



Youth Recruitment Strategies Research Project

Final Report
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(NBCDAG) & The Atlantic Workforce Partnership (AWP)

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1 Executive Summary

The labour market is changing. Older workers are retiring. Younger workers are entering the workforce. While this has always been the case, Canada is now experiencing a seismic demographic shift. Baby boomers, the generation born between 1946 and 1964 is now between the ages of 52 and 70. Over the next ten years, approximately one-third of Canadians will retire. Some boomers are already retired. Employers are experiencing challenges finding qualified replacements. In a sustainable workforce framework, the younger generation of workers, the “millennials”, the generation born from approximately 1980 to 2000, would be sufficient to offset those leaving the workforce. Some estimates suggest that in the near future they will represent nearly 50% of the labour force. They are now between the ages of 14 and 34. Some millennials are already in the workforce, while others are entering it now. Millennials want to work. Employers need staff. Despite significant challenges, there are opportunities to improve youth recruitment and retention in Atlantic Canada by promoting best practices and success stories.

Challenges

There are many factors that have exacerbated the problem facing young workers and employers. The global economy is still rebounding from the global recession of 2007. Baby boomers are holding on to their jobs for longer, past the age of 65. Similar to previous generations, youth who find it challenging to find work in Atlantic Canada pursue opportunities in other parts of the country.

There has also been a shift in the values of recent entrants to the workforce. Millennials are more motivated by maintaining a work-life balance than they are by money (Deloitte, 2016). They also prefer team work. Where previous generations could rely on long-term employment with one or two employers over the course of their working life, long-term employment with the same employer is now less common. This is in part due to an increased employer tendency to replace fixed costs (i.e., salaried employees) with variable costs (i.e., contract employees), a trend brought about by globalization. Many millennials carry a large student debt. This has caused them to defer many of the lifestyle choices that previous generations made early in their working lives, such as getting married, purchasing a home or travelling the world. They are also the first generation that grew up with the internet and smart phones. This comfort with technology makes millennials more adaptable to increasingly rapid changes in the workplace, which is a benefit to employers, but it also blurs the line between their professional and personal lives, which can make employers uncomfortable.

As values change, so too do motivations. Employers who are trying to attract millennials to work for them have struggled to “reach” them in two ways:

1. Many employers are gradually moving to digital job placements and maintaining a corporate social media presence. A background paper of the Federal Library of Parliament recognized that “The labour market is undergoing a period of major change: young workers are increasingly turning to social media to look for employment and for career advancement opportunities, and employers are becoming increasingly active on these platforms. Both job seekers and employers will need to adapt to this new reality and use these tools wisely” (Langlois, 2012); and
2. Some employers also have trouble understanding how to structure their job postings so they appeal to millennials. Many describe their companies and the jobs they need filled in ways that were attractive to previous generations of workers; they speak to the quality of their products and services and make reference to job security. Employers’ expectations are that their new hires are “job-ready”, that they have a combination of a good education and work experience. Some employers require a university degree whether it is relevant to the job or not. Those practices are still valid, but they may be less effective with millennials.

Methodology

In the current study, the researchers reviewed academic literature about the millennial generation as well as the recruitment and retention strategies of 50 companies that have successfully attracted young workers and integrated them into their operations. Of particular interest were the practices of small companies, those with fewer than 100 employees. The researchers have compiled a list of strategies and practices from 22 small companies that Atlantic Canadian employers can use to help broaden their existing strategies and appeal to younger workers. The practices that employers choose to adopt will vary depending on where they are located; the skill level of the employees they require; what type of business they are in; and the type of corporate culture they embrace.

Conclusions

Other than the specific strategies that are listed in this report, there are a number of general conclusions that can be drawn by looking at companies that successfully recruit young workers.

1. There are many strategies that have minimal costs associated with them that can be employed by themselves or in concert with others to attract a greater number of younger candidates.
2. Most strategies are scalable. Small companies can use many of the strategies employed by large companies, but scale them down to what they can afford both in terms of budget and time commitment.
3. In the same way that it is important to understand the market for their products, Canada's best employers understand the market for their employees. All generations of workers have different motivations. Small employers must identify and adapt to the motivations of young workers. Small Atlantic Canadian employers can attract the best and the brightest of the millennial generation by appealing to what motivates them.
4. Employers need to recognize how young workers view their companies. The tone, imagery and content of a company's website or social media presence reflects its values and will dissuade candidates who feel they do not align with their values. Small Atlantic Canadian employers should look at what their brands tell about the type of employees they would like to attract and should narrow the gap.
5. Employers could consider continuous recruitment as an approach to succession planning. As more experienced staff retire, employers will need to attract and retain younger workers. Starting the search only after the need becomes apparent will likely lead to rushed and therefore poor hiring decisions. Atlantic Canadian employers should always be searching for qualified employees. Ideally they should be developing relationships with them before they are needed. Maintenance of a list of hireable candidates and periodical contact is suggested.
6. Avoidance of a one-size-fits-all approach for recruiting employees is recommended. There are recruitment strategies that are better suited to highly skilled jobs and those that are better suited for filling entry level positions. For example, the use of LinkedIn appears to be more effective for recruiting higher skilled candidates, while the federal government's Job Bank appears more effective for entry-level positions (Malatest, 2016).
7. Employers should post the qualifications that match the job skills. By requiring post-secondary degrees for entry-level positions or unskilled positions, employers eliminate ideal candidates and may in fact increase the salary expectation for the position.
8. Employers can consider applicant tracking. While applicant tracking software is typically used by larger employers, sophisticated metrics are not required. Employers should be aware of what

mechanisms are used to promote or post a position; its cost; time invested; number of applications received; number of interviews granted; number of applicants hired; and the cost per hire. Tracking could be populated on a spreadsheet and monitored over time, increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the recruitment process.

2 Methodology

The purpose of this report is to identify and analyze innovative and successful recruitment and retention strategies, including career awareness, implemented by industry specifically targeting youth aged 16-30 years. The report addresses the following objectives:

- Summarize the labour market context of youth (Atlantic provinces and Pan-Canadian);
- Identify innovative and successful recruitment and retention strategies implemented by industry (Atlantic, Pan-Canadian, and International);
- Summarize potential challenges and gaps identified by key stakeholders (Atlantic, Pan-Canadian and International); and
- Identify youth recruitment and retention strategies that may be utilized to inform areas of future collaboration.

To that end, the researchers conducted a literature review of government programs and academic journals. They reviewed papers published by industry organizations and reviewed the blogs of human resource professionals who specialized in youth recruitment.

The website postings of 50 different businesses were reviewed to determine their recruitment strategies. Many of these were also listed on Mediaparc's list of *Canada's Top 100 Employers for Young People*. While some strategies employed by larger companies can be effectively used by the smaller size companies that are found in Atlantic Canada, most require adjustments in scale. To help identify effective practices that are used by companies similar in size to Atlantic Canadian firms, the researchers defined Small companies to be those with 100 or fewer employees and all others to be Mid-Large. Table 1 shows the industry sectors of the 50 companies reviewed.

Table 1
Companies reviewed by sector and number of employees

Small (100 or fewer employees)		Mid-Large (More than 100 employees)	
Sector	Number of employees	Sector	Number of Employees
1. Information Technology	≤ 100	1. Management Consulting	> 100
2. Engineering	≤ 100	2. Mining	> 100
3. Travel & Tourism	≤ 100	3. Transportation	> 100
4. Food Services	≤ 100	4. Retail	> 100
5. Transportation	≤ 100	5. Law Firm	> 100
6. Information Technology	≤ 100	6. Information Technology	> 100
7. Bio-Life sciences	≤ 100	7. Media	> 100
8. Green Technology	≤ 100	8. Fitness	> 100
9. Information Technology	≤ 100	9. Information Technology	> 100
10. Information Technology	≤ 100	10. Marketing	> 100

11. Management consulting	≤ 100	11. Information Technology	> 100
12. Advertising	≤ 100	12. Engineering	> 100
13. Information Technology	≤ 100	13. Information Technology	> 100
14. Education & Training	≤ 100	14. Food Services	> 100
15. Gaming	≤ 100	15. Financial Services	> 100
16. Marketing	≤ 100	16. Health	> 100
17. Health	≤ 100	17. Information Technology	> 100
18. Bio-Life sciences	≤ 100	18. Information Technology	> 100
19. Robotics	≤ 100	19. Hazardous Waste	> 100
20. Financial	≤ 100	20. Information Technology	> 100
21. Financial	≤ 100	21. Clothing	> 100
22. Recycling	≤ 100	22. Mining	> 100
		23. Construction	> 100
		24. Information Technology	> 100
		25. Engineering	> 100
		26. Food Services	> 100
		27. Retail	> 100
		28. Information Technology	> 100

The researchers identified the more successful recruitment and retention strategies used by small companies in Canada and the US and convened a panel of Atlantic Canadian industry stakeholders with representation from the Science, Transportation and Information Technology sectors. These stakeholders provided their opinion on whether these practices were being used within their respective fields in Atlantic Canada; if so, were they effective; and if not, why not. They were also asked if there were other practices that their industries followed that could be replicated by small employers in the region.

Finally, four brief case studies were developed of Canadian businesses with fewer than 100 employees that have successfully tailored their recruitment strategies and attracted the human resources they required.

3 Limitations of Research

This study relied extensively on secondary data sources such as previous published research, industry reports and internet searches. The static nature of secondary research restricted the exploration of additional ideas and strategies of interest.

While some of the secondary source research was from Atlantic Canada, most of the examples were from outside the region. There were few examples of small Atlantic Canadian companies that have documented and evaluated their recruitment and retention strategies. Recruitment strategies are in part a reflection of local markets, economies and cultures, so the applicability of strategies from outside the region to companies within Atlantic Canada should be considered carefully. The researchers did validate the strategies with three industry stakeholders, each of whom concurred that the strategies are valuable. They also noted that some of them are effective with specific target populations (e.g., highly skilled applicants) or specific industries.

4 Project Background

Young Atlantic Canadians entering the labour force face various challenges. In 2016, preliminary estimates have already pointed to slow economic growth. International trade is also slowing, reducing demand for Canadian exports. Older workers, many with limited retirement savings, are keeping their jobs longer.

These factors have resulted in a highly competitive job market. Currently, it is a demand driven labour market, but in the near future, that will change; there are already employers in Atlantic Canada who experience challenges in recruiting qualified workers. The older “baby boom”

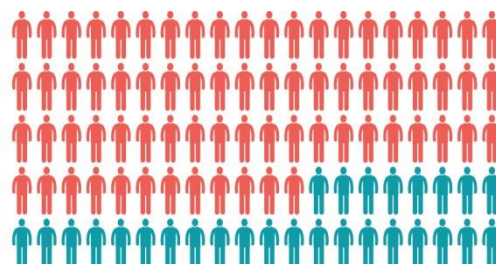
generation is retiring and it is estimated that “millennials” will make up 48% of the labour force by 2020.¹ It should be noted that the Atlantic Provinces have four of the five lowest fertility rates in the country (Statistics Canada, Births and total fertility rate, by province and territory, 2012).

Coupled with a higher level of provincial out-migration (Statistics Canada, 2012), Atlantic Canada is less able than other regions to maintain the number of workers required to offset retiring workers.

This is a significant demographic shift, but while it may be large in scale, workforce adaptation is not an uncommon experience in Canada. In Atlantic Canada, large scale transformations have included the decline of the fisheries, the discovery of offshore oil and gas, the signing of long-term ship building contracts and the integration of technology into virtually every industry. Finding qualified workers to replace retiring ones is a challenge, but it does not mean that employers need to eliminate practices that have worked for years. With government support in the form of tools, best practices and demonstrable examples of what other successful small employers have achieved, businesses can add to their recruitment strategies and attract the talent they need. In addition to what has worked in the past, more of the region’s small and medium sized enterprises need to better understand the motivations of the millennials and adapt their recruitment strategies to appeal to them.

72%

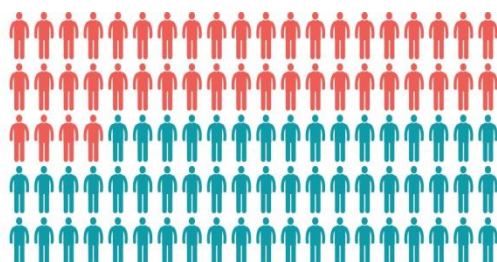
of Millennials are willing to sacrifice a higher salary for a more personally and professionally fulfilling career.



5 Changes in Motivations and Strategies

44%

of Millennials would like to leave their current employers in the next two years.



Employers often have multiple generations of workers, including the baby-boom generation, generation X, generation Y (Millennials) and generation Z. Each generation has its own workplace values and motivations. According to a report by Deloitte, Millennials *feel a lack of leadership-skill development and feelings of*

being overlooked are compounded by larger issues around work/life balance, the desire for flexibility, and a conflict of values. Forty-four percent of Millennials say, if given the choice, they would like to leave their current employers in the next two years. (Deloitte, 2016).

¹ (Brazen, 2016) “Baby boomers” are those who were born in the post war era 1946-1964. “Generation X”ers are those from 1965-1982. “Millennials” are those born from 1982-2002.

Most employers have established recruitment and retention strategies that have worked well with previous waves of employees; however, over the past ten years those strategies have been less effective in attracting millennials who are big users of social media. Initially, employers characterized millennials as having high salary and career expectations. However, research has identified that while there has been a change in values, millennials are not primarily focused on high salaries; other factors weigh heavier. In a 2011 report in the Ivey Business Journal, millennials are described as “well educated, skilled in technology, very self-confident, able to multi-task, and have plenty of energy. They have high expectations for themselves, and prefer to work in teams, rather than as individuals. Millennials seek challenges, yet work life balance is of utmost importance to them” (Gilbert, 2011). Seventy-two percent of millennials are willing to sacrifice a higher salary for a more personally and professionally fulfilling career (Albritton, 2011).

Most youth are aware that some form of post-secondary education and training is beneficial to compete for the limited employment opportunities. Unlike previous generations, millennials often graduate with significant student debt. Those debts figure prominently in their salary expectations, even when starting out.

Youth who do not pursue a post-secondary education or training may not be fully prepared to seek out employment. In addition, those who focus solely on academic achievement may lack the necessary workplace skills to succeed. These include the soft skills that can be learned in volunteer jobs, in civic engagement, or in participating in extracurricular activities. Increasingly, labour market information is delivered to allow youth and their parents to use it in career planning. This is a valuable development because one-on-one career counselling is not possible when the ratio of students to guidance counsellors in most high schools in Canada is approximately 500:1 (Malatest, 2009).

On the supply side, all jobseekers including youth use a variety of mostly online employment services to find work. For example, Job Bank is a federal government website with tools for employers, job seekers and career planners. It is the most common place for job seekers to look for work. It also has detailed labour market information about job market trends and human resource management support.

These types of job posting sites “put the emphasis on prospective employees, on their acquisition of skills, on how they present themselves, and in matching them to job opportunities” (Zizys, 2014). Using these services in addition to some career counselling, candidates learn how to write resumes, apply for jobs and prepare for interviews. “Informed education choices early in life can help young Canadians obtain the skills and experience necessary to find work quickly, avoid unnecessary debt and get a better start to their careers” (Job Bank). While youth from several generations have used the Job Bank as a resource when looking for employment, youth from the millennial generation also rely extensively on social media networks. As previously noted in the Deloitte report, employed millennials are ready and willing to leave their job and switch employers if they are not provided with an opportunity to develop their career. To do this, they “follow” employers they might consider working for based on how they present themselves publically and in social media. This gives them an understanding of their target employer’s corporate culture and how well it aligns with their own values. It also improves their chances of becoming aware of jobs that companies may not post publically.

On the demand side, private sector companies, both large and small, have traditional expectations of the employee-employer relationship. As previously noted, employers have developed relatively static recruitment strategies, largely because they have been very effective in the past. These include posting positions on their website, word-of-mouth, attending job fairs, classified ads and job search sites such as Monster.ca. Many employers also look internally to find candidates. This includes promoting staff as well as asking staff for referrals. In both these cases, jobs are not publically posted.

Rather than adapting to the emerging reality of needing to broaden their approach to recruitment and retention, traditional employers continue to expect all new entrants to be job-ready. In other words, applicants should have the numeracy and literacy skills provided by secondary school, supplemented with the critical thinking provided by post-secondary training, and some form of workplace experience. The greatest challenge for youth is often a lack of practical work experience. In many instances the skills required to do a job can only be obtained on the job. Summer jobs, internships and co-op placements are all established methods that help youth acquire the necessary experience for the workplace. Many employers participate in these programs, but more may need to be done — “not only for the purpose of supporting the transition of youth into the workforce, but also for the sake of businesses, to meet their recruitment needs and contribute to their bottom-line results” (Zizys, 2014). The adoption of a business process management approach to human resources may help smaller companies not only adapt to the current demographic shift, but also be prepared for future changes in the labour force.

Potential benefits for employers are typically not realized until further in the future, while they have immediate considerations such as cost and untried practices. “Thus, while individual employers may engage in workforce development, expanding the scale of these practices requires deliberate, demand-focused strategies that engage employers, often in partnership with educators, employment services, economic development offices and other labour market stakeholders” (Zizys, 2014)

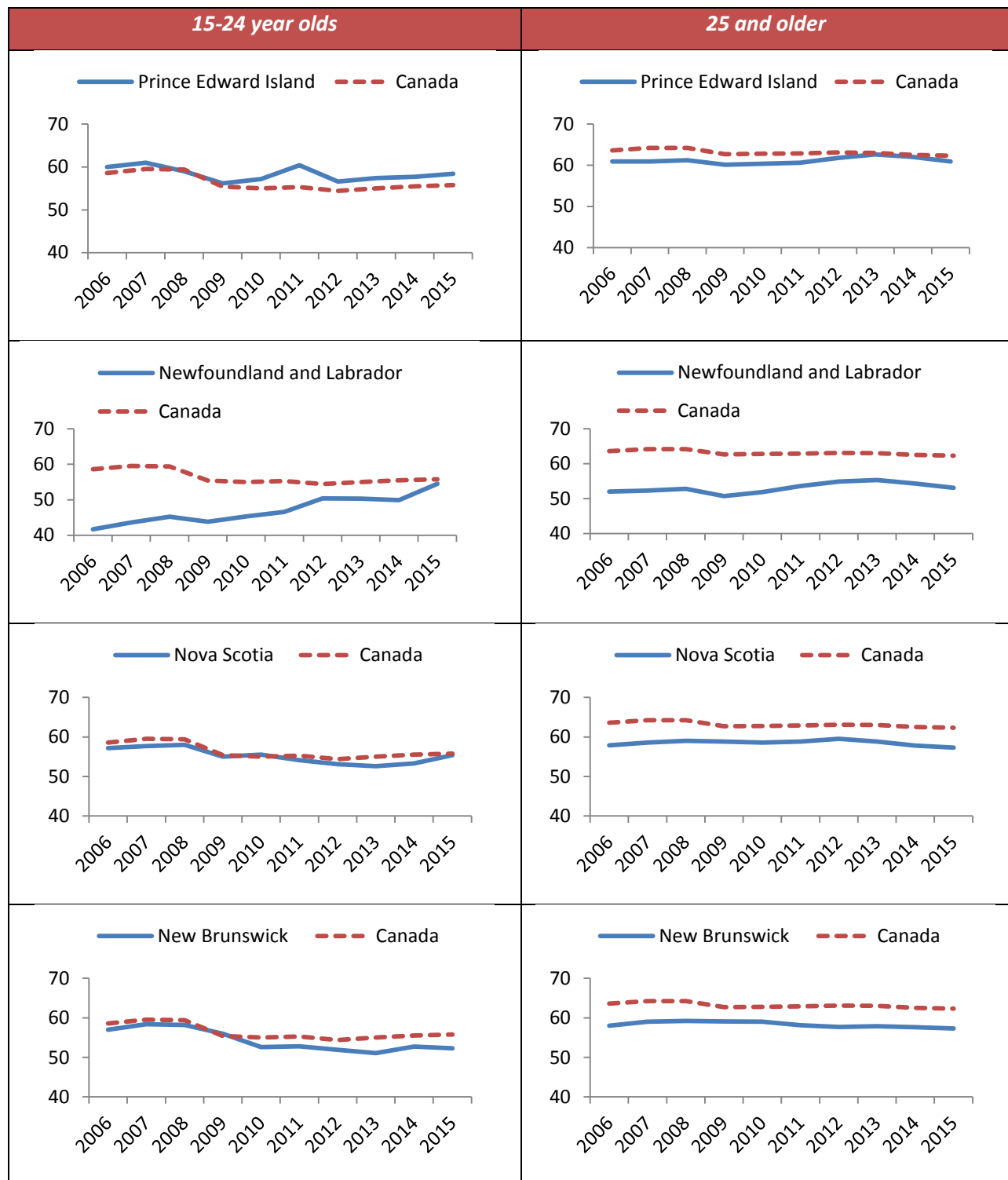
6 Labour Market Context for Youth

6.1 The Economy in Atlantic Canada

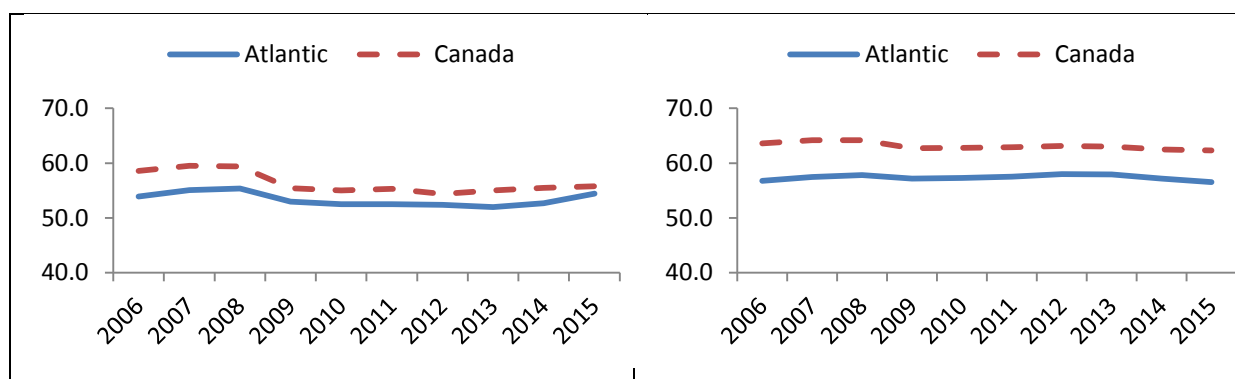
In Canada the labour force participation rate of 15 to 24-year-olds (the percentage who are employed or seeking employment) declined by 3.1 percentage points between 2008 and 2014 (67.3% in 2008 to 64.2% in 2014). (Bernard, 2015). This was the first significant, prolonged decline in youth labour force participation since the early 1990s; following the 1990-1992 recession the youth participation rate fell from 71.2% (1989) to 61.5% (1997). The participation rates among full-time and part-time students 15-24 years of age were markedly lower than for non-students. The participation rate for part-time students in that age group ranged from 80.1% (2008) to 75.2% (2014). For full-time students the participation rate ranged from 46.1% (2008) to 42.1% (2014) (Statistics Canada, 2014). “The Atlantic Provinces were the only region where the participation rate increased among 20 to 24-year-olds from 2008 to 2014, rising by one percentage point to 73.6%. Almost all of this increase was the result of an increase in non-students’ labour force participation” (Bernard, 2015).

Looking at employment trends from 2006-2015 in the column on the left in Figure 1 and comparing the Atlantic Canadian provinces against national averages, a number of things become clear. Newfoundland and Labrador has made steady gains; rates are currently on par with the national average. Since 2008, youth in PEI have enjoyed higher employment rates than the national average. Youth employment rates in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have been relatively unchanged and remain just below the national average. However, when compared with the employment rates of those 25 years of age and older within the same province (the charts on the right in Figure 1), youth aged 15-24 have lower rates in each province.

Figure 1
Canadian and Atlantic Canadian employment rates² in those 15-24 compared with those 25 and older



² The employment rate (formerly the employment/population ratio) is the number of persons employed expressed as a percentage of the population 15 years of age and over.



Source: CANSIM Table 282-0087

One of the challenges facing all sectors of the economy in Atlantic Canada is the out-migration of youth. It comprises two movements. The first is urbanization, the movement of people (including youth) to larger urban areas from rural ones. This is a global phenomenon. The second is the inter-provincial movement of youth and young adults in order to find work. This has been a long-term phenomenon for Atlantic Canada. Labour market projections take into account inter-provincial labour mobility; however, significant demographic and economic changes such as the departure of the baby boomers from the job market; the drop in the price of oil and the devaluation of the Canadian dollar make it difficult to forecast out-migration.

6.2 Government Programs

All governments in Canada have recognized the challenges faced by youth when entering the labour force, particularly in obtaining their first job. The Youth Employment Strategy (YES) is “the Government of Canada's commitment to help young people, particularly those facing barriers to employment, get the information and gain the skills, work experience and abilities they need to make a successful transition into the labour market.” YES has three program streams: Skills Link, Career Focus, and Summer Work Experience (Government of Canada, 2014).

Skills Link provides funding to businesses, organizations, public health and educational institutions, band or tribal councils, and municipal governments throughout the country for their youth projects. The program provides youth between the ages of 15 and 30 with services tailored to their specific needs. Its aim is to help them find meaningful employment and fulfilling careers.

Career Focus provides funding for projects that facilitate youth transition to employment. This could include career-related work experience and workshops to bolster advanced employability skills.

Summer Work Experience is designed to provide summer jobs to students 15-30 years of age. It is available to not-for-profit organizations, public sector employers and businesses with 50 or fewer employees.

Provincial governments, through Canada Job Fund Agreements, are connecting skills training with local employers' needs as well as providing needed job experience. This is a shift. Past training programs were structured around the trainee or job-seeker, rather than the employer. The Canada Job Grant, in contrast, requires a work attachment with an employer pursuing training (whether currently employed by the employer or having an offer of employment upon completion of training) for an individual to receive training. The program is now focused on meeting employers' needs.

Provincial governments in Atlantic Canada also place an emphasis on supporting youth gain work experiences to support their education and training. The provincially funded programs targeting youth available in Atlantic Canada are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Key Youth Employment Programs and Services Delivered by Provincial Governments in Atlantic Canada

Province	Program	Web Link
Newfoundland and Labrador	Service Agreements for Youth and Students (SAYS)	http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/students/says.html
	Linkages	http://www.aes.gov.nl.ca/students/linkages.html
	Partnership in Academic and Career Education and Employment (PACEE)	For details on the PACEE initiative, please contact: Senior Manager, Labour Market Partnerships Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour Employment and Training Programs Telephone: (709) 729-1045
	Youth Opportunities Marine Co-op Program	www.mpsh.ca/students/Student%20and%20Youth%20Employment%20Programs.pdf
	Small Enterprise Co-op Placement Assistance Program (SECPAP)	https://www.mun.ca/coop/employers/funding/
	Student Work and Service Program (SWASP)	http://communitysector.nl.ca/swasp
	Graduate Transition to Employment Program (GTEP)	https://www.mun.ca/cdel/jobs_for_students/GTEP/
Prince Edward Island	Graduate Mentorship Program	https://www.workpei.ca/job-seekers/
	Post- Secondary Program	http://skillspei.com/programs-for-job-seekers/post-secondary-student
	Career Prep Program	http://skillspei.com/programs-for-employers/career-prep-program-employers
	Jobs for Youth Program	http://www.gov.pe.ca/ial/jobsforyouth
	Youth Futures Council	https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/workforce-and-advanced-learning/about-youth-futures-council
New Brunswick	Youth Employment Fund (YEF)	http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.201375.Youth_Employment_Fund.html
	One Job Pledge (Workforce Expansion)	http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.201311.Wage_Incentive_-_One-Job_Pledge_.html
	Employment Services for the New Brunswick Aboriginal Information Communications Technology (NBAICT) Project	www.jedinb.ca

Province	Program	Web Link
	Youth Entrepreneurship Development Initiative (YEDI)	http://www.acoa-apeca.gc.ca/eng/publications/FactSheetsAndBrochures/Pages/WorkingwithYoungEntrepreneurs.aspx
	New Brunswick Teen Apprentice Program (NBTAP)	https://www.nbtap.ca
Nova Scotia	Graduate to Opportunity	http://novascotia.ca/gto
	Co-op Education Incentive	http://novascotia.ca/programs/co-op-education-incentive/
	Student Summer Skills Incentive	http://novascotia.ca/programs/student-summer-skills-incentive/
	Energy Training Program	http://energy.novascotia.ca/industry-development/energy-training-program
	Youth Apprenticeship Programs	https://nsapprenticeship.ca/apprentices/youth-apprenticeship

A British Columbia Centre for Employment Excellence study suggested that governments should “establish benchmarks for what constitutes good employment practices relative to youth, and incorporate reference to those benchmarks in their procurement practices” (Zizys, 2014). This could take the form of providing points to companies that demonstrate their effort to be “youth employment friendly.” This is similar to what some governments do currently for environmental sustainability; a small number of points in a points-based procurement process are given to proponents who adhere to environmental best practices. This has the impact of creating value in adherence.

7 Challenges and Gaps

While the country as a whole is experiencing a demographic shift, the impact is being felt differently in various sectors depending on what proportion of the sector is close to retirement and how easy it is to attract new entrants. This has created a need for readily available and up-to-date Labour Market Information (LMI). Sources of LMI data exist at both the federal and provincial level. The federal government’s Job Bank website (www.jobbank.gc.ca) was launched on March 6, 2014. The new site merges the Working in Canada portal – formerly designed to provide occupational information specific to foreign workers interested in moving to Canada – and the Job Bank portal – formerly an electronic listing of jobs provided by employers across Canada. The Job Bank website is now the Government of Canada’s leading source for advertising vacant job positions and disseminating learning and labour market information. An on-going study of this single-window approach to disseminating LMI data shows that while employers, job seekers and career counsellors appreciate the comprehensiveness of the available information, the timeliness of the information is not always ideal (Malatest, 2016). It is also important to note the different frequencies with which types of the LMI data are updated. For example the Census is completed every five years; the Annual Survey of Manufacturers and Logging is completed annually; and Statistics Canada’s Labour Force Survey is completed monthly. In addition, recent enhancements have been made to the Job Vacancy Survey, which have resulted in more accurate data at the local level. Similar enhancements have been made to the Wage Survey. The expectations among economists is that local wage data will also become more reliable (Malatest, 2016).

There are labour force shortages materializing in a variety of professions. In Canada, these have been researched extensively by sector councils, industry-led partnership organizations that receive federal funding to address labour market and skills development issues. In reviewing the type of strategies employed by industry organizations and sectors of the economy in trying to attract and retain youth, the researchers reviewed strategies developed by the following sector councils and industry associations:

- Asia Pacific Gateway Skills Table
- Association du camionnage du Québec
- Association forestière des deux rives
- Automotive Sector Council of Nova Scotia
- BioTalent Canada
- British Columbia Coastal Forest Industry
- Canadian Supply Chain Sector Council
- Community University for Recovery Alliance
- Enviro compétence
- Geoscientists Canada
- Le Comité sectoriel de main-d'œuvre en transformation alimentaire
- Maison régionale de l'industrie et de la table estrienne de concertation formation-emploi
- Mining Industry Human Resource Council
- Ontario Tourism Education Corporation
- Ordre des ingénieurs forestiers du Québec
- PEI Bioalliance
- PEI Tourism Sector Council

At a sectoral level, promoting and attracting new recruits to a profession begins at a young age. That is why many industry associations and provincial governments try to make youth aware of the educational requirements of various careers as early as possible. For example, the Ontario Tourism Workforce Development Strategy includes the action item to: develop pre-employment and educational programming to engage key labour pools (youth, aboriginal, newcomers, mature workers, and persons living with disabilities). The intention is to engage students at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary level and leverage provincial and national student scholarship programs to support post-secondary studies in the sector (Ontario Tourism Education Council, 2012). Students should be encouraged to access the federal Job Bank site to use the Explore Career feature to determine educational pathways, employment outcomes. The earlier students begin thinking about career options, the sooner they can align their educational choices to support those career pathways.

In a study for the Mining Industry Human Resource Council, researchers identified 16 recruitment strategies specifically to attract youth. These included:

- Support education and training partnerships with secondary and post-secondary institutions;
- Provide access to mine sites and equipment for post-secondary training;
- Brand the industry as both safe and environmentally responsible; and
- Promote excitement, challenge, opportunity for advancement, and global work experiences.

The strategies speak to students' desires to have hands on experience. The promotion of the profession as exciting and the industry as environmentally responsible also speaks to millennials' lifestyle and values (Mining Industry Human Resource Council, 2008). A similar approach is used in the trucking sector. In Atlantic Canada, trucking is promoted on the basis of lifestyle: the ability to be your own boss and be on the open road (Malatest, 2016).

Some industries are also adjusting their communications to reflect millennials' preferences. For example, the Canadian supply chain sector employs over 700,000 people to facilitate the procurement and logistics of goods and services. The sector introduced a pilot project intended to attract youth to work in the supply chain. Researchers provided 22 youth (aged 18-24) with a three week career awareness workshop called *Linking Up*, followed by a two-month work placement. The goal was to make the youth job-ready. It is interesting to note that "of the 22 participants accepted into the program, 6 had learned of the program through Facebook, 3 participants heard of *Linking Up* through LinkedIn and other 3 from internet search engines" (Van Horne Institute, 2015).

While the gap in future labour supply is quickly becoming a reality, particularly in highly skilled or technical professions, the industries that will have the best success in recruiting top candidates will be those that:

- Are able to connect using the networks millennials use;
- Promote values that align with millennials; and
- Can offer the work-life balance millennials are looking for.

When evaluating entry level candidates the emphasis is on soft (or non-cognitive) skills according to a recent survey conducted on behalf of the Business Council of Canada. "The soft skills most in demand included collaboration and teamwork, communication skills, problem-solving skills and people and relationship-building skills. While grades and educational credentials are certainly important to recruiters, companies are increasingly focused on finding people who can work in teams, solve complex problems and show a willingness to learn" (Aon Hewitt , 2016).

Presented are the top three responses by Canadian employers to the question: When evaluating candidates, which of the following skills and capabilities are most important to your company?

The survey had previously been conducted in 2013 and one significant difference was the emphasis placed on "Functional Knowledge." Previously it was ranked 7th. It was noted that the relative importance of hard and soft skills depended on the position being filled. In the machine-intensive sectors such as natural resource and manufacturing, companies' recruiting efforts focused on a strong suite of hard skills. Companies in more customer facing sectors such as the financial and service sectors were more interested in candidates' soft skills. (Aon Hewitt , 2016).



This is largely because the technology employed in manufacturing is increasingly customized for the company/user, which means it cannot be taught in schools, only on the job, and generally by the supplier of the technology (Deloitte, The Skills Gap in US Manufacturing: 2015 and Beyond, 2015).

As previously noted, one problem some employers have with millennial candidates is their salary expectations. From some employers' perspectives they are not realistic for entry level positions. This stands in contrast to what studies of millennials have documented: that they are not primarily motivated by money. Employers who are negotiating with qualified millennial applicants could consider offering more of what truly motivates millennials: flexibility, work-life balance and learning opportunities.



8 Youth Recruitment and Retention Strategies

In reviewing the type of strategies employed by industry organizations and sectors of the economy in trying to attract and retain youth, the researchers looked at companies across a range of industries. For example, the Construction Association of Nova Scotia partners with a number of stakeholders to create the Building Futures for Youth program. Partners include, high schools, the Department of Education, the Nova Scotia Community College system, the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency and industry employers. Through a competitive selection process, the program offers students in grades 10 and 11 an opportunity to obtain on-the-job experience in paid work placement. It also provides them with pre-apprenticeship hours and the experience counts as three high school co-op credits.

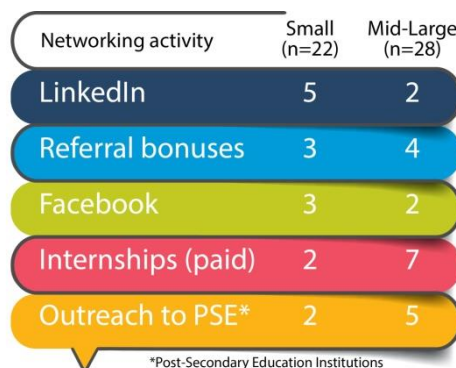
The strategies used are divided into ten categories. The researchers have separated out strategies employed by Small companies (100 or fewer employees) from Mid-Large companies (over 100 employees).

8.1 Networking

Among the 50 companies reviewed, 28 developed and used their networks to help fill positions.

Networking can take a variety of forms. At its most basic form, companies can use their own employees to help recruit new ones. This word-of-mouth networking to spread the word about a job posting is still widely used in industries that are not office-based or do not make extensive use of computers. For example, the trucking industry in Atlantic Canada relies extensively on word-of-mouth recruiting (Malatest, 2016).

Companies also use referral bonuses to get their staff involved in the recruitment process. Larger companies offer much larger bonuses (\$1,000-\$5,000 depending on the position); however, bonuses can be customized to match company budgets. The bonuses offered by smaller companies were in the hundreds. In one case, it was dinner for two at a local restaurant. Referral bonuses make employees feel that management is open to their input in the hiring process. According to recent international research of over 3,000 human resource professionals, the top recruitment sources for highly skilled positions are social networks (43%); internet career sites (42%); and employee referrals (34%). It is interesting to note that the loyalty (duration) of employees engaged through referrals is higher than through the other two sources (Gager, 2016).



Corporate databases of clients and suppliers can be used in the same way as word-of-mouth in certain situations.

A company with a well established social media presence can post a job on a site such as Facebook and have it seen by all its followers. The larger the number of followers, the more effective a recruitment option becomes. One company emailed

its staff and asked them to post the job on their social media sites as well. LinkedIn appeared to be used by smaller businesses for job postings. LinkedIn also has a variety of recruitment tools to target specific skills in specific geographies. For example, B.I.D. Bulk Material Handling in Woodstock, New Brunswick has fewer than 50 employees and has almost 400 followers of its LinkedIn page. It posts messages about its accomplishments on a regular basis and also uses the site to reply to customer inquiries.

Another networking option is outreach to post-secondary institutions. This is generally most appropriate when the company requires a worker with some form of post-secondary credential. Colleges and universities are often eager partners when companies provide paid internships and co-op placements. These forms of networking are more involved in terms of the time required to develop the relationships with the training institutions; however, they are also longer lasting. Co-ops are paid work placements of a limited duration, generally one semester or three months. These count as part of the students' credit attainment. Colleges and universities also hold job fairs. Companies interested in students graduating from specific programs find these job fairs valuable. Some colleges are also receptive to having an industry "guest lecturer" speak to a class to give students an opportunity to ask questions to someone working in their field of interest. Only one company out of the 50 reviewed used the services of an employment agency.

Innovative approaches:

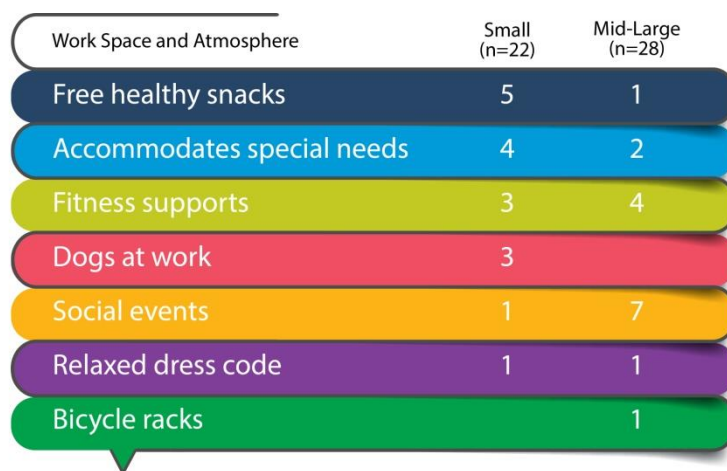
- Two companies used contests to generate interest in their job postings. For example, an IT company issued a programming contest that if solved, would provide the email address of the president where they could send their resume. These companies were looking for highly skilled candidates and found the contests helped ensure applicants were invested in the recruitment process.
- A retail company uses undercover recruiters. It produces “We’re hiring” business cards and gives them to employees to distribute to people who they think demonstrate great customer service.

Another change in employer behaviour is the trend toward continuous recruitment. Whether companies are experiencing turnover, or planning on expansion, welcoming on-going submissions and continuing to review resumes is becoming more common. This has the benefit of reducing the cost of recruitment, reducing job vacancy times; and reducing stress on existing employees (Matta, 2014).

8.2 Work Space / Atmosphere

Among the 50 companies reviewed, 28 used their workplace features to help attract applicants.

Smaller companies appear to be more willing to create a work space and atmosphere that can be used as a selling point for younger employees. This may be due to the low/no cost nature of these initiatives. While the social events offered by larger companies can be very involved and expensive, smaller companies can encourage social events by celebrating employee milestones with a pizza lunch.



Many of the other actions that resulted in a pleasant workplace atmosphere do not have high costs and allow young employees the flexibility to express their individuality.

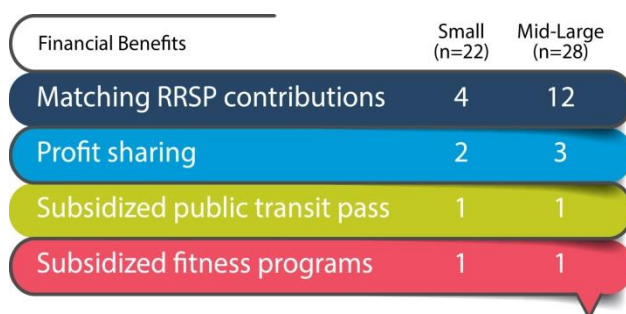
Innovative approaches:

- No desktop computers. Everyone works with a laptop. No dedicated offices. First in the office decide where to work within the office.
- Many of the IT companies reviewed had hammocks and games rooms.
- In the construction sector, promoting safe, inspected and fully maintained equipment is considered a strong attraction to new entrants to the field.

The use of spare rooms to accommodate individuals requiring space for personal reasons, including religious observances, parental obligations or health needs, was a simple gesture that a business could make. It demonstrates flexibility and is rarely a business imposition. The room in question does not need to be specially equipped. It could be any small area that allows a few minutes of privacy.



8.3 Financial



Among the 50 companies reviewed, 29 used some form of financial benefit to help attract applicants.

Smaller companies can and do compete with larger companies in offering financial benefits, particularly RRSP contributions. Their benefits are not as large and are often capped, but companies that offer them feel they are effective at not only attracting but retaining valuable employees.

Both companies offering subsidized fitness programs were in the healthcare sector. This underscores the role that benefits can have in strengthening a company's brand image. In the same way that marketing and IT companies provide their staff with an atmosphere that suggests "we value creativity," companies in the healthcare field can choose the features of the recruitment strategy that complement their values.

Innovative approaches:

- One Atlantic Canadian company with 26 employees maintains a vacation property that is offered to employees for free during their vacations.

8.4 Family Oriented

Among the 50 companies reviewed, 21 used family oriented policies or programs to help attract applicants.

Family oriented supports can be viewed as financial benefits and there are very few low/no cost options; however, like financial benefits, it is possible for smaller companies to limit the range of services and cap their exposure so that they can offer their staff some coverage.



Maternity leave support includes topping up the parents' maternity pay while on leave. Company health plans are very popular in the US where there is limited access to free public healthcare; employer health plans in Canada are also popular in that the

benefits include many needed health services not covered under Medicare including dental, eye care and pharmaceuticals.

8.5 Work-Life Balance

Among the 50 companies reviewed, 22 offered work-life balance initiatives to help attract applicants.

Over half of the small companies reviewed are offering the option of telecommuting and are giving employees some flexibility over their work hours. A small number of companies allow employees to take longer (unpaid) vacations.

Work-life balance initiatives varied a great deal in terms of their flexibility. For example, some companies allowed staff to work from home one day per week. Others required them to be in the office at least one day per week (and whenever necessary). All the work-life balance initiatives are dependent on the type of company. They may be more appropriate for white collar, clerical and IT jobs. According to research in the US, 2.5% of the total US workforce in 2014 telecommuted. In addition, 80-90% of workers polled indicated they would like to telecommute (Globalworkplaceanalytics, 2016). A similar trend exists in Canada where a study commissioned by the Conference Board of Canada in 2014 found that 70% of millennials would prefer to telecommute (Hemmadi, 2014).

Work-Life Balance Initiatives	Small (n=22)	Mid-Large (n=28)
Telecommute options	12	7
Flexible hours	8	7
Reduced work week	4	8
Increased vacation time	3	2
Summer hours	1	3



Flexibility in hours takes different forms. One small US company has a "no miss" guideline; employees are instructed to never miss important family or school events for work. According to the company's human resource manager, a small company's ability to accommodate the work-life balance of its employees can significantly improve the quality of candidates and the loyalty of employees (Andruss, 2012).

Summer hours were generally described as getting to leave the office early on Friday afternoons during July and August. Low cost work-life balance initiatives can be very attractive for millennials and their family, who are generally the primary influencers on any career decisions.

Innovative approaches:

- One smaller company offered the option of an unpaid sabbatical. Employees who have been with the company for six years can take a year off (unpaid) and know that their job will be secure.

8.6 Recognition

Among the 50 companies reviewed, five used some form of employee recognition to help attract applicants.

Employee recognition programs are another measure small companies can take and scale to their resources and needs.

While the two larger companies had highly structured programs with significant cash rewards, the smaller companies offered tickets to a concert/sporting event or dinner. Milestones were generally celebrated within the office with the company covering the cost of pizza lunch.

Employee Recognition	Small (n=22)	Mid-Large (n=28)
Performance awards/rewards	2	2
Recognition of milestones	2	1

Innovative approaches:

- One smaller company offered employees a lunch with the company owner/president if they had reached significant milestones or if they had made a significant contribution to the company's success.

8.7 Skills Development

Among the 50 companies reviewed, 32 promote their skills development initiatives to help attract applicants.

Skills development	Small (n=22)	Mid-Large (n=28)
In-house training	4	12
Mentoring	4	10
Tuition contributions	3	10
Support for accreditation	2	1

Skills development is an investment in the future productivity of a company's workforce. Smaller companies offer a range of training opportunities. These include the same types of initiatives offered by larger companies, but scaled back.

In larger companies, tuition contributions can be full rebates that cover the cost of the training. For smaller companies, external courses may require an investment on behalf of both employer and employee.

A well thought out mentoring program can have a profoundly positive impact on a new employee's career trajectory and have a relatively small cost. Mentoring programs can be as simple as pairing a more experienced worker to provide oversight and guidance to a new worker. On a more advanced level, mentoring programs can include a team who provide formal feedback and who help new workers navigate both the technical aspects of their job and their corporate culture. When implemented well, many mentored employees go on to become mentors themselves and help address the issue of corporate succession planning. Mentoring programs can also be used to facilitate the on-boarding of under-represented populations. For example, the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society offers a Mentor Handbook detailing the African Canadian and Aboriginal Law Student Mentorship Programme (Hassanali, 2014).



In-house training programs can also be scaled to fit employers' budgets. Often the main expense associated with in-house training is the time required to develop the materials. However, with the exception of upgrades, those materials can be reused for long periods of time.

8.8 Community Oriented

Among the 50 companies reviewed, 19 promote their community support initiatives to help attract applicants.

Both small and large companies encourage community mindedness among employees. More small firms opt to provide paid time off to volunteer. This ranges from 1-5 days.

Two small companies supported employees who volunteered on their own time. Their companies donated the cash equivalent of the time volunteered. Two other companies matched their employees' cash donations. This encourages collaboration in the workplace to meet employee-driven fund raising goals. For all three approaches, small companies have control over the amount of money they contribute. Supporting volunteerism is a particularly effective approach to recruitment in Atlantic Canada, where volunteerism and charitable donations exceed those of other parts of the country.

Community-oriented benefits	Small (n=22)	Mid-Large (n=28)
Paid time for volunteering	3	7
Cash donation for volunteering	1	6
Match employee donations	1	4

9 Use of Third Parties

The use of third party employee search firms, or head hunters, was not common among the smaller companies reviewed. Where it was used, it was almost exclusively used for highly skilled or technical positions.

Several larger companies did use third party software to manage their recruitment process, including their social media posts; however, there are costs associated with the licensing of the software that are generally beyond the scope of smaller companies.

10 Online Resources

Increasingly, businesses of all sizes are using social media to recruit candidates. The top two social media sites used by human resource managers are LinkedIn and Facebook. LinkedIn has tools specifically designed to assist companies connect with potential employees. As part of its Business Solutions, it offers the LinkedIn Recruiter and LinkedIn Talent Solutions. These can be used to target candidates by industry, skill level and geography among other filters.

While there are potential legal ramifications associated with employers checking applicants' social media sites, according to a survey of 1,800 human resource professionals, "94% of recruiters use LinkedIn, followed by Facebook at 66%. But 79% have hired candidates found on LinkedIn versus only 26% for Facebook" (Ceniza-Levine, 2014). Recruiters may adopt other social media, such as Snapchat and Instagram, as their usage increases.

Companies should not assume that merely having a LinkedIn or Facebook account is sufficient. Having an account is similar in efficacy to having a website. It is a passive, "wait-and-see" approach that may result in missing valuable candidates. The active use of social media requires an exploration of what features allow a company to reach the right type of employee. Another factor that should be considered

is that for many millennials, their method of searching and applying for jobs is by using their mobile device, so consideration must be given to how compatible any communication, posts or forms are with these devices.

As previously noted, Job Bank is a federal government website with tools for employers, job seekers and career planners. It is the most common place for job seekers to look for work. It also has detailed labour market information about Job Market Trends and human resource management support.

<http://www.jobbank.gc.ca>

Employment and Social Development Canada also makes available the Canadian Occupational Projection System which employers can use to determine if their industry is one of those facing an imbalance between labour supply and demand. Projections extend from 2011 to 2022.

<http://occupations.esdc.gc.ca/sppc-cops>

Increasingly, larger employers have been surveying their employees to help improve their recruitment and retention strategies. Simple Survey (www.simplesurvey.com) is a low/no cost method of surveying employees³. If this were done at an industry or sectoral level it would provide greater privacy protection and the increased response base would result in increased reliability in the results.

Smaller employers can further reduce costs by simply asking candidates during their interview how they found out about the job; however the answers need to be kept for future reference.

11 Validation Session

The researchers presented the recruitment and retention strategies detailed in this report to three industry stakeholders in the Scientific, Transportation, and Information Technology sectors. These types of sessions are qualitative in nature and represent the views of only a small number of people. While there was consensus among all three regarding the need for employers to adapt to millennials' motivations in order to attract the right candidates, there were areas of difference as well.

In the Scientific sector, which is highly skilled, the emphasis was put on co-op and internship job placements as well as job fairs. In highly specialized fields such as geophysics, there may be fewer than 100 graduates in any given year, so establishing relationships with those students prior to graduation is essential. This suggests that both employers and job seekers in highly skilled or technical fields need to nurture their relationships within their specific field. Recruitment efforts need to align with the source of labour. The Transportation stakeholder agreed that job fairs are useful, but suggested that the members of transportation industry associations experience barriers when attempting to reach out to post-secondary and training institutions.

The stakeholder in the IT sector suggested that the sector does use internships as well as a wide variety of other measures to attract youth. Youth have an expectation that software companies are more exciting; careers advance more quickly; and there is a high degree of team collaboration, something millennials value.

Participants from both the IT and Transportation sectors indicated that it is more difficult to find qualified candidates in rural areas of Atlantic Canada. In the case of IT, there are a limited number of qualified programmers in rural areas to begin with as many move to the cities where they can earn substantially more money. Those that stay are needed in a wide variety of sectors outside of IT itself, for

³ Data collected on Simple Survey is housed on Canadian servers.

example banking and healthcare. Recruiting strategies often require “poaching” staff from their current employers.

Workplace atmosphere was not an issue for the scientific sector, but was an attribute of recruiting that both the IT and Transportation sectors consider. The Transportation sector is in the process of rebranding itself so that millennials perceive it as more appealing. Trucking, for example, provides workers the opportunity to be their own boss. According to the Transportation stakeholder, the sector has had some success in attracting recent immigrants to the sector in part because fluency in English and French is not as essential as it is in other sectors. The stakeholder for IT concurred with what the literature review suggested about the sector, that millennials expect an exciting, gadget-filled environment.

All three industries noted that work-life balance is very important to millennials and that their industries employ a variety of low cost strategies to attract qualified candidates. In addition, while all three used social media to reach millennials, there was no one dominant method considered to be most effective, either in terms of number or quality of candidates.

Both the Transportation and IT sectors are presenting their respective industries as “green” to align with millennial values. This is a no cost measure that increases the comfort millennials have with would-be employers. In the Scientific sector where there is a higher concentration of international collaboration, there has been a conscious effort to be inclusive of all diverse year-end holidays in addition to Christmas. This acceptance of diversity resonates not only with millennials, but with immigrants and aboriginals as well.

Work-life balance is an issue for the Transportation and Scientific sectors. Transportation, regardless of whether it is planes, trains or trucks, often involves not being able to follow a traditional 9-5 schedule. This can also true of scientific research. The Transportation sector is trying to address this, by turning its weakness into a strength. It promotes the “life on the open-road” to younger people and saves the short-haul trucking assignments for older truckers with family.

All three sectors have also provided more autonomy to new entrants to their industries. This, coupled with increased responsibility, aligns with the millennials’ career expectations. This is particularly true in the scientific sector where graduate and doctoral students are often put in charge of laboratories or projects that require that they work independently and often on non-traditional shifts. In this context they may also have to report to their advisor who may be lecturing in another country.

According to the stakeholder from the scientific community, one of the biggest challenges facing the sector is the increasing size of student debt. The stakeholder suggested that in order to meet their debt obligations, many students who should be continuing with their scientific careers are ending them prematurely.

Skills development is an ongoing issue for all three sectors. It is a given in the scientific community that all scientists are interested the advancement of knowledge in general and in staying at the forefront of their field. There is an expectation that they will be attending the relevant conferences for their field of interest. For the IT sector, programmers are continuously struggling to stay up-to-date with accelerating IT theory and knowledge, and new applicants expect training as part of their terms of employment. The Transportation stakeholder suggested that the cabs driven by most container truckers are nearly as high-tech as the cockpit of many commercial airliners. New drivers expect, at a minimum, to be trained on the communication software and the panel instruments and any new equipment that could be installed. Most fleet operations currently have GPS tracking systems, diagnostic systems and inventory controls built in.

12 Case Studies

12.1 D&D Automation (Robotics and Automation)

D&D Automation is located in Stratford, Ontario. It has just over 70 full-time employees. It designs and produces control systems for automated processes and robotics. The company's products can be found in a variety of different industries including the automotive sector, wastewater-treatment and the mining sector.

D&D is a corporate role model for recruitment and retention. It has employees who have been with the company for over 20 years, yet it has an average employee age of 29 years.

The company attracts new employees a number of ways including investing intensively in education and training. This is important because of the nature of D&D's clients. The staff often have to support product implementation in highly technical and even dangerous environments. According to D&D's founder and President, Michael McCourt, the importance of occupational health and safety training in a contracting engineering firm cannot be overstated. He personally trains all new recruits regarding the company's safety protocols.

In addition to safety training, the company provides subsidies for tuition and encourages professional accreditation. It offers formal mentoring opportunities as well as leadership training. D&D also arranges apprenticeships with post-secondary institutions. McCourt believes that technology is moving so fast that if companies do not commit to life-long learning, their workplace will fall behind.

D&D encourages social responsibility by supporting employees to volunteer in the community. It offers staff paid time off to volunteer and also provides matching donations up to \$500. The company marries its commitment to the community and education by offering a "summer robot camp." The camp provides an opportunity for employees to mentor high school, college and university interns who are strong in science and math and interested in careers in engineering, robotics, and automation.

Another perk that serves as both a recruitment and retention strategy is the company's profit-sharing plan. McCourt wants the staff to share in the company's successes. He also believes in enjoying work and has tried to foster an environment that allows the staff at D&D to do the same. He has implemented a "Fun Time Fund" that is used to support social activities such as private boxes at hockey games.

Through the mix of safety, continuous learning, fun and community spirit, the company feels that it is laying the ground work for attracting the next generation of workers. McCourt wants his employees to love working at D&D and be proud of the work the company does.

D&D Automation was one of Canada's Top Small & Medium Employers in 2015.



12.2 MassExpress (Trucking)

A shortage of qualified truck drivers forced a transport company based in Trois-Rivières, Quebec to innovate in their recruiting strategies. In 2012, MassExpress had difficulties finding qualified truck drivers. According to the owner of MassExpress, potential candidates are not interested in making long-distance delivery because they want to spend their evening at home with their family. With recent research predicting a shortage of truck drivers, the prospects of finding reliable employees were not encouraging (Conference Board of Canada, 2013).

In 2013, MassExpress caught the attention of Radio-Canada news with an unusual recruitment strategy. To improve their recruitment efforts, the company of fewer than 50 employees decided to lead an advertising campaign along Highway 40 between Montreal and Quebec City. A billboard with “We hire drivers USA” printed in large characters was installed on the side of the road. While this initiative helped attract candidates from other trucking firms, it also generated significant interest from new entrants.



MassExpress’ new recruitment strategy also committed the company to improving drivers’ working conditions. Flexibility was the key. As more young workers were looking for a healthy work-life balance the company made some changes in the way they administer work schedules. For instance, the company allowed employees with shared-child-custody to work four-day weeks on those weeks when they had custody.

In addition, the company reduced the average schedule from 70 hours to 45 hours a week to appeal to young drivers. Before the schedule changed, one young driver was considering making only short deliveries in Canada to better align his work and family life. MassExpress now advertises on its website that new hires can expect to spend their weekends at home.

MassExpress continues to post billboards on highways, but now most of their potential candidates are coming from their partnership with the Road Transport Training Center (RTTC). Recently, the company started offering internships for students at the RTTC. This partnership has helped the company revitalize its workforce by hiring good candidates immediately after they graduate.

According to the owner, as a result of these initiatives, MassExpress no longer has a challenge recruiting. The average age of its workforce is now 30 years of age, compared to an industry average of over 50.

12.3 Think Shift (Advertising)



Think Shift is a Winnipeg, Manitoba based advertising agency with just under 60 full-time employees.

CEO David Baker makes a distinction between Think Shift's brand and its culture. According to Baker, how employees see the company is what the corporate culture is; what people outside the company think of Think Shift is its brand. He believes they are two sides of the same coin and that it is his role as CEO to align them.

Think Shift takes an intentional approach to its culture and ensures that any new hires are comfortable with it. Baker believes employees who embrace the corporate values will express it to the company's clients and thereby reinforce the brand. By viewing each new hiring decision as an opportunity to showcase and reinforce

the brand, it helps ensure that the type of people who apply to ThinkShift are the type who will be engaged with the corporate culture and share in its values.

Baker claims that recruiting staff used to be based on convincing potential employees that you had quality products and services. Think Shift focuses on expressing what employees achieve while working there, if they share the same values.

The company has created an opportunity-based culture, one that encourages rapid advancement. As the company progresses, so do the employees. This has attracted younger candidates; the average age of Think Shift employees is 32. In 2015, 16 employees at Think Shift were promoted. According to Baker, they are attracted to opportunity and advancement, which is how the company is viewed. That advancement is predicated on training. Think Shift is committed to on-going training for all staff.

It also expects a great deal from its employees but provides them with the latitude to organize their work in order to optimize their performance and their opportunities within the company. Staff at Think Shift have the option of telecommuting and flexible hours.

Think Shift was listed as one of Canada's Top Small & Medium Employers in 2015 and is poised to continue hiring.

12.4 Velsoft (Information Technology)



Velsoft opened its doors in 1998 in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. It currently has 27 employees who help Velsoft produce and sell online courses and teaching aids. It has also developed technology to convert paper-based curriculum into

digital courseware. The company opened a second office in Halifax, in part because of the challenge in recruiting higher skilled candidates to New Glasgow. Velsoft's primary revenue comes from the export market; it currently has over 10,000 clients in over 160 countries.

The company uses a variety of recruitment channels including online job postings on Job Bank, Indeed, Career Beacon and Kijiji. Velsoft's owner feels that while most of the sites produce a large number of low skilled, entry-level candidates, he has found that most of them are unsuitable for a growing IT-based business. One exception to that was Kijiji, which he feels is a strong source of computer programmers.

Velsoft has employed many recruitment strategies. It offers fitness memberships; matching RRSP contributions; provides a professional development fund for each employee; and makes a corporate property in Florida available for staff to use for vacations. However, the owner believes that the most attractive aspect for millennials is to feel they are part of something big and successful. The company has sales targets for individual sales representatives and for the company as a whole. It celebrates both. When the company reaches a sales target, it provides the sales representative who reached the target with 10 gift cards to distribute to the staff who made the biggest contribution. The targets are achievable, so there are frequent celebrations. It breeds a culture of success and collaboration.

Velsoft also completely embraces work-life balance. Staff members are allowed to telecommute. The company's focus is on outcomes. If staff members reach their targets they can take the rest of the day off. The company also shows it is concerned about employees' personal life; on storm days, it closes to allow staff to stay at home to take care of their school-aged children.

Because its head office is in New Glasgow, the owner feels he has already acquired most of the local highly skilled human resources that are unattached. Any expansion at the company's head office will require luring candidates away from their jobs at other local firms. Velsoft has found that larger companies with more rigid structures are the easiest targets. It promotes its management style and vision to be a global leader.

Because the company is continuing to expand, it has recently developed relationships with St Francis Xavier and Dalhousie universities. According to the owner, it is too early to determine if these internship programs will result in a more secure supply of programmers in the future. His early feelings are that internships represent a lot of invested time with no guarantee of a dividend; however, the company takes them seriously and hopes that by exposing them to a culture of success and reward the interns will be back.

13 Conclusions

A number of general conclusions that can be drawn by looking at companies that successfully recruit young workers:

1. There are many strategies that have minimal costs associated with them that can be employed by themselves or in concert with others that will attract a greater number of younger candidates.
2. Most strategies are scalable. Small companies can use many of the strategies employed by large companies, but scale them down to what they can afford both in terms of budget and time commitment.
3. Small employers need to become aware of the motivations of young workers. In the same way that it is important to understand the market for their products, Canada's best employers understand the market for their employees. All generations of workers have different motivations. Small Atlantic Canadian employers can attract the best and the brightest of the millennial generation by appealing to what motivates them.
4. Employers need to understand how young workers view their companies. The tone, imagery and content of a company's website or social media presence reflects its values and will dissuade candidates who feel they do not align with their values. Small Atlantic Canadian employers should look at what their brands tell about the type of employees they would like to attract and to narrow the gap.
5. Employers should consider continuous recruitment. As more experienced staff retire employers will need to attract and retain younger workers. Starting the search only after the need becomes apparent will likely lead to rushed and therefore poor hiring decisions. Atlantic Canadian employers should always be searching for qualified employees. Ideally they should be developing relationships with them before they are needed. Employers should maintain a list of candidates that they would like to hire and they should stay in touch with them periodically.
6. Employers should use a variety of approaches when recruiting employees. There are recruitment strategies that are better suited to highly skilled jobs and those that are better suited for filling entry level positions. For example, the use of LinkedIn appears to be more effective for recruiting higher skilled candidates, while the federal government's Job Bank appears more effective for entry-level positions (Malatest, 2016).
7. Employers should post the qualifications that match the job skills. By requiring post-secondary degrees for entry-level positions or unskilled positions, employers eliminate ideal candidates and may in fact increase the salary expectation for the position.
8. Employers should consider applicant tracking. While applicant tracking software is typically used by larger employers, sophisticated metrics are not required. Employers should know what mechanisms they used to promote or post a position; how much it cost; how much time it took; how many applications were received; how many interviews were granted; how many applicants were hired; and what the cost per hire was. This could be done by clerical staff on a spreadsheet and monitored over time. This would help increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the recruitment process.

14 A More Targeted Approach to Recruitment and Retention

A variety of human resource experts refer to recruitment funnels, similar to the one shown in Figure 2. It shows the stages that companies and job applicants go through to reach the successful on-boarding of a new employee when a job posting is filled. It is a visual reminder that there are metrics that can be applied to the recruitment process that will allow employers, large and small, to improve their future recruiting.

Figure 2
Sample Recruitment Funnel



Source: Malatest, 2016; Background images purchased from iStock.

ATTRACT: The internet has changed the way candidates search for jobs and in a Google search world the employer brand is more important than ever. Prior to beginning to fill out applications many candidates will be researching opportunities available. Marketing efforts need to be cognizant of recruiting efforts. Content on all vehicles (e.g. website, social media) needs to be up-to-date and relevant at all times.

- CONVERT:** Candidates actively looking for work will be talking to friends and family, searching job boards and using social media. When advertising, be clear about the job vacancy, expectations, goals, people and the company's values. Many companies have institutionalized their corporate culture and created an official culture code. This code describes what current employees love about their job and what it takes to be successful. For prospective employees it helps them understand what makes someone an ideal candidate. Consider maintaining a career page front and centre on the corporate website. The site should allow candidates to look for both part-time and full-time jobs as well as learn about the company. Links to employee videos to get a 'day-in-the-life-of' perspective can be utilized. (e.g., What it is like to work in a team; How creative and autonomous the work is; How current employees contribute to the overall success of the organization).
- CLOSE:** For many employers, the face-to-face interview is the last step before making a decision to hire. Many firms have adapted this practice and now include more employees in the process. Current employees know what it takes to be successful in their company. Employees from different departments might not be qualified to conduct full interviews, but they have insights into corporate culture that will allow them to determine 'best cultural fit.' Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are used by many larger firms to allow them to follow candidates from first contact to hire. Often this is done through the purchase of software. If there is a budget for this kind of software it can be a good investment. Purchasing software is not essential though. Keeping track of this information can be done in Excel. This also allows employers to keep information handy for individuals not hired at the time. In talent acquisition, a candidate relationship management (CRM) system will help in finding, building and maintaining relationships with potential candidates whom you might want to hire now or in the future.
- INSPIRE:** Improve retention through an engaged workforce. Engaged employees can be encouraged to recruit others and the whole process can start again.

15 Summary of Low Cost Strategies

A clearer understanding of what motivates millennials is emerging through research. In *The Truth About Millennials*, Capstrat researchers recommend the following recruitment strategies (Albritton, 2011):

- “When recruiting, position your company (benefits, culture and environment) in terms of work-life balance.
- Feature and celebrate employees’ lives outside of work in recruiting campaigns and internal communications.
- Develop an employee brand that maps back to your company’s higher purpose.
- Recognize employee volunteer efforts in recruitment materials and internal communications.”

Smaller employers in Atlantic Canada can implement strategies that will improve their ability to identify, communicate with, attract and retain their human resource needs. There is no one approach that will work for all employers. Table 3 shows an a-la-carte menu of approaches used by smaller employers. Skill level is particularly important when determining which of the following low/no cost strategies to implement.

Table 3
Recommended Strategies and Actions for Companies with 50 or Fewer Employees

Skill level	Strategy / Action	Description	Time	Cost
All skill levels	Networking	Continuous recruitment. Always be on the lookout for good employees. Accept resumes and keep in touch with preferred candidates so that relationships can be developed and accessed when employers are ready to hire.	Minimal, but on-going	None
All skill levels	Networking	Employers should develop their in-house networks. Existing employees can be made to feel part of a company’s growth if their input is solicited in its human resource decisions. Ask about their use of social media and job search websites. Distinguish between low, medium and high skilled employees.	Minimal, but on-going	None
Low skill	Networking	Use government job posting websites. Employers should have a fairly detailed job description prepared prior to posting.	Minimal	None
High skill	Networking	Use social media such as Career Beacon, Indeed, LinkedIn. Employers should have a fairly detailed job description prepared prior to posting.	Moderate ~1 hour per posting	Pay per click or flat rate Costs can be kept below \$400
Low skill	Networking	Referral bonus. Remuneration if recommended hire stays with the company for a period of time (generally 3 months)	Minimal	Employer determined Costs can be kept below \$100

Skill level	Strategy / Action	Description	Time	Cost
High skill	Networking	Referral bonus. Remuneration if recommended hire stays with the company for a period of time (generally 3 months)	Minimal	Employer determined Costs can be kept below \$500
High skill	Networking	Develop career channels with post-secondary institutions. This could involve co-op placements or internships. Through these placements, employers can observe and develop future staff.	Substantial Supervision and evaluation	Hourly wage
All skill levels	Networking	Campus recruiting / job fairs. For highly skilled positions, job fairs are most effective when focused on a particular industry. Without that focus, they tend to benefit employers looking to fill entry-level positions.	Moderate Preparation, attendance and follow-up	\$250-\$1,000
All skill levels	Workplace Atmosphere	Relaxed dress code. This does not work for all positions; however, if business attire is not required, it can help make smaller workplaces less formal. Businesses that choose this option should have a policy that stipulates what it considers acceptable and when.	None	None
All skill levels	Workplace Atmosphere	Healthy snacks and beverages.	Minimal, but ongoing	\$500-\$1,000 annually
All skill levels	Workplace Atmosphere	Privacy room. The periodic use of a room for privacy can accommodate employees' person needs. This does not require a dedicated room.	None	None
All skill levels	Workplace Atmosphere	Allowing dogs at work shows flexibility toward dog owners who represent 32% of the population. Employees' and customers' allergies need to be considered as well as relevant regulations (e.g., food handling).	None	None
All skill levels	Workplace Atmosphere	Social events. These can help in team building. Most employers hold them periodically and often tie them to company accomplishments (e.g., new contract, sales milestones).	Minimal	Scalable Costs can be kept below \$200 per event
All skill levels	Workplace Atmosphere	Bicycle racks at work. These can demonstrate a commitment to the environment and employee fitness.	Minimal	One time cost. Can be kept under \$500
All skill levels	Work-life balance	Telecommuting. Depending on the position and corporate culture, this can be very attractive particularly to those staff whose commute is more than 30 minutes.	None	None

Skill level	Strategy / Action	Description	Time	Cost
All skill levels	Work-life balance	Flexible hours. Depending on the position and corporate culture. Allows employees to work fewer but longer days.	None	None
All skill levels	Work-life balance	Summer hours. Could be implemented as “leave early on Friday” policy in July and August.	None	10% loss of productivity for 8 weeks.
All skill levels	Employee recognition	Recognizing employee milestones (e.g., 10 th year anniversary) and meeting corporate goals. Most effective if recognition is periodic (monthly/quarterly). Can take a variety of forms (e.g., gift certificates, pizza lunch).	Minimal	Scalable Costs can be kept below \$200 per event
Low skill	Skills development	Mentoring program. These programs positively impact both recruitment and retention. They are very reassuring for new employees and ensure better integration.	Moderate Planning and evaluation	Minimal loss of mentor’s productivity
All skill levels	Community support	Time off to volunteer. Offering employees 1-5 days (unpaid) to volunteer can help demonstrate a small company’s values, which may in turn attract candidates with similar values.	None	None

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17 Appendix A – Companies Reviewed

Small Companies reviewed

Akufen
Arcurve
Big Viking Games
Capture Higher Ed
Clearpath Robotics
Crelobix
EF Educational Tours
Eloquest Healthcare
Infusion
JOEY Restaurant Group
Mass Express
Metabiota
Northstar Recycling
Percy Miller
R. F. Binnie & Associates
Retrofit
SoCore Energy
Think Shift Advertising Inc.
TrueWealth LLC
Velsoft
Zumasys

Mid-Large Companies Reviewed

Accenture
ACL Services Ltd
Adlib Software
Advanced Chemical Transport
Agrium
ASDR Solutions
Big Rock Brewery Limited Partnership
British Columbia Automobile Association
Capgemini Canada
Coalision
Connect Hearing
Corus Entertainment
D2L
Deltaware Systems Inc.
Dentons Canada
Five Stones Research Corporation
Groupe Charbonneau
Groupe Dynamite
Hard Rock Cafe
Jardin de Ville
Jazz Aviation LP
L'Ipse
NTT Data
Nuance Communication
Sid Lee
Tata Consultancy Services Canada
Tetra Tech EBA
YMCA of Greater Toronto



March 8, 2016

On behalf of the Atlantic Workforce Partnership (AWP), the New Brunswick Career Development Action Group (NBCDAG) has commissioned a study looking at best practices for recruiting Atlantic Canadian youth to fill key labour market gaps in the region.

We have hired R.A. Malatest & Associates to research successful recruitment and retention strategies employed by leading companies across Canada, in the US and internationally. We would like your help in validating which of these practices would work best in your sector within Atlantic Canada's economic context.

Malatest researchers are scheduling a teleconference call that will be approximately 1 hour in duration. It will be with four industry leaders from our region. Participation is voluntary. If you agree to participate, you will be provided with an honorarium of \$250.

Your input will remain anonymous and you will not be named in any reports. We hope we can count on you to provide your insights and help the region's businesses optimize their labour market strategies.

Should you have any questions about this study, please contact:

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YOUTH RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Industry Validation Session

Background



- Undergoing seismic demographic shift
- Businesses finding it difficult to source younger candidates
- Youth finding it difficult to get entry level experience
- Discussion to focus on effective practices to attract youth – what works in your industry



Current Recruitment Practices

Thinking about your company/industry



- Is attracting younger workers a challenge?
- Where do you currently find qualified applicants?
- Has that changed over the past five years?

What works



- What are the most effective recruitment practices?
- What are the most innovative ones?
- Is recruitment an on-going process in your organization?
- Do you know of strategies used by other sectors / jurisdictions that you'd like to try?



Consider the following strategies

Networking

- Developing relationships with PSE institutions
- Internships/co-op placements
- Job fairs
- Social media to reach potential candidates
- Word of mouth / Referral bonus

-
- ▣ Are these effective approaches in your field
 - ▣ What other strategies would you recommend

Workplace features and atmosphere

- Promoting a culture of fitness (e.g., healthy snacks)
- Onsite bicycle racks
- Business casual attire
- Promoting collaboration through social events
- The use of a private room for nursing mothers or religious observances

□ Are these effective

□ What other workplace features are there in your field

Financial benefits



- Employee referral bonus
 - RRSP contributions
 - Free/subsidized health related programs
 - ▣ Gym membership
 - ▣ Weight management program
-
- ▣ Are these effective benefits in your field
 - ▣ What other types of financial benefits are used

Family benefits



- ▣ Topping up parental leave
 - ▣ Support for family programs:
 - ▣ Daycare
 - ▣ Senior care
-
- ▣ Are these effective approaches in your field
 - ▣ What other benefits appeal to families

Work-life balance



- Flexible work hours
- Telecommuting
- Earn days off
- Longer vacation after first year
- Reduced summer hours

-
- ▣ Are these effective recruitment initiatives in your field
 - ▣ What other initiatives would appeal to young workers

Employee recognition programs



- Cash and prize awards for exceptional performance/milestones

- Lunch with president
- Dinner for two
- Movie/sports/cultural passes

-
- Are these effective
 - What other ways can you recognize good employees

Skills development



- Tuition subsidies
- Formal mentoring plan
- In-house training and/or career planning program
- Job rotation plans (exposing new hires to a variety of jobs)
- Bonus for obtaining relevant credential

-
- ▣ Are these effective approaches in your field
 - ▣ What other methods will develop employees skills

Community support



- Matching employee donations to charity
 - Paid time off for charitable work
 - Employee's unpaid charitable work matched by employer cash donation
 - Educational outreach to high schools (career presentations)
-
- Are these effective recruiting features
 - How else can employers show their community support

Which would your industry be most likely to adopt ...

- 
- For attracting youth
 - For increasing diversity in the workplace
 - ▣ Immigrants
 - ▣ People living with disabilities
 - ▣ Visible minorities
 - ▣ Aboriginals
1. Networking
 2. Workspace/Atmosphere
 3. Financial benefits
 4. Family benefits
 5. Work-Life balance
 6. Recognition
 7. Skills development
 8. Community

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

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