Yes, not a lot of interest in working in the print industry anywhere; currently there are a lot more creative type employees but those skills are not always suitable either.”*

*“Not an issue in construction. Building, craft industry, very appealing to local workers.”*

*“Like to hire people who are already passionate / interested.”*

9. **Implementation of a regional manufacturing council or peer group:** Interest?

There was very little enthusiasm for a regional manufacturing council. Most respondents felt that they were already too busy to participate on a formal basis. Some were interested in peer mentoring relationships, but felt they had already established this themselves or through support programs. Several businesses expressed appreciation for their trade organization.

*“Strong network connections already, would like to connect with other CSA builders.”*

*“Only if it relates to specific industries.”*

*“Manufacturing councils useful as advocates but doesn't have a lot of time to participate in them.”*

*“Currently part of business peer group and finds it beneficial.”*

*“Already belong to professional organizations and networks.”*

*“Not interested in committees.”*

10. **Access to Best Practices from other regions:** similar industries, other jurisdictions?

Most respondents were interested in best practices from other regions, but the vagueness of the topic makes it difficult to establish the priority or level of enthusiasm.

*“Successful and mature business, next step - implementing succession plan.”*

*“Always open to new ideas.”*

## **D) Five Key Recommendations from 2017 Study**

1. Improve education and training opportunities for local manufacturers
2. Create a mechanism of manufacturers to network (council)
3. Enhance the profile of manufacturing within the region
4. improve communication of existing programs and services
5. Improve productivity and competitiveness

Respondents were asked to indicate which, if any, recommendations from the 2017 West Kootenay Manufacturing study were relevant to them.

For those that answered this question, almost all indicated point five as their top priority.

## E) Priorities and concerns

Interviewees were given the opportunity to outline their own priorities and concerns—which may or may not have come up in previous questions. Some themes came up multiple times, as indicated below.

- Shipping and distribution (*mentioned four times*)
- Succession planning (*mentioned four times*)
- Concern of workforce attitude towards work/life balance (*mentioned twice*)
- Maintaining competitiveness in wages (*mentioned twice*)
- Diversification of revenue streams
- Maintaining loyalty to customers and suppliers
- Essential skills training—like customer service
- Attracting right culture fit rather than worrying about experience
- Competition from companies in larger centres expanding their reach
- Maintaining technological competitiveness
- Social media literacy
- Climate change affecting production costs
- Increase in minimum wage not offset with reciprocal tax breaks
- Unsure of taking risks of capital expenditures
- Employees aging out / knowledge loss

## III) Project Activities Reports

Along with employer needs assessments, the primary method for gathering report data from manufacturers were “lunch & learn” events. Seven such events were held over the course of the project:

Thursday, May 2nd: Apparel Manufacturers Peer Group Discussion

Thursday, May 16th: Food and Beverage Manufacturers Peer Group Discussion

Thursday, May 30th: Technological Innovation in the Manufacturing Sector

Thursday, June 20th: Castlegar Manufacturing Sector Project Update

Tuesday, June 25th: Nelson Manufacturing Sector Project Update

Thursday, September 26th: Apparel Manufacturers Follow-Up

Thursday, October 3rd: Économusée Seminar

As a deliverable of the project, career fairs were planned in concert with the June 20th and 25th Castlegar and Nelson project updates, however they suffered from poor attendance.

Reasons for the lack of success in the career fairs include:

- a) timing for recruitment was not well aligned for employers to take advantage of these resources
- b) many employers who participated in one-on-one interviews did not express an interest or need for job fairs to support their hiring needs
- c) most Lunch and Learn attendees were not engaged in a recruitment or hiring cycle

For the purpose of the Executive report, project reports were modified for inclusion. Comments made by specific business owners were unattributed and action items for the LMP project team were removed.



## Apparel Manufacturing Sector Peer Group Discussion

Thursday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019

12:00-1:30 PM Hume Hotel, Emporium Room

In attendance: Marilyn Lee (Kootenay School of the Arts); Scarlet Kux-Kardos (Zapped Outfitters); Sharon Batcheller, Liz Cohoe (Lillie and Cohoe); Beth Schwartz, Laura Mutsaers, Maria Diaz Seguel, Catherine Gaudreault (Sea of Wolves); Bretney Bontje (Bret's Bibs); Savina Kelly, Kat Britton, Rob Andrew (KCDS)

This lunch & learn was a peer group discussion amongst the apparel sector. The attendees were a mix of established businesses, sole proprietorships, post-secondary, industry liaisons, and KCDS representatives.

Attendees were asked to bring their own challenges and ideas to the table and workshop from there potential opportunities for mentorship and group collaborations.

Some of the challenges and areas of potential collaboration raised:

### 1) Technology

- The need for a \$20,000 yardage garment printer with fibre-reactive dye capability was raised by one business. Two other attendees both indicated that they could use this printer as well and a third expressed interest but would need to report back as to whether this met their exact needs
- Laser cutting was also a need expressed. The technology may already be available through MIDAS, but is it accessible?
- Technology is also creating changes in the workforce. Is KSA able to adapt to these changes? Collaboration would improve this.
- One company shared their success in obtaining funding to attend technology-based trade shows.

### 2) Collaboration

- Is there an opportunity to share space and hardware? Would KSA also want to collaborate? The Pacific Insight building was mentioned. Nelson Home Furniture also mentioned but attendees thought it would be prohibitively expensive to make the necessary renovations.
- Could the apparel industry collectively market? Studio tours? Tag line ideas: "Profits with Purpose" "100 Mile Garments"
- How would this collaboration look? Cooperative, non-profit society, charity, for-profit enterprise? What funds might help make this happen? CBT Impact Investment Fund?
- What other boards and peer groups already assist apparel manufacturers locally? Canadian Federation of Independent Business, Canadian Apparel Federation, Chamber of Commerce. CAF offers group employee benefits and insurance. These fulfill different roles than a peer group.

### **3) Marketing**

- Competition in digital space is very fierce. Those who got in early on “Brand Boom” are doing very well but it is less useful to late adapters.
- One business uses an agent to act as a link between manufacturers and retailers. They get through doors that they wouldn’t if they were acting on their own. Agents have local relationships and loyalty.

### **4) Distribution**

- Many of the mid-size brands use already use 3PL (Third party logistics) to reduce warehousing and shipping costs.
- Big brands need micro-development and the opportunity is out there for small designers to make relationships and get assistance with distribution.
- One attendee uses Waneta Quickstop for import/export from the US.
- Transportation costs are a major barrier locally. Is there a business opportunity for a local shipping provider?

## Food & Beverage Manufacturing Sector Peer Group Discussion

Thursday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019

12:00-1:30 PM Torchlight Brewery, 125 Hall Street

In Attendance: Rob Andrew, Felicity Howell, Savina Kelly, Lisa McGeady (Kootenay Career Development Society); Cameron Whitehead (Kootenay Association of Science and Technology); Simon Bama, Nathan Russ, Kate Walker (NBC); Nadine BenRabha (Kootenay Co-op); Alex Balcer (Virtue Artisan Tea); Craig Swenson (Torchlight); Lavinia Lidstone, Ariel Saunders (Kootenay Kombucha); Leeza Zurwick (Happy Gut); Denis Leblanc (No. 6 Coffee Company); Silvio Lettrari (Kaslo Sourdough); Ben Andrews, Leanna Andrews (Firevines); Bruce Burgener (Mountain Muchies); Kevin Goodwin, Lora Goodwin (Kootenay Country Craft Distillery); Valerie Sanderson (Valerie's Fermented Foods)

This lunch & learn was a peer group discussion among the food & beverage manufacturing sector. The participants ranged from a sole proprietorship to a thirty-year-old company with ten employees, but most attendees were family-owned partnerships with no storefront location. The Kootenay Co-op also attended as both a niche manufacturer and as a distributor.

Invited facilitators were Lisa McGeady, discussing the WorkBC wage subsidy, Felicity Howell of the West K Tech program, and Cameron Whitehead of KAST.

Challenges identified during the discussion:

### 1) Distribution, distribution, distribution. (This was a recurring theme.)

- Most of the manufacturers had come up with their own solutions to tackling this issue. The desire for collaboration was expressed, but logistical concerns made this unrealistic in most cases.
- Some of the challenges to collaborating were insurance costs, the differences in shipping needs (i.e.: refrigerated vs. non), and the desire for the manufacturers to have a direct connection with their retailers. The more long-standing businesses were particularly adamant that having this connection was a necessary step in the growth process.
- There was some discussion of the potential for a third-party business to do the distribution, but some were concerned that there would be a disparity in the way that third-party marketed the various products. This may have been based on an existing local example.
- Other potential ways of collaborating on this discussed were a Facebook group and partnerships with trucking companies.
- Some excellent suggestions were made to help with shipping costs. Among them: Amazon Seller accounts, Freightcom, and the B.C. Food Processors Association.
- Frustrations with access to the right equipment to make environmentally-friendly packaging were raised. Another attendee stated that this was a priority for their company, but the particular equipment needed would be different for each business.

This topic took up the majority of the meeting, with attendees expressing frustration that this has been recurring theme for many years in the Kootenays and that no one had come up with a way to address it. Cam Whitehead suggested that a letter writing campaign to both local and provincial governments may be effective at getting attention.

## **2) Marketing**

- There was some talk of a boutique shop selling products to both locals and tourists. An accompanying website (Madeinnelson.com?) may be more feasible.
- Buybc.gov.bc.ca was mentioned as a useful marketer for those in the agricultural and food sectors. Partners in this program are required to make 51% of their products in BC, but that was no obstacle for any of the attendees. Surprisingly, only two of the attendees had taken advantage of this program. They also provide funding for partners to attend trade shows, both in and outside of BC.
- TechPat solutions was suggested for help with patents and technological literacy.

## **3) Infrastructure / Red Tape**

- Frustrations were expressed regarding the lack of support from local government and chambers of commerce regarding barriers to efficiency.
- Access to three-phase electric power was an issue for one business and the cost of making this upgrade for their location would be entirely on them – even if this was an infrastructure issue that would benefit others. Savina from KCDS suggested that Carmen Procter from Ecosafe may be the best person to talk to at the city.
- One attendee echoed that government were constantly putting up more regulations and forms to fill out but were not providing support in return. This sentiment was echoed by others at the table.

## Technological Innovation in the Manufacturing Sector

Thursday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

12:00-1:30 PM Castlegar Community Complex, Columbia Room

In Attendance: Rob Andrew, Savina Kelly (Kootenay Career Development Society); Clare Verigin (Kalesnikoff Lumber); Derek Court, Adrien Maitre (Selkirk Paving); Jan Piorecky (Martech Electrical); John Belland, Angie Seifrit (Celgar—Mercer International); Martin Scheulin (MS Steel Design); Jessica Nordlander (ThoughtExchange)

Keynote speaker Jessica Nordlander is a technology executive with an MSc in Applied IT, an ex-Gogler and was recently awarded the most Innovative Leader in one of the most innovative countries in the world (her native Sweden). She has joined Thoughtexchange with a main focus on Operations. Prior to this, Jessica led impressive change and growth in multinational companies, as Chief Digital Officer for global travel group STS Education; Head of Business Development at Google and Managing Director in Stockholm, Dubai and Vancouver for SaaS growth wonder Meltwater. Jessica serves on the board of several tech start-ups and contributes to Forbes.com as a member of the Forbes Technology Council (an invitation-only community for world-class CIOs, CTOs and technology executives).

In Jessica's talk on technological innovation she emphasized:

- 1) All companies need to innovate. The question "how we will make money tomorrow" is at least as important as "how we make money today"
- 2) Small companies have the advantage in ability to innovate. There are less roadblocks as things move up the chain. This is why it is advantageous for larger companies to contract out their innovation to more agile start-ups.
- 3) The example of the Swedish company, Ikea, was given. It doesn't matter how efficient they are at making furniture if people don't have cars. Their entire business model is based on people owning vehicles.
- 4) Another Swedish company Jessica has advised, Volvo, has perfected manufacturing—but now software is just as important. They now find themselves competitors with small, innovative, software companies. Whereas innovations in trucks happen in five years, innovations in software can happen in two weeks.
- 5) When you start looking at the competitive edge that some of these innovated companies have, it's not ping pong tables in the office, it's something called slack. Slack is when your workforce meets the job requirements but then brings other skills to the table that aren't strictly needed for the job, but will help innovate. It's almost like hiring an extra employee that you didn't know you needed. For many years, companies shied away from hiring overqualified employees because they were too expensive. That is looking at it from a strict efficiency perspective when you know exactly what's required of the job today. If you overhire, your workforce will be more innovative and will figure out what it takes to be efficient in the future.

- 6) She gave another example of a company that was selling surgical simulators and would send technicians from Sweden to places all over the world to fix these machines without actually knowing how they were being used. She advised them that they always be connected to these machines and constantly monitoring their use. This way you can track how many training hours every student was doing and which facilities had the highest grades on the tests. They can judge the correlation between number of hours and how good you become at surgery. All of the sudden they went from a hardware company with a software component to a software company with a hardware component.
- 7) Innovation requires employees who will not accept the answer that “this is how we’ve always done it.” Innovated companies require employees who will look outside their own company, because you will not find all the answers from within.
- 8) A lot of the big innovations happening now come from open source software.

Questions were raised about the differences in sector collaboration in North America versus Europe or Scandinavia. Jessica said that there weren’t large differences, but one of the reasons Sweden is so innovative is that the government has it’s own venture capital funding that functions just like Silicon Valley investors.

One of the attendees asked about how their innovation in paying for three phase power would benefit not just them but anyone who used the space in the future. The city is only thinking about who will use the power today, not who will use it in the future. They felt that government has the same issue that large companies do where you have to run things up the ladder only to get a no from someone in six months.

There was some discussion about the differences in generations. One attendee felt the current generation has never experienced tough times economically, they do not value their job the same way and they will think nothing of leaving a job without a clear plan or from jumping form job to job every 3 to 5 years. There were younger people in the room offering different perspectives that the pace of the cost of living was actually outstripping wage growth and that it was still very difficult to get even an entry level position in an advanced field without prior work experience.

Finally the differences in the values placed on the education system in Europe vs. North America were discussed.

## Castlegar Manufacturing Sector Project Update

Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**12:00-1:30 PM Castlegar Community Complex, Columbia Room**

In Attendance: Rob Andrew, Katt Britton (Kootenay Career Development Society); Michael Hoher (Export Navigator); Mark Laver (City of Castlegar), Leanne Stoochnoff (Drop Manufacturing); Ann Jensen (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction), Eric Matton (Kootenay Kombucha); Udo Matern, Rob Sibilleau, Kurt Wood (Job Seekers)

This meeting was an opportunity to provide an update on the LMP progress and to workshop some of the initial findings with manufacturers and other stakeholders. Invited facilitators were Michael Hoher of the Export Navigator program, and Mark Laver, the City of Castlegar Economic Development Manager.

Topics of discussion included:

- 1) Growth challenges
- 2) Export markets
- 3) Distribution
- 4) Resource sharing
- 5) Peer group collaborations
- 6) Post-secondary training
- 7) Labour market (from both job seeker and employer perspective)
- 8) Housing

## Nelson Manufacturing Sector Project Update

Tuesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**12:00-1:30 PM Hume Hotel, Hume Room**

In Attendance: Rob Andrew, Katt Britton, Felicity Howell, Lisa McGeady (Kootenay Career Development Society); Ann Jensen (Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction), Shawn Curran, Cameron Whitehead (Kootenay Association for Science and Technology); Erin Rooney (ISS of BC); Margret Jennings (SMRT1); Bob Henderson (Popov Leather); Martin Stegman (Ministry of Jobs, Training, and Technology); Meghan MacIvor; Rose Hoher (Strategy Consultant); Ken Foot (Spearhead); Emily Dacosta (Mountain Munchies); Meghan Melanson (D-Pace)

This meeting was an opportunity to provide an update on the LMP progress and to workshop some of the initial findings with manufacturers and other stakeholders. Invited facilitators were Cameron Whitehead of KAST.

Cam Whitehead gave an update on the Community Workforce Response Grant as well as an Employer Training Grant. The ETG is for between five to ten thousand dollars with some cost sharing and it is money to upskill existing employees. Some of the training (3D modelling, robotics) can be done at KAST.

Felicity Howell outlined the West K Tech program and Lisa McGeady talked about the wage subsidy and training grants.

Erin Rooney outlined the high level of skills that immigrants are bringing to Canada. However there is a disconnect from the rich skillset and experience that they are bringing and the positions that are available to them.

The group also discussed the newly announced Rural Immigration Pilot Project. Communities all across Canada helping people who aren't even here yet.

In discussing the LMP findings to date, of particular interest were the HR Toolkit, distribution concerns, and potential for collaboration.

The potential tools for collaboration were discussed, with Cello, Slack, and Zoom all mentioned as particularly useful for participants. It was noted that there is already a Nelson and Tech Knowledge Group on Facebook.

The concept of a regional distribution manager and a consolidated warehouse were discussed.

Multiple employers mentioned that they required help with technological upgrades. Cam Whitehead from outlined a few options and his vision for the future in this respect.

Finally, the overall Nelson labor and housing market was talked about. Employer needs expressed were consistent with the findings of the LMP to date.



## Apparel Manufacturing Sector Follow-up

Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**11:00 AM-12:30 PM Kootenay Career Development Society, #3 86 Baker Street**

In Attendance: Rob Andrew, Savina Kelly (Kootenay Career Development Society); Liz Cohoe (Lillie and Cohoe); Marilyn Lee (KSA); Don McCulloch (Community Futures); Zoë Creighton (Upper Columbia Co-op Council)

This meeting was meant as a follow-up to the extremely optimistic Apparel Sector meeting in May where collaboration on a number of different fronts was discussed. Zoë Creighton, coordinator of the Upper Columbia Co-op Council, and Don McCulloch, loans manager at Community Futures were invited facilitators.

Turnout was disappointing as several who had expressed interest and availability in a scheduling poll were not in attendance but the discussion was excellent and carried on well past the scheduled end.

Topics discussed included:

- 1) Technology
- 2) Real Estate
- 3) Marketing
- 4) The Co-op model
- 5) Examples of other artisan co-ops
- 6) Funding options
- 7) The potential for collaboration with KSA grads
- 8) Daycare space
- 9) Co-working spaces
- 10) Économusée

Ultimately, one participant was very excited about the potential for the co-op model. Another, who expressed interest in taking on a coordination role, was not sure the model offered enough financial incentive to put in the burden of work. They found the absence of many people at this meeting to be a sign of low commitment.

Due to the richness and productivity of the discussion, it was decided that KCDS would undertake to survey interested artisans—not just in the manufacturing sector. The goal is to gauge both suitability to collaborate on shared goals but also willingness and ability to commit both through time and financially.

## Économusée Seminar

Thursday, October 3rd, 2019

6:30-8:00 PM Lillie & Cohoe, #4 320 Vernon Street

In Attendance: Rob Andrew, Savina Kelly, Lisa McGeady (Kootenay Career Development Society); Liz Cohoe (Lillie and Cohoe); Vincent Deslauriers (Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique); Scarlet Kux-Kardos (Zapped Outfitters); Shelly Kindred-Fawcett; Meadow Caya (Cake Betty); Andrea denElzen (Goldsmith); Briana Schroeder (Glass Artist)

The Économusée model is a network that goes back to basics and celebrates what makes artisan manufacturers great. By visiting artisans in their workshops, visitors share history, know-how and passion of the uniquely creative people who work there. An Économusée allows enterprises to reach out the general public, explain local culture and contribute significantly to the preservation of intangible cultural heritage.

Recently, Lillian & Cohoe become Nelson's first and British Columbia's fourth Économusée. The Nelson Chamber of Commerce is embracing the model and is creating a space in the Visitor Centre specifically for the region's Économusées. In addition, funding has been obtained to expand the network in the West Kootenays to four participants— making this a wonderful opportunity for those that may not have had the funds to transform their space.

Vincent Deslauriers of the SDEBC was invited to give a seminar on the benefits and opportunities of the model. He outlined his history with the program and with collaborative workspaces.

A few of the participants were interested in building the Économusée concept into their artisan co-op model. Another participant has a five-year-old business and a storefront space with potential to open up the workshop.

In addition, in the course of marketing the event—four other potential participants who couldn't attend the seminar were put in touch with Vincent.

After the seminar and questions had finished, Liz Cohoe of Lillian & Cohoe gave the group a full tour of her Économusée space

## IV) Summary & Recommendations

### 1. Transportation and distribution are a long-standing challenge for West Kootenay manufacturers.

Across all sectors the number one recurring issue for manufacturers that came up during our project—in both one on one interviews and peer sector discussions were challenges in distribution of their products.

The low density of population and distance to urban centers makes a distribution a challenging concern. In recent years, the region has lost several transportation options, suggesting the challenges may worsen even as businesses adapt to the changing economy of e-commerce.

Most manufacturers come up with their own solutions to tackling this issue as a natural product of their growth cycle, with little support from government or peers. Economies of scale can help larger manufacturers, but the issue may prevent businesses from reaching that point. One manufacturer stated that these challenges were the number one impediment for their growth, and that they had been raising the issue for the entire life-cycle of their business, which is over twenty-five years old.

In 2017, the Columbia Basin Trust commissioned a study on “Regional Shipping and Logistics”. The study authors concluded, based on survey responses, that the level of concern may be “highest among businesses in the West Kootenay Corridor.”<sup>1</sup>

There is appetite for collaboration within sectors, but there are logistical concerns with insurance, difference in shipping needs (ie: climate control) and the desire of manufacturers to have a direct connection with their retailers.

#### **Recommendation:**

Three potential ways to promote distribution collaboration in the West Kootenay Manufacturing sector were identified.

#### a) A social media group or hub

This would require minimal overhead and maintenance, but would need some luck and initial enthusiasm to develop organically. The informality and lack of accountability of a social media platform is likely to scare off some potential collaborators. It is also likely that copacetic business relationships that develop will be taken off-platform. This is, of course, not necessarily a bad thing; but the same connection could be achieved through support organizations like Export Navigator, for example.

#### b) An online shipping and warehousing board

This model is used commercially for large scale shippers across North America through freight matching websites like 123Loadboard.com, getloaded.com, and Truckstop.com.

There is potential to adapt a trusted local platform like Kootenay Rideshare for this purpose. Having an established “brand” involved would be an important part of initial marketing. Just as with the social media model, the challenge of getting over a hump in participation as the board organically grows may impede enthusiasm.

<sup>1</sup> Davies Transportation Consulting, Wave Point Consulting, and S5 Services, *Columbia Basin Trust Regional Shipping and Logistics Analysis Final Report*, <https://ourtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/downloads/ColumbiaBasin-Shipping-and-Logistics-Analysis-June2017.pdf>

In conversation with Sustainable Kootenays, who operate Kootenay Rideshare, a rough estimate of \$20,000 in seed money to consult stakeholders and develop the new platform was given. Getting the right people to the table in a stakeholder consultation is especially important in ensuring that the final product is functional and used.

Partial funding for this model may already exist through another Labour Market Project, or it may be obtained through environmental or innovation grants like EcoAction or Smart Cities.

c) A part-time regional distribution coordinator as a pilot project

This is the most ambitious of the three options, but also the most likely to satisfy the needs of local manufacturers. Having a position that is actively engaging and adapting to the needs of the stakeholders is the best way to cover the enthusiasm gap and ensure that the work being done is making a difference.

In addition to bridging the gap between shipping partners, this person would have to have extensive knowledge of all shipping options and support organizations. The initial hours expensed would be acquiring this knowledge and building relationships with the partner businesses. Project maintenance would likely only require 10-15 hours per week and there would be very low overhead beyond that.

This position would not be mutually exclusive of the first two options and could involve implementing an online distribution hub. A more expansive and ambitious version of this position would include direct involvement in the actual shipping, rather than just coordination.

## **2. Local manufacturers are not aware of the existing resources that are already available to them.**

In both our one on one needs assessments and peer group discussions, it was evident that most businesses, regardless of size and stage of life cycle, were unaware of some or all of the resources or programs that could help them reach their goals.

Recommendation five of the 2017 manufacturing study was headed “Improving Productivity and Competitiveness” and was the most cited recommendation as an ongoing priority for our survey participants. This was summarized in 2017 as follows:

*To address the low adoption rate of mainstream techniques for improving productivity and competitiveness by the region’s manufacturers, steps should be taken to better promote the value of these concepts to local manufacturers. This could be achieved by hosting information events with knowledge experts, best practice site tours and training sessions on various topics of productivity and competitiveness.<sup>2</sup>*

Although this highlights an important need, many of these resources may already be available. For instance, Basin Business Advisors brought in a time study engineer from to observe workflow and build a productivity model for one long-term local manufacturer. Other programs bring in experts for workshops and training, but may not know the level of specific demands. The West K TECH program assists local tech and manufacturing companies in arranging external training for new staff positions.

### **Recommendation:**

As part of the LMP project, an Asset Map was assembled to better allow us to provide feedback to needs assessments interview participants. This document contains local, provincial, and national resources—but it is almost certainly not complete. Some of this work is included in Appendix G—Regional Resources.

<sup>2</sup>Paul Wiest and Brenda M. Wiest, *West Kootenay Manufacturing Study (2017)*, <https://futures.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/West-Kootenay->



This work could be used as a base for an online “concierge” model where local businesses (or those who are assisting local businesses) can input qualifications like business type, revenue, and export market and receive an automated report of relevant programs and resources. It is likely that one of the stakeholder organizations involved in this project would be willing to host this service and the overhead would be relatively small.

### **3. Local manufacturers need support in Human Resources best practices**

In responding to the conclusions of the 2017 study, employers were asked about best practices for recruitment and retention (findings 3 and 4). In response to these questions, and to a lesser extent the responses to questions about training and operational excellence, manufacturers expressed a clear need for HR support. Even those companies that already had policies or staff in place to manage HR felt that they could use additional resources.

#### **Recommendation:**

The LMP project team has compiled an HR Toolkit (Appendix C-F in this report) and an accompanying HR presentation. Kootenay Career Development Society is committed to maintaining these as a living resource and to making them freely available on their website, [www.kcds.ca](http://www.kcds.ca).

### **4. The desire for collaboration among artisan manufacturers is high**

In the apparel sector peer group discussion, the appetite for collaboration was very high. Optimistic models involving shared property, technology, and marketing were discussed. Coming out of that meeting, other artisan manufacturers who were not specifically apparel expressed an interest in being included in future discussion.

A follow-up meeting was held, including facilitators from the Upper Columbia Co-op Council and Community Futures. The discussion at this meeting was very substantive and productive, but the discouraging attendance from artisans gave pause to those who might take on an organizational role.

In another of our project activities, we hosted a seminar on the Économusée model for artisan manufacturers. There is funding available to expand the number of participants in the West Kootenays, and the potential is there for artisans to explore this as a marketing model for collective space and infrastructure sharing.

#### **Recommendation:**

The LMP team is distributing a survey to as many artisan manufacturers as they can reach to gather information on desire to collaborate, equipment and space needs, and ability to contribute, both financially and with time. The hope is that this information is useful to those who have already expressed an interest in coordinating such a collaboration.

**5. Although manufacturers see value in peer and trade groups, most are not excited at the concept of a regional manufacturing council.**

One of the recommendations of the 2017 manufacturing study was the establishment of a “West Kootenay Manufacturers Council”. This model would only include representative manufacturers, but it would be less useful without buy-in from the manufacturing sector as a whole.

In the employer needs assessments interviews, the topic of a Manufacturers Council generated very little enthusiasm. Most respondents felt that the manufacturing sector is too broad for this to be of value to them in their specific industry. Respondents also expressed that simply did not have the time to be involved in a group of this type.

The project team consulted with Peter Jeffrey, facilitator of the Okanagan Peer Mentoring Group (OPGM), which was also listed as a resource in the 2017 study. The OPMG is still active, but is meeting less often and has not recently been bringing in external speakers and training sessions. Their membership also contains large scale manufacturers that are officed in Kelowna and our market simply does not have the same base to draw from.

**Recommendation:**

During this project, the project team met with many stakeholder groups, both on our volunteer committee and off. In the course of these consultations, the extent to which these groups have worked hard to establish their own relationships in the business community was readily apparent.

Through their own activities, these groups understand the challenges and changing face of operating a business in the West Kootenay region. They bring this knowledge to the table in any discussion about the value of future and ongoing programs.

A regional stakeholder council would not necessarily have to contain manufacturers to provide tangible benefits to the manufacturing sector.

A quarterly or monthly collaboration containing groups like CBT, Community Futures, KAST, KCDS, LCIC, Selkirk College, all local Chambers of Commerce and established industry groups, has the potential to provide immense value in strategic planning and resource sharing.

# Appendix A—Interview Participants

Alfab	Northern Teardrop Trailer
Aqua Diversities	North Woven Brooms
Backroads	Oso Negro Coffee
Cartolina	Popov Leather
D Pace	Purcell Timber Frame
Freeride Entertainment	Briana Schroeder
Hall Printing	Selkirk Paving
Harrop Proctor Forest Products	Shasheen Machine
KMC-Kootrac/Kootenay Tractor	Spearhead
Hellman Canoes	Speedpro Signs
Kalesnikoff	Torchlight
Kelprint	Trainor Mechanical
Kootenay Forge	Virtue Artisan Tea
Martech (steel fabrication dept)	We Are Stories Handmade
Nelson Brewing Company	West K Concrete
Nelson Tiny Homes	Zellstoff Celgar—Mercer
No. 6 Coffee Company	



# Appendix B—Interview Guide



## KOOTENAY CAREER DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

### Building Resiliency in the West Kootenay Manufacturing Sector

In 2017, the Castlegar and Nelson Chambers of Commerce in partnership with Kootenay Career Development Society (KCDS) commissioned a study of the West Kootenay manufacturing sector to gain a deeper understanding of the unique human resource and training needs of businesses in manufacturing industries. Recently, KCDS initiated a follow up Labour Market Project (LMP) to the 2017 survey with the intention of fostering resiliency in the West Kootenay manufacturing sector.

As part of the LMP, KCDS is inviting employers across the region to participate in individualized needs assessments. The first step of these project is to learn a little bit about your business and to gauge interest in participating in group learning sessions and career fairs.

Employer	
Type of industry/service	
Does the employer seem interested/willing to participate in the conversation?	
Number of Employees	
Sales Focus (ie: over-the-counter, online, export market, wholesale)	
Is the employer familiar with KCDS and/or WorkBC and services that may be of benefit to them?	
Is the employer familiar with the 2017 West Kootenay Manufacturing Sector Study?	
Is there an interest in attending one of the Lunch and Learn events? (Follow up invitation sent?)	

If they are interested in the Lunch and Learn events, what kind of subject matter interests them most? (Either from the 10 2017 findings or something else)

Does the employer seem interested in participating in Career Fair(s)? (Follow up in tabn sent?)

Interest in engaging in the development of or joining a regional manufacturing council? Or peer group? (Explain the difference if they are not clear)

## Review of the top ten findings from the 2017 West Kootenay Manufacturing Study

Recruitment; finding skilled workers: does the employer find it difficult to find skilled or unskilled workers

Lack of affordable housing for employees: awareness of current housing incentives. resources to refer potential employees to. is housing affecting recruitment/retention

Access to HR Best Practices for recruitment and screening: is there a HR/Hiring manager/policies posted for jobs online. recruitment strategies familiar with WorkBC programs and services that support hiring

Access to HR Best Practices for employee retention: offer fair/competitive wages. benefit packages and other non-financial incentives. flexible schedules for primary caregivers

<p>Access to methods to improve Operational Excellence: business analysis, management strategies, financial literacy, professional development for management and owners, awareness of training/upskilling</p>
<p>Job specific training strategies: recruitment practices, employment centres, clear understanding of what kinds of skills/training are necessary for the role? (essential skills, industry certifications etc)</p>
<p>Collaboration with postsecondary institutions and training programs: what trainings exist, what trainings would be of benefit, what opportunities are available to collaborate with post-secondary and make programs more industry-driven</p>
<p>Promoting manufacturing careers: addressing misconceptions about the manufacturing industry (branding image)</p>
<p>Implementation of a regional manufacturing council or peer group</p>
<p>Access to Best Practices from other regions: similar industries, other jurisdictions</p>

## Five key recommendations that resulted from the 2017:

1. Improve education and training opportunities for local manufacturers
2. Create a mechanism of manufacturers to network (council)
3. Enhance the profile of manufacturing within the region
4. Improve communication of existing programs and services
5. Improve productivity and competitiveness

Which of these are priorities of the employer, if

any: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

Other:

---

---

---

---



# Appendix C—HR Toolkit Recommended Policies

## Recommended Policies

### **1. Health and Safety**

A general health and safety policy sets the standard for the workplace environment, ensuring the health and well-being for all employees at all times. Putting safety measures in place should be a primary consideration for all businesses and should guide all workplace decisions, activities and conduct. Health and safety policies outline occupational safety protocols and may require the implementation of an Occupational Safety and Health program (OSH), depending on the size of your organization. Risk assessments, inspections, incident management and reporting processes are just some examples of the responsibilities that may fall to the OSH committee. In the absence of an OSH committee, these duties should be assigned to a staff member(s) and incorporated into their job description(s).

For more information on workplace health and safety, please refer to WorkSafeBC guidelines found [here](#).

### **2. Workplace Violence Policy**

In order to successfully implement a workplace violence policy, employers need to make a commitment to, and standby policies that promote a non-violent and safe workplace for all staff. Distinct from general health and safety policies, a workplace violence policy relates to interpersonal relationships, and affects all employees and stakeholders, across all levels of the organization. Workplace violence policies act to eliminate or minimize the risk of violence for all employees, in all senses of the word. Employers may want to consider providing training and resources to staff as part of this policy, and all employees should be aware of the reporting and recourse mechanisms in place. Privacy and confidentiality are critical points of consideration when developing workplace violence policies and procedures.

### **3. Diversity and Inclusion**

Diversity and inclusion may be difficult to define as there are many interpretations and definitions in use across a broad cross-section of businesses, organizations and agencies. Some diversity and inclusion policies make workplace accessibility for individuals who identify as having a disability a priority. Others adopt expansive definitions that take into consideration age, disability, gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, social status or any other personal identification factor. The variations reflect changes in society and infer the need for employers to take a responsive and reflexive position when it comes to diversity and inclusion policy frameworks.

A commitment to embracing shifts in current and acceptable definitions and standards is key and this area of social discourse represents an important nexus between generations, cultures and employment. One of the most critical points of consideration for employers is to demonstrate to all employees and stakeholders, a commitment to finding a satisfying working definition of diversity and inclusion.

### **4. Emergency preparedness and business continuity**

We live with environmental and geographical factors that, despite their natural beauty, can pose risks to our communities, businesses and livelihoods. As such, it is important for all employers to consider how a natural disaster or other emergency event would affect their operations and put into place mitigation and management strategies that help reduce risks to employees and longterm operations. It is also recommended a rescue and response plan be devised that covers evacuation and accounting procedures.

## **5. Privacy**

Privacy and protection is critical to any business as it is a cornerstone of relationship building, trust and the social capital required to build a cohesive workforce and a successful business or organization. As we increasingly rely on technology to collect and store information, there is an ever increasing emphasis on security and accountability for all parties who regularly collect and store personal data. Workplace privacy policies should therefore reflect the employers position on privacy protection and include clear processes and procedures around collecting and storing personal information of all stakeholders. In addition to clear and accessible policies on the handling of personal information, employers should have in place, procedures outlining how to handle privacy breaches as well as complaint resolution processes.

## **6. Progressive Discipline**

A progressive discipline policy is recommended for all businesses and organizations. Not only does a progressive discipline policy ensure an employer takes fair and responsible action, it outlines the course of disciplinary action to be taken when an employee fails to meet expectations around performance and behaviour.

## **7. Internet, phone, email and social media policies**

This is a broad and ever expanding category that touches on employer rights, privacy and expectations around behaviour and conduct. With so much to consider, developing policies that are fair and consistent across the business is key.

## **8. Attendance and hours of work**

Clearly stated policies outlining the employers' expectations around attendance, absenteeism, tardiness and work schedules in general is important, not just to management, but to all staff as it ensures fairness, structure and leaves no room for preferential treatment. This area of policy should also outline expectations around start and end times, meal and break schedules.

## **9. Compensation, Benefits and Overtime Policy**

This is a broad area and covers many distinct categories including, but not limited to, pay rates, pay scales, payment schedules, vacation time and compensation and standard deductions. Employment standards outline the legal minimums employers are required to provide all employees. More information on the Canada Labour Code and BC Employment Standards can be found here [\[link\]](#).

Beyond the minimum legal requirements, employers may use benefit packages and competitive wages as a way to recruit and retain employees. However, not all employers are in the position to make these offers. In these cases, non-financial benefits and compensation packages can be explored. Examples could include flexible work arrangements, family friendly policies and job sharing. All benefit policies should be clearly outlined and fairly and consistently applied.

## **10. Termination**

While there are other policies that touch on termination, having a distinct policy that captures all those crossover areas leaves little room for confusion and miscommunication. Termination policies should outline how the employer intends to document employee wrong doings and associated disciplinary actions. Consistency and detailed record keeping may help employees reflect on past performance and avoid termination. In cases where termination is deemed necessary, precise documentation serves to protect employers from accusations of wrongful dismissal and other vulnerabilities.

## **11. Conflict of Interest**

Defining conflict of interest can vary greatly, depending on the area and scope of business you are engaged in. As such, employees need to be provided information and training on what is considered a conflict of interest. Policies on how to manage conflict of interest incidents including associated disciplinary action also need to be communicated so that all employees understand the risks involved.

## **12. Workplace Impairment/Drug and Alcohol Use**

Workplace impairment policies should provide all employees with clear guidelines on drug and alcohol use in the workplace while also acknowledging the permitted use of some substances. This policy straddles workplace health and safety with employee accommodations.

## **13. Code of Conduct**

The code of conduct should clearly outline expectations around behaviour, especially when it comes to the responsibilities and accountabilities of employees. Establishing a code of conduct is also an opportunity for employers to share their ideals around workplace culture, setting the tone for communication style, dress code and guide both formal and informal interactions across the organization.

## **Additional Policy Suggestions**

Employers may want to consider adding the following Human Resource policies in addition those outlined above.

Accessibility

Alternative work arrangements

Communication

Conflict Resolution

Contractual Employment

Outside Employment

Copyright

Expenses & Allowances

Performance Management

Professional Development

Retirement

## **Employee Handbook**

The purpose of an employee handbook is to provide all employees with an outline of the Human Resource policies and procedures in a clear and accessible format. Employee handbooks also provide a structural overview and share the overarching mission and vision of the business or organization. Employee handbooks may draw attention to key points the employer wishes to emphasize to staff, like compensation, benefits and additional perks. Ultimately, employee handbooks are communication tools for both employees and employers, a quick reference guide to workplace policies and employment standard basics. Employee handbooks should also be documented in a way that reflects the workplace culture; it should make the employees feel supported and that the employer and management team have taken care in developing policies and procedures with employees health and well-being in mind.

# Appendix D—Healthy Workplace Environment

## Creating healthy workplace environment

Demonstrating a commitment to culture creation and social engagement in the workplace makes good business sense as a health and happy workplace environment means fewer absences, better engagement and increased productivity. And while it may be difficult to capture the tangible outcomes of your efforts, you are likely to realize the cost benefits over time through greater employee retention and less frequent hiring cycles.

Constructing a positive workplace culture may be more complex than checking of a list of key elements. How it is defined and shaped is unique to the business or organization and always involves some unquantifiable aspects, too difficult to put into words. However, there are some reoccurring themes that seem to resonate across a variety of businesses and organizations, all reportedly adding to workplace satisfaction.

### ***Wellness programs***

This can mean a variety of things, from providing healthy snacks to delivering structured health and wellness programs. Some employer benefit packages provide extended health and wellness care like massages and counselling. In the place of extended health care, employers can explore other non-financial health care benefits (see more under Non-Financial Benefits).

### ***Community Involvement***

Volunteerism is in decline and has been for sometime. This can be attributed to growing costs of living and the increased dependency on two full time incomes for most families. As a result, less time and fewer resources are available for community involvement. Employers have the capacity to pool resources of employees, committing time to a cause that is meaningful to staff. Alternatively, employers can collect and match donations from employees, and present the raised funds to an organization selected by the staff. Collective action can satisfy the desire of individuals to contribute to the community in a positive way and with the support of their employer.

### ***Team Building Activities***

For some employers, team building activities are delivered as structured and/or guided engagements designed to gather feedback and encourage employee contribution. Some examples include strategic planning sessions and organization wide trainings. However, team building can be less contrived with a focus on fun and socializing. Celebrations, shared meals and impromptu gatherings can sometimes have a greater impact on team building than organized activities though both serve a purpose.

### ***Fair Employee Policies***

Committing to fair, transparent and consistent practices across the organization can have a tremendous impact on workplace culture and leave little room for preferential treatment, perceived or otherwise.

### ***Cleanliness***

Regardless of your standard of cleanliness in your home, a clean and comfortable workplace is always appreciated. Rotating cleaning schedules can help reduce the ill feelings that arise when cleaning falls to one or two individuals. Paying for a regular cleaning service will most likely be appreciated by all staff.

### ***Safe Environment***

Finally, an unsafe workplace environment will have a detrimental effect on staff and could lead to absenteeism, lack of engagement and low productivity. Identifying the source of insecurity is an obvious place to start however the cause may not be physical; providing staff with reporting mechanisms with confidentiality in mind could reveal individuals with patterns of harassment, bullying or inappropriate conduct.



# Appendix E— Recruitment Guide-

## Recruitment: guidelines for hiring

Once the labour needs of a business or organization have been assessed and the position clearly defined, it is time to create the job posting. Keep in mind that just as a resume describes the knowledge, skills and experience of a job seeker, a job posting is a means of communicating to potential candidates what is required for the role, what are the employers' expectations as to how it should be carried out, and most importantly what it would feel like to be a part of the team behind the operations.

### ***Marketing***

It is easy to overlook how the recruitment process is as much about marketing your business or organization as it is about finding the right candidate to hire. Ideally, this is where employee engagement starts. Take advantage of this opportunity to describe the workplace environment and culture, wellness and incentive programs in place to support the well being of employees and...

### ***Job Overview***

Make it succinct; a brief but clear job description will help job seekers with their own screening process. Unclear or poorly constructed job descriptions may result in mismatched expectations and misunderstandings as to what the job involves.

### ***Accountabilities***

This section should clearly layout all of the duties, responsibilities and tasks associated with the job. Again, short descriptions simply worded will avoid confusion for job seekers.

### ***Requirements***

This part of the job posting is critical to screening processes and should be constructed accordingly. Any training, education, knowledge and/or skills required to do the job are listed under requirements. If the employer is not willing to accept equivalencies to any of the job requirements, it should be noted in this section of the job posting. However, if the employer is willing to consider equivalencies, that needs to be clearly articulated in a logical way. For example, a two year diploma with two years of work experience may be considered equivalent to a bachelor degree.

Rigid job requirements can simplify the initial screening process but may also result in too few applicants left to consider. If this is the case, the employer may want to consider reviewing the job requirements; if they are not negotiable, expanding the search to include a broader geography may result in more qualified applicants.

### ***Additional preferences***

In addition to listing the skills, knowledge and experience required for the job, employers may want to include specific training or areas of expertise that would be an asset to the role, and could make the difference in the final selection process.

***Other information important to include***

If there are specific conditions that need to be met to fulfill all the responsibilities of the job, it is critical to list them in the job posting. For example, if the position requires working away from home, long hours or nights shifts. This is also true for jobs that may be physically taxing like requiring standing for prolonged periods or lifting heavy objects. These are often deal breakers for job seekers and so if they are absolutes, they need to be included.

***Ready to post!***

There are many options, online and in print, for posting a job and where an employer chooses to do so may be strategic. For example, if they are looking to fill a position that requires specific training, they may choose to post the position on the job board of the regulating body or professional organization. However, that does not preclude an employer from posting on more than one job board; in fact, it is recommended to post in multiple locations for greatest reach and to attract qualified applicants.

***Contact information and instructions on how to apply***

Employers should provide easy instructions for job seekers on how to apply and what to include with their application. If an employer only wants a resume, they need to make that known. If they are looking for a cover letter to accompany a resume, that information needs to be included in the application instructions. Fair hiring practices are grounded in consistency, help refine processes and provide a foundation for future hiring cycles. Finally, do not forget to leave state the preferred method of contact and include name, number and/or email of where to direct applications.

# Appendix F— Retention Strategies

## Retention Strategies

### Retention Starts with On-boarding

On-boarding gives employers an opportunity to set a good impression, not just for the benefit of new hires, but for the entire team. How the employer greets, communicates and interacts with new employees sets a precedent. This will either reiterate to all staff the kind of positive behaviour and conduct an employer extends across the workplace, or, in cases where the initial impression is less than ideal, further entrench negative feelings and contempt amongst staff, leaving the newest team members second guessing their decision to take the job.

Developing a checklist can help smooth the on-boarding process for new hires and work out some of the logistics in advance of their start date. Provided below are some points to consider when planning the on-boarding process.

#### ***Day One: Introductions and Orientation***

Employers who make themselves available to greet new hires on their first day demonstrate their commitment to employee engagement and longterm relationship building with all staff. However, this may not always be feasible and so thoughtful selection of who would stand in the place of an employer is recommended. Again, this first meeting will strongly influence a new employees' first impressions of their employer, colleagues and the overall workplace culture.

In some cases, it may be appropriate for a direct supervisor or manager to greet the new employees. Other options might include a colleague who will act as the go-to person throughout the orientation process, or, in the event the organizational structure lends itself to small teams or working groups, arranging for a more intimate orientation with the staff they will be working most closely can help establish healthy relationships early on.

Keep in mind, initial workplace orientations and introductions can be just as overwhelming for current employees as they are for the new hires. Preparing staff in advance could help mitigate some of the unease that arises when changes are introduced in the workplace. This means clear and regular communication to staff when a hiring cycle is initiated, and when the final selection process has lead to confirmation of a new hire.

#### ***Prepare in Advance: Workplace Readiness***

It is strongly recommended employers secure all material goods required for the job in advance of the new employees' start date. In some cases, workplace readiness infers having an assigned workspace ready with all the required tools and technology to do the job. Workplace readiness could also mean having safety equipment and essential workwear, or keys and security clearances, all of which should be prepared in advance.

While workplace readiness will vary depending on the nature of the work and the role of the new hires, the key elements can be documented in a check list which can also serve as confirmation of receipt and responsibility for replacement of any material items if necessary.

### ***Workplace Culture: Keep it Friendly!***

It is never too early to foster workplace culture and teamwork so it is good practice to use the on-boarding process as a relationship building exercise and encourage all staff members to welcome the new hires. An encouraging atmosphere can greatly reduce anxiety and stress that stem from starting a new job. Arranging for the new hires to sit in on a team meeting early on in the on-boarding process may provide them with the opportunity to observe some of the regular workplace practices and processes.

Finally, making sure new employees are acquainted with the Human Resource policies and procedures, and if available, providing them with their own copy of an Employee Handbook can help clarify some of the questions that will naturally arise at this stage. Remember, on-boarding processes can be continuously improved and refined and the feedback from new hires is a valuable resource to this process.

## **Training**

Many positions require employees to have professional designations, specific training and/or certifications. In these instances, new hires likely will not need extensive on-site training. For more generalist positions, it can be expected that there will be some on-site training required in order for the new hires to be successful in their new roles. A training plan outlining the training schedule, activities and learning objectives may need to be developed in advance of the new hires' start date. The training plan should specify who is responsible for training new employees, how progress will be measured and how follow up support will be delivered. Again, creating an on-site training checklist can streamline these processes and gathering feedback from outgoing staff or scheduling overlap time with incumbents can also greatly enrich the on-site training experience.

Failing to provide enough on-site training for new hires can leave them feeling unsupported and unprepared to deliver on the accountabilities associated with their role. This may result in poor outcomes or sudden departure, once again leaving the position unfilled after what may have been a lengthy hiring cycle. For the best return on investment, it is recommended employers allocate adequate time and resources into on-site training.

## **Professional Development**

Employees need to feel engaged in their roles and for some, that may mean consistent acquisition of new knowledge and skills that contribute to improved outcomes and increases in key performance measures. Others may feel they have reached a plateau in their current position and are looking to advance their career through promotion or more in-depth training. Either way, the professional development ambitions of all employees should be communicated to managers and documented in training plans. Of course training plans need to be aligned with the overarching goals of the business or organization and as such, consultation with business planning and finance departments may be necessary. It is recommended that employers devise an organization wide professional development training schedule and budget to keep employees engaged.

For employers with minimal training resources, there are other options that can be explored. For example, assigning mentors to less experienced staff or scheduling cross training within the organization. These kinds of in-house trainings should be formalized, arranged and scheduled in advance, with learning objectives and training goals documented. This helps with legitimizing the training experience for all staff and can be used to rationalize advancements, promotions and increases in compensation.

# Communication

Clear, consistent and transparent communication is critical to all operations and all staff interactions. Poorly communicated initiatives leads to low employee engagement while insufficient communication can leave too much room for employees to generate their own stories and explanations which can lead to perceived inequalities and preferential treatment. This can be easily avoided by taking the time to establish open lines of communication, committing to fair and equitable practices across the business or organization and by giving all staff opportunities and mechanisms to share their feedback and clarify any misunderstandings. Clear and open lines of communication are fundamental to building trust and social capital within a business or organization, which correlates to longterm employee engagement and retention.

In most cases, it is the employer that sets the general tone and expectations around communication in the workplace and as such, it is recommended the desired style of communication be crafted with purpose. This could infer differentiating a formal tone for client interactions from more informal communication used in-house. Other things to consider are the platforms, timing and frequency of communication across the organization which could also include meetings, reports and organization wide updates. Accessibility to express ideas or concerns can contribute to a sense of belonging and value which enhances engagement at all levels.

## Family Friendly Policies

Creating the kind of workplace atmosphere that keeps employees engaged may in part depend on the individual needs of employees outside the workplace. In many cases, this involves balancing professional and family responsibilities. For working parents with young children, flexible schedules with provisions around school and/or day care drop-off and pick-up times may be critical to maintaining employment. Other family friendly policies could be as simple as welcoming discussion around family issues in the workplace; employees with family responsibilities are more productive when they feel supported by their employer and their colleagues.

As family care responsibilities are unique to individuals, it is recommended that employers take into consideration the distinct needs of employees. While there may be limits to the kinds of accommodations an employer can make, the attempt to find a workable solution is key to employee engagement. Below are some points to consider when devising family friendly policies:

- acknowledging the importance of family commitments is a great place to start!
- review training practices; avoid scheduling training time outside of normal working hours (evenings, weekends), or full days for part-time staff
- long hours, impromptu after hour meetings or last minute coverage may be difficult to accommodate for employees with family obligations
- professional commitments that require travel may not be suitable to staff with family obligations
- flexible schedules, remote work options and job sharing are solutions with exploring with employees struggling to meet both work and family responsibilities
- be aware that child-care is not the only type of family care an employee may be providing
- family obligations and responsibilities do not fall solely on mothers or fathers; other family members may be primary caretakers
- consider the cultural and religious backgrounds of staff and how family celebrations may fall on days not recognized as provincial or national holidays for staff on leave to care for family, keeping them updated may help them feel connected and alleviate stress and lack of connection associated with reintegrating into the workplace

# Flexible Schedules, Job Sharing and Remote Work Options

Beyond accommodating employees with families, flexible schedules, job sharing and remote work options are incentives that appeal to many individuals. For some, the desire for a flexible work schedule relates to finding a more satisfying work-life balance and those accommodations with therefore have a direct impact on employee retention. For others, the option to work remotely part of the time may be the equivalent to an increase in earnings. Job sharing can alleviate the stress of limited transportation and/or childcare, two frequently cited barriers to employment.

Of course accommodating a variety of scheduling requests from multiple employees can be challenging and so it is recommended that employers consider the needs of the business or organization in contrast to flexible work option requests from staff prior to implementing organization wide policies. Ultimately, employee engagement and retention will be positively impacted if there is consultation, rationale explaining limitations to options presented in advance and demonstration of commitment to seeking out a flexible and creative solution on the part of the employer.

## Benefits and Non-Financial Incentives

Financial wellness is critical to the overall health and well-being of any individual and so it is understandable that financial benefits are near the top of the list of criteria for job seekers and employees alike. A robust benefit package can be a valuable incentive at the recruitment stage and can make up for a less competitive wage for existing employees.

Not all employers are in the position to offer comprehensive benefit packages, nor do they have the financial resources to remain competitive when it comes to recruiting and retaining staff. In these instances, exploring less conventional benefit packages and non-financial incentives may lead to the development of in-house wellness programs that make up for higher wages and extended benefits offered elsewhere. This is usually achieved by assessing the current workforces' needs and values and crafting ways to deliver...

here are some examples of non-financial incentives:

- condensed work weeks; extending the hours worked in a day to reduce the numbers of days worked in a week
- flexible work schedules, remote work opportunities and job sharing; as previously discussed, creating workable solutions around work schedules can increase engagement and even offset costs associated with commuting
- pay back programs; purchasing athletic, club or theatre passes in advance and taking incremental payments from pay checks over an extended period of time
- approaching local health and wellness practitioners about reduced group rates for services purchased in advance
- bringing health and wellness practitioners into the workplace to provide neck and shoulder massages to staff
- providing a staff meal at regular intervals (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)
- appreciation events, awards, acknowledgements; this is a highly adaptive incentive idea and the more personalized it is the more engaged the employees

# Communication

Clear, consistent and transparent communication is critical to all operations and all staff interactions. Poorly communicated initiatives leads to low employee engagement while insufficient communication can leave too much room for employees to generate their own stories and explanations which can lead to perceived inequalities and preferential treatment. This can be easily avoided by taking the time to establish open lines of communication, committing to fair and equitable practices across the business or organization and by giving all staff opportunities and mechanisms to share their feedback and clarify any misunderstandings. Clear and open lines of communication are fundamental to building trust and social capital within a business or organization, which correlates to longterm employee engagement and retention.

In most cases, it is the employer that sets the general tone and expectations around communication in the workplace and as such, it is recommended the desired style of communication be crafted with purpose. This could infer differentiating a formal tone for client interactions from more informal communication used in-house. Other things to consider are the platforms, timing and frequency of communication across the organization which could also include meetings, reports and organization wide updates. Accessibility to express ideas or concerns can contribute to a sense of belonging and value which enhances engagement at all levels.

## Family Friendly Policies

Creating the kind of workplace atmosphere that keeps employees engaged may in part depend on the individual needs of employees outside the workplace. In many cases, this involves balancing professional and family responsibilities. For working parents with young children, flexible schedules with provisions around school and/or day care drop-off and pick-up times may be critical to maintaining employment. Other family friendly policies could be as simple as welcoming discussion around family issues in the workplace; employees with family responsibilities are more productive when they feel supported by their employer and their colleagues.

As family care responsibilities are unique to individuals, it is recommended that employers take into consideration the distinct needs of employees. While there may be limits to the kinds of accommodations an employer can make, the attempt to find a workable solution is key to employee engagement. Below are some points to consider when devising family friendly policies:

- acknowledging the importance of family commitments is a great place to start!
- review training practices; avoid scheduling training time outside of normal working hours (evenings, weekends), or full days for part-time staff
- long hours, impromptu after hour meetings or last minute coverage may be difficult to accommodate for employees with family obligations
- professional commitments that require travel may not be suitable to staff with family obligations
- flexible schedules, remote work options and job sharing are solutions with exploring with employees struggling to meet both work and family responsibilities
- be aware that child-care is not the only type of family care an employee may be providing
- family obligations and responsibilities do not fall solely on mothers or fathers; other family members may be primary caretakers
- consider the cultural and religious backgrounds of staff and how family celebrations may fall on days not recognized as provincial or national holidays for staff on leave to care for family, keeping them updated may help them feel connected and alleviate stress and lack of connection associated with reintegrating into the workplace



## Performance Management

Performance management frameworks help employers set goals, monitor progress and implement change for the benefit of the business or organization as a whole. At the operational level, performance management metrics ensure existing procedures sufficiently meet output targets and are delivered within budget.

Individual performance is measured against predetermined goals that directly relate to the role and job description of an employee. However, by seating the individual performance management framework within the broader organizational context, employers have an opportunity to impress upon their employees their value and importance, thereby increasing their sense of connection.

At the employee level, performance management planning and goal setting should support the individual in their role through a process of constructive feedback, training and mentoring. Performance management processes should not be negative experiences, and frequent administration can help mitigate surprising results and outcomes. In the event an employee is consistently struggling to meet their performance goals, employers may want to consider providing additional support to the individual to help identify the source of the problem. If it is a systemic issue, benchmarking tools and strategies can be implemented to pinpoint the source of underperformance and relieve staff of the personal responsibility they may have assumed in the process.

## Other policies that support employee engagement:

diversity and inclusion policies, resources and training  
indigenous relations; policies that reflect and support indigenous perspectives  
cross-cultural communication policies and training opportunities  
sexual harassment training  
recognizing unconscious bias  
soft skill training



# Appendix G— Regional Resources

## Regional Resources

### ***KAST***

The Kootenay Association for Science & Technology (KAST) is a non-profit working to build a recognized, vibrant and prosperous technology community in the West Kootenay region of BC by connecting and solving problems for entrepreneurs.

### ***MIDAS***

MIDAS is an applied research, commercialization and digital fabrication training facility in Trail, B.C., focused on the metallurgical sector that exists in the region surrounding the Teck Trail Operations smelter. MIDAS makes recent advances in manufacturing technology (including 3D Printing) accessible to West Kootenay companies, entrepreneurs and students.

### ***Metal Tech Alley***

Metal Tech Alley is a cluster of great minds and opportunities that is leading the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Our multi-lateral, multi-dimensional partnership clears the path for you and your company to succeed, and involves leaders from industry, technology, institutions and government. Led by the Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation (LCIC) and its community partners of Trail, Rossland, Fruitvale, Montrose, Warfield, and Regional Districts Area A & B.

### ***Export Navigator***

The Export Navigator pilot offers businesses access to community-based export specialists who can provide a personalized, step-by-step approach to exporting (selling goods and services to anywhere outside of BC qualifies) and help connect your business to the market information, export programs, financial services, and business development experts it needs at every stage of the process.

### ***Community Futures***

Community Futures Central Kootenay is a not-for-profit community economic development organization. We are committed to helping people in the Central Kootenay region who are either operating or are planning to start their own business. Community Futures has offices in Trail and Nelson.

### ***Nelson Innovation Centre***

Supporting the development for the Kootenay region to be a destination for technology entrepreneurs and workers.

### ***Selkirk College - Advanced Manufacturing Applied Research***

Selkirk College's advanced manufacturing research and workforce development program involves primarily industry-driven projects in the areas of rapid prototyping, process optimization, materials testing and 3D visualizations. Projects rely on technologies like 3D printers and scanners, CNC machines and laser cutters, and robotics equipment. Most projects are funded through a combination of industry and grant contributions. Get in touch with the team to explore your project idea and available funding opportunities.

### ***Rural Development Institute (RDI)***

The Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute is located at Selkirk College and is a regional research centre with a mandate to support informed decision-making by Columbia Basin-Boundary communities through the provision of information, applied research and related outreach and extension support.

### ***Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation (LCIC)***

LCIC provides economic development services within the Lower Columbia Region and to serve as the 'first place of call' as opportunities develop. The LCIC works to develop a creative, dynamic and competitive business environment that fosters economic growth.

### ***West K Tech***

One-year employment program supporting West Kootenay employers with recruitment, on-boarding and training for technology-related positions; for businesses in manufacturing, tourism and technology sectors.

### **Castlegar Chamber of Commerce - Castlegar Economic Development**

Promotion of business and economic development in Castlegar and surrounding area

### **Nelson Chamber of Commerce**

The Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce (The Chamber) engages, supports, and informs the business community to shape community dialogue and identify issues of concern to our member businesses. The Chamber also engages elected officials at all levels of government to ensure the region's business interests are heard. This is of particular importance to our membership when advocating issues of concern to regional and municipal governments.

### **Trail Chamber of Commerce**

The Trail & District Chamber of Commerce advocates for the business community to support and encourage successful growth and development.

### **Basin Business Advisors (BBA)**

Economic capacity building in Basin communities by providing support to Basin businesses—encouraging newly established businesses to grow and prosper and contributing to the successful management of on-going businesses.

### **Columbia Basin Trust (CBT)**

**Columbia Basin Trust Impact Investment Fund:** the fund supports business opportunities that are higher risk and may not offer adequate financial returns to an investor, but will benefit Basin residents and communities in some other way i.e. job creation, addressing community need, help the environment or support arts and culture (<https://ourtrust.org/grants-and-programs-directory/impact-investment-fund/>)

**Columbia Basin Trust Career Internship Program:** provides eligible employers with up to 50 per cent of an intern's salary (up to \$25,000 over a seven to 12 month term) for full-time, career-focused positions that lead to permanent employment (<https://ourtrust.org/grants-and-programs-directory/career-internship-program/>).

### **Small Business BC (SMBC)**

A non-profit organization that exists to help BC entrepreneurs start and grow their own businesses. Like the entrepreneurs served, SMBC is a small business made up of a small and mighty team with a passion for entrepreneurship

# Appendix H— North American Industry Classification System

Food Manufacturing (NAICS 311)

Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing (NAICS 312)

Textile Mills (NAICS 313)

Textile Product Mills (NAICS 314)

Apparel Manufacturing (NAICS 315)

Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing (NAICS 316)

Wood Product Manufacturing (NAICS 321)

Paper Manufacturing (NAICS 322)

Printing and Related Support Activities (NAICS 323)

Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing (NAICS 324)

Chemical Manufacturing (NAICS 325)

Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing (NAICS 326)

Non-metallic Mineral Product Manufacturing (NAICS 327)

Primary Metal Manufacturing (NAICS 331)

Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing (NAICS 332)

Machinery Manufacturing (NAICS 333)

Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing (NAICS 334)

Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing (NAICS 335)

Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (NAICS 336)

Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing (NAICS 337)

Miscellaneous Manufacturing (NAICS 339)