



MINING INDUSTRY
HUMAN RESOURCES COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES RESSOURCES HUMAINES
DE L'INDUSTRIE MINIERE



Take Action for Diversity – Research Report

CHANGING THE FACE OF THE
CANADIAN MINING SECTOR

SHIFT

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The Diversity Network

The Diversity Network is comprised of human resources professionals from mining sector operations across Canada. These champions for diversity guide the development of project deliverables, and implement inclusion and diversity strategies in their companies or sites. The strategic plans developed will be assessed over the course of 18 months to determine their contribution to HR growth in the greater mining industry.



Background and Purpose

As part of its initiative called *SHIFT: Changing the Face of the Canadian Mining Industry*, the Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) contracted Graybridge Malkam to conduct the *Take Action for Diversity* research project. This primary research aims to expand upon published research, by exploring industry-specific barriers to the inclusion of the following target groups in the Canadian mining industry:

- Aboriginal peoples
- Mature workers
- New Canadians
- Persons with physical disabilities
- Youth

Based on findings from an earlier project, the research also addressed barriers faced by women.

The research results will guide the *Take Action for Diversity Network* (Diversity Network), as it leads the development of new approaches and implements plans to help its member companies attract and retain staff from these target groups.

Methodology

Data was gathered via telephone interviews and online discussions. A total of 80 individuals participated in the research, which involved eight of the 10 provinces and one territory. Research participants included individual workers, support agencies working with the target groups, human resources (HR) professionals, union representatives and educators. Individual workers were drawn from the five target groups listed above, and included both current mining sector employees and individuals hoping to work in the industry.

Selected Findings

Work in the mining industry offers both well-recognized benefits and challenges that apply to all workers. For example, challenging working conditions in remote locations are balanced by high levels of compensation and good career opportunities in a growth industry. This research expands mining-sector knowledge by highlighting issues of particular significance to members of targeted groups. The *Take Action for Diversity – Research Report* outlines several barriers and potential solutions for each group. Briefly:

- *Aboriginal peoples* face barriers such as:
 - Employer and potential employee concerns that educational and skill levels do not meet entry requirements
 - Limited employer awareness of how to source Métis, First Nations and Inuit candidates, and of how to incorporate Aboriginal cultural norms in their hiring processes
- *Mature workers* face barriers such as:
 - Difficulties in meeting the physical demands of some jobs
 - Limited access to more desirable work schedules and arrangements, such as part-time, contract, etc.
 - Limited access to health care and other services in remote work locations



- *New Canadians* face barriers such as:
 - Complex and unfamiliar processes for immigration, credential recognition, recruitment, etc.
 - Difficulties in meeting industry hiring requirements such as language skills and Canadian experience
 - Challenges in adapting to Canadian workplace cultures and norms
 - Remote locations presenting particular barriers to the successful integration of the workers' families
- *Persons with physical disabilities* face barriers such as:
 - Inaccessible or challenging work environments
 - Individuals' and agencies' lack of awareness of the range of mining occupations available and suitable for persons with physical disabilities
 - Employers' lack of awareness of the potential offered by people with physical disabilities and how to recruit them
- *Youth* face barriers such as:
 - Limited early awareness of career opportunities in the industry
 - Difficulties in gaining entry to the industry without previous experience or personal connections
 - Concerns about living in remote locations
 - Challenges with acceptance and integration into the workplace culture
- *Women* face barriers such as:
 - Limited organizational flexibility in work practices, schedules, career paths, etc.
 - Difficulties integrating into male-dominated work cultures
 - Limited role models in senior positions

Recommendations

Mining sector employers are very interested in and committed to recruiting, hiring and retaining potential employees from the diversity population. However, employers all expressed a need for further support, more HR tools, and guidance to help them achieve their recruitment goals with the diversity population.

This report outlines several recommendations and related action steps for employers, post-secondary institutions and unions. *It is acknowledged that some of these recommendations are already in progress.* Briefly, the recommendations include:

Key Practices for Inclusion

- Develop and implement diversity and inclusion strategies that have buy-in from all levels of the organization
- As part of the overall diversity and inclusion strategy, develop, implement and support respectful workplace practices



Employers

- Establish aggressive strategic plans to recruit members of the target groups.
- Target Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts in areas where there is a “recruitment bonus.”
- Create supports for potential labour pools – well in advance of recruitment or application – to build general readiness.
- Segment the needs of the different target groups, and create tailored outreach and communication approaches.
- Refine the processes at various stages of the HR cycle, such as:
 - Best-in-class recruitment and selection processes that make the employer “easy to do business with” from the perspective of diverse candidates.
 - Integration and inclusion of diverse employees in the work environment.
 - Consideration of possible advancement strategies as diversity efforts succeed.
 - Retention strategies focused on mature workers who have physical limitations that constrain perceived ability to work in operational roles.

Post-secondary Institutions

- Make active efforts to build awareness of the sector among students, particularly those enrolled in relevant programs.
- Support foreign-credential assessment.
- Target apprenticeship training to youth-only (in some cases), so that they are not competing with mature workers.

Unions

- Support recruitment and hiring of diversity candidates in the mining sector – through efforts with individual employers as well as with MiHR.
- Promote – particularly in interactions with youth – the availability of excellent careers in this sector.
- Support credential-recognition of internationally trained workers.
- Support more training and orientation for job transfers and transitioning.



“Just as mines have 25-year mining plans, they should also have 25-year HR plans.”



In the near future, the Canadian mining industry will face significant challenges in meeting the demand for workers. Slow labour force growth, combined with an aging population, will create significant pressures on the mining labour market. Based on the *Canadian Mining Industry Employment and Hiring Forecasts 2010 Report* (MiHR), by 2020, the mining industry will need to hire an estimated 100,000 workers to respond to changes in employment and to replace workers retiring or leaving the industry (assuming that mining-industry growth will continue at current rates).

In recent years, the mining industry has adopted proactive strategies to attract, recruit and retain top talent. Industry stakeholders will continue – and likely intensify – these efforts, to ensure an adequate supply of labour well into the future.¹

As part of the Mining Industry Human Resources (MiHR) Council's work to support employers in developing proactive strategies to attract, recruit and retain top talent, MiHR has initiated a project called *SHIFT: Changing the Face of the Canadian Mining Industry*.

One component of SHIFT is Take Action for Diversity – a project on identifying barriers to the inclusion, leading to action planning for the engagement of the following target groups in the Canadian mining industry:

- Aboriginal peoples
- Mature workers
- New Canadians
- Persons with physical disabilities²
- Youth

The report also includes barriers faced by women, based on research findings from an earlier partnership project with Women in Mining (WIM) Canada called *Ramp-UP: A Study on the Status of Women in Canada's Mining and Exploration Sector*.³

The primary focus of the *Take Action for Diversity* research project was to garner the perspectives of members of these target groups, whether current employees or individuals who hope to work in the sector.

The secondary focus was on gathering insights from the following key informants:

- HR representatives from mining organizations
- Representatives from post-secondary institutions
- Representatives from labour unions
- Other subject-matter experts, such as organizations and associations working directly with members of one or more under-represented groups

The research results will inform upcoming diversity tool development and plan implementation led by the Diversity Network. That operational work will assist employers in their efforts to attract, recruit and retain staff from these target groups.

1 *Canadian Mining Industry Employment and Hiring Forecasts 2010 - A Mining Industry Workforce Information Network Report*. MiHR, July 2010.

2 MiHR identified that only persons with physical disabilities would be included in this research.

3 Findings from Women in Mining (WIM) Canada's and MiHR's partnership project, *Ramp-UP* report are included here for comparison purposes. For additional information, see *Ramp-UP: A Study on the Status of Women in Canada's Mining and Exploration Sector* available at <http://www.mih.ca/en/publications/resources/Ramp-UPFinal2010.pdf>



Prior to finalizing the methodology and the research questions, and commencing the research, Graybridge Malkam worked closely with MiHR's Director of Research, Dr. Martha Roberts, to agree on a process and tools that would meet MiHR's standards of research ethics and integrity.

The following description provides an overview of the methodologies employed in this research.

2.1 Data-Gathering Methods

Research took place between early December 2010 and the end of January 2011. The research team used two approaches to gain insights from participants:

- **Interviews:** Researchers conducted a standardized, open-ended telephone interview of up to 45 minutes with members of the target groups who are current employees in the mining sector. In addition, they interviewed individuals interested in working in the industry, as well as members of the key informant target groups (HR leaders and professionals, unions, educators and employment service providers). The research team chose interviews as the primary data-gathering method because interviews offer more flexibility to participants and are less disruptive to employers' work schedules. Furthermore, the timeframe for the project did not permit the use of other methodologies, such as focus groups.
- **Online discussions:** Discussion questions were posted over a three-week period on MiHR's Facebook page for post-secondary students (*Mining Students in Canada*), as well as MiHR's LinkedIn group (*Canadian Mining HR Professionals*).

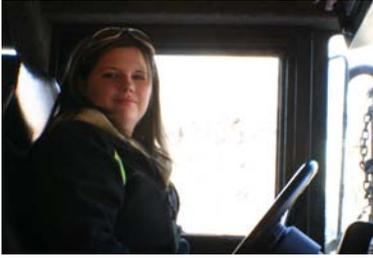
2.2 Research Questions

All participants were asked about their thoughts and experiences on the following topics:

- What they considered attractive about working in mining
- Advantages and drawbacks of working in mining
- Challenges the industry faces in attracting and integrating members of the target groups
- How employers can better attract and retain members of the target groups

Specific questions were also posed to members of each target group, such as:

- *For current employees:* Personal history in the industry; experience of the recruitment process; and whether they would recommend the industry to others from their target group
- *For organizations serving the target groups:* How they work with the target group; and their experience in relation to working with the mining industry
- *For HR leaders and professionals:* Company profiles; interest in and actions taken to attract and retain members of the target groups, and the impact of these actions; and how the mining industry's position compared with other sectors regarding the target groups
- *For other key informants:* How they work with the mining industry; and their perspectives on the mining industry's interest in attracting and retaining members of the target groups, compared to other sectors



2.3 Identification and Recruitment of Research Participants

Research participants were identified via the following sources:

- MiHR’s *Take Action for Diversity Network* members
- MiHR contact database of post-secondary institutions, labour unions and career counselors
- MiHR participation in industry events
- Other MiHR initiatives – e.g., the Virtual MineMentor Program, MiHR’s *Canadian Mining HR Professionals* LinkedIn Group, *Mining Students in Canada* Facebook page
- Graybridge Malkam’s contacts in the industry with mining employers, employment agencies and organizations serving the target groups

In total, 80 individuals participated in the research, which spanned eight provinces and one territory. Seventy-six participated in interviews, while four posted on the Facebook or LinkedIn discussion boards. Within the primary target groups, the research team conducted interviews with current mining employees from six different companies.

TARGET GROUP	NUMBER OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS
TARGET GROUPS (WORKERS AND/OR AGENCIES)	
Aboriginal peoples/organizations	13
Mature workers	9
New Canadians	17
Persons with disabilities/organizations	8
Youth	9
STAKEHOLDERS AND KEY INFORMANTS	
HR leaders/professionals	10
Union representatives	3
Post-secondary educators	8
Secondary-school educators and other subject-matter experts	3
TOTAL	80

2.4 A Note on the Limitations and Benefits of the Research

While the information provided in this report will inform the sector’s collective knowledge regarding barriers and facilitators to the attraction, recruitment, retention and advancement of targeted pools of talent in the industry, some caveats and limitations should be noted.

First, the project’s timeframe, timing and resources were not designed for a large-scale, representative study of each group. Instead, the researchers conducted in-depth discussions with a small number of people who had direct experience with the barriers faced by target supply groups for the mining industry.

Second, the research was dependent on the willingness of members of the target groups to participate. To maximize participation, Graybridge Malkam worked with MiHR to publicize the research as widely as possible. Despite all efforts, the sample sizes of some groups are relatively small.

“You can see the world in the mining industry.”

To counter these limitations, the researchers ensured that any findings reported were substantiated by at least one other research participant from the same or another target group. Where appropriate, findings have been validated with previous research in the mining and other industries.

Much has already been written about the employment barriers faced by diverse populations in the general labour force. The current research study goes beyond this previous work to focus directly on Canada’s mining industry. In particular, this study allows the industry to hear directly the “voices” of individuals from groups that hold significant promise for addressing the future human resources needs of the sector.





“Develop a strategic hiring plan that starts with junior co-op students. They are easier to recruit (fewer jobs for junior students); it can impact their career choices and they have the opportunity to return for subsequent co-op terms.”



This section presents the following information for each target group:

- Profile of research participants
- Perceived advantages of the mining sector
- Barriers faced by members of this group related to recruitment, retention and advancement in mining
- Suggested solutions to address these barriers

Note: Findings are based on interviews not only with members of the target groups, but also with representatives of agencies serving the target groups, as well as key informants (HR professionals, unions, educators, and subject-matter experts).

HOW RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS VIEWED THE MINING INDUSTRY

Advantages

All participants

- Generous salary and benefits
- Growing industry

Current employees

- Opportunities for career development and mobility
- Interesting work
- Attractive work schedules, facilities and working conditions
- Positive, welcoming work culture
- Benefits for the local community
- Open to diversity
- All current employees would recommend mining as a career to family, friends and others

Drawbacks

Participants outside industry

- Mining is restricted to underground physical and manual work; involves a dangerous and unhealthy work environment; and has restrictive entry requirements

Current employees

- Working for extended periods in remote locations impacts personal and family relationships
- Exclusive work culture: “old boys’ club”
- Changing priorities and instability due to market demands

PROFILE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

DEFINITION

Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)

Participants were not specifically asked to disclose to which Aboriginal population they belonged but some participants may have disclosed this information voluntarily

NUMBER OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

13

CURRENT STATUS

9 individuals currently employed in the mining sector

4 representatives of organizations working with Aboriginal peoples

LOCATION

Alberta, British Columbia, Nunavut, Northwest Territories, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan

GENDER

7 women; 6 men

OCCUPATION

Employees' occupations included community relations, tradesperson, supervisor, trainer and human resources

Aboriginal organization representatives' occupations included human resources, director and community liaison

LENGTH OF TIME IN INDUSTRY

The average length of time in the industry for those currently employed was 10 years, ranging from 7 months to 32 years

“Develop a strategic training plan that is long-term with First Nations communities to groom potential employees.”



3.1 Aboriginal Peoples



Themes from the Literature

Previous research has described several employment-related barriers faced by Aboriginal peoples across a range of industries. Primary among these are:

- Skill and educational levels that do not meet stated industry requirements
- Limited access to training and skills-upgrading programs in local communities
- Racism and discrimination in the workplace
- Employers' limited awareness and accommodation of Aboriginal norms, such as communication approaches and cultural traditions
- Barriers faced by individual workers who relocate to urban environments for training or employment opportunities
- Employers' lack of awareness of effective recruitment, selection and retention practices for Aboriginal peoples

The literature has often recommended solutions such as:

- Investment in training programs to build skills and provide structured relevant work experience
- Individualized support for transitions and integration into the workplace or training environment, including access to job coaches, mentors and Elders
- Cultural awareness for employers, supervisors and managers, colleagues and Aboriginal workers
- Flexible and culturally sensitive employment practices

The literature also includes some findings with respect to the mining industry specifically; for example, research and case studies with Cree First Nations have confirmed these barriers and the effectiveness of such solutions.

For this study, researchers conducted interviews with current employees in the mining sector, as well as organizations working with Aboriginal peoples, to explore these themes and any other barriers specific to the mining industry.

“Recruitment can be improved by “preparing individuals by offering one-on-one counseling to help understanding of what to expect, and being transparent in the process.”



“The most important piece to attracting Aboriginal peoples to training is to guarantee “on the job training” practicum. This provides a realistic job preview for the potential employee and gives a chance for both parties to evaluate the offering between employee and employer. This training is a vital base to attracting strong employees.”

Advantages of Mining

Interviewees identified advantages such as good salary and benefits, opportunities for career and personal growth, and the opportunity to work relatively close to one’s community. They also noted opportunities for employment and development of Aboriginal peoples, and investment for Aboriginal and northern communities.

Barriers Identified

According to the key informants, Aboriginal peoples are the industry’s most-targeted group, largely due to being the most accessible labour pool and the fastest-growing population available to many mining employers. Several participants considered the mining industry to be ahead of other sectors with respect to the inclusion of Aboriginal peoples.

Nevertheless, there are numerous barriers to the attraction, recruitment, retention and advancement of Aboriginal peoples in mining:

- Some employers report that they are not clear on where to go or whom they should approach to access potential workers among Aboriginal peoples. Many companies, however, are very aware of First Nations communities through Impact Benefit Agreements (IBAs) signed with such communities. These IBAs are helping to determine employment training, recruitment and advancement expectations.
- Other employers spoke about lower education levels hindering their recruitment efforts. Overall, many employers feel that their companies need to commit to an Aboriginal employment strategy that includes employment targets to support their goals in this area.
- Another challenge identified by both employers and Aboriginal employees is the lack of cultural awareness on both the employer and employee side. Participants highlighted concerns such as employer stereotypes about Aboriginal workers, as well as challenges for Aboriginal peoples related to social issues and worries about leaving their communities.
- Although few challenges were identified regarding advancement, a lack of role models in the senior ranks and limited skill development were mentioned as possible barriers.

Solutions Recommended

The research revealed two schools of thought regarding potential solutions to support the hiring of Aboriginal employees in the mining sector.

- Some Aboriginal participants, employees and organizations felt that the industry needs to respond with clear, distinctive and creative policies that may differ from other employee policies, to support the hiring and retention of Aboriginal workers. For example, mining employers should be flexible in allowing Aboriginal peoples to leave work sites to attend family gatherings, hunt on the land and attend cultural ceremonies.
- Others interviewed indicated decisively that they felt employment policies *must* be the same for all employees, but flexible enough to allow employees to choose how they use vacation time (e.g., for hunting season, attending family or ceremonial gatherings).

Both perspectives were evident when interviewing mining employers. Some employers had already created specific employee policies that would serve Aboriginal employees. Other industry employers had created the types of flexible, general policies and support mechanisms that assist in recruiting, employing and retaining Aboriginal workers.

Barriers

- Employers unaware of how to source
- Lack of understanding of Aboriginal culture
- Prejudice and stereotyping
- Underlying social issues
- Lack of education and minimum qualifications
- Limited accommodation of Aboriginal customs
- Low levels of skills available, and lack of skill development
- Shortage of role models

Solutions

- Cultural understanding
- Aboriginal expertise in HR
- Education about the industry and its opportunities
- Relationship-building with communities
- Leveraging of agreements with communities
- Making solutions region-specific
- Being “high touch” and flexible
- Considering strategic planning that identifies employment targets

It was clear from the interviews that the mining industry has some work to do to attract Aboriginal employees. However, participants also said that Aboriginal peoples and communities need to better-educate themselves on opportunities in the sector, as well as become aware of the work ethics and expectations needed to succeed.

Mining sector employers must continue to offer support for training and upgrading education for Aboriginal peoples. These efforts will help employers to communicate and support recruitment efforts, employment and advancement opportunities for Aboriginal individuals seeking careers in the mining sector. Having an Aboriginal person on the human resources team, and providing managers, human resources departments and employees with awareness-building training on Aboriginal culture and customs, were also identified as key solutions.

Employers should continue with more community education and interaction with Aboriginal communities to inform First Nations, Métis and Inuit about mining sector opportunities. These types of communication will also facilitate opportunities for Aboriginal persons to consider these jobs as the first steps towards a career, rather than “just another job” – as the latter perception may not inspire the commitment to stay for the long-term.



PROFILE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

DEFINITION

Over the age of 50

NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS

9

CURRENT STATUS

All 9 currently employed in the mining industry

LOCATION

British Columbia, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan

GENDER

9 men

OCCUPATION

Employees' occupations included foreman, human resources, technician, tradesperson, trainer and supervisor

LENGTH OF TIME IN INDUSTRY

The average length of time in the industry for those currently employed was 24 years, ranging from 2.5 to 32 years

OTHER SECTORS IN WHICH THEY WORKED

2 of the 9 had transitioned from other sectors (forestry and finance) within the past five years

“Flexibility and latitude in hours, schedule and breaks would be helpful - longer breaks and a modified schedule”.



“I have a lot to share and could do a lot of mentoring.”

3.2 Mature Workers



Themes from the Literature

Although mature workers are not currently an under-represented group in the industry, the retention of current employees and the attraction of mature workers from other sectors is an important component of managing the mining skills shortage. Previous research has described several employment-related barriers faced by mature workers across a range of industries.

Primary among these barriers are:

- Financial disincentives within pension systems, tax regimes, etc.
- Mandatory retirement provisions
- Desire to work part-time or seasonally
- Physical demands of certain occupations
- Lower levels of educational attainment among older workers, as well as a lower level of participation in job-related employer-supported training
- Negative employer attitudes and perceptions toward older workers

Recommended solutions have often included:

- Review of pension, retirement, compensation and benefit plans to better meet the needs of older workers
- Greater use of flexible work arrangements such as part-time, seasonal work, contract work, phased retirement, and flexible work hours and locations
- Adapted job design and accommodations for those aspects that mature workers find more demanding
- Improved awareness of generational differences and inclusive workplace characteristics that value mature workers
- Opportunities to provide mentoring and knowledge transfer to younger workers

“If living in another area for the balance of your life, you have developed a network of friends, family and relationships. When moving to a mining town it can be difficult to integrate.”



“Yes, I do recommend it to older workers. Benefits and salary are good, and the work is more challenging.”



Interviews with nine current employees in the mining sector were conducted to explore these themes and any other barriers specific to the mining industry.

Advantages of Mining

Like many of the target groups, mature workers are attracted to the mining industry because of salary, interesting work and opportunity for progression. However, some of these workers stated that as they have grown older, they have become less interested in monetary compensation and more drawn to flexible and less stressful working conditions, “improved lifestyle”, health benefits and new opportunities. Participants said that they would be attracted to temporary, contract or part-time work.

Several participants noted that the generous health-benefits package was the key factor keeping them in their job. Some had intended to retire early, but due to family or spousal illness and large medical expenses, they decided to stay until age 65. Working at only one facility, versus having to move with the location of the work (as in the construction industry) was also seen as a benefit.

Barriers Identified

Because of the physical demands of some of the work, numerous workers self-select out of the industry. Many said they could transition to less physically demanding or less stressful work, but wanted to maintain their income levels.

Many also mentioned that, as they age, remote locations and shift work are less appealing. In addition, they expressed concerns about getting medical services, since many remote locations have few doctors, dentists, optometrists, or other health professionals. Mature workers also find that leaving family and friends is difficult, and that being away from home is hard on relationships. Furthermore, some transitioning mature workers who have become used to living in a larger urban centre find it difficult to integrate into and live in a smaller community.

Regarding work culture, one participant noted that he is considering leaving his company due to the attitudes of younger employees who “want to advance and don’t mind what they do.” Another participant felt that “motivation processes are more geared towards fault than praise”, and didn’t feel valued for his contribution.

Interviewees noted that many have transitioned from the forestry, construction, and oil and gas industries. In the process, some have lost their tenure and retirement plans. Mining industry employers may want to consider taking advantage of the skills workers have acquired in other industries, by providing them with supervisory or other related opportunities to apply these skills in the mining sector.

These workers would be interested in retraining if there was work in the sector. One participant noted that many workers transferring from other sectors still need retraining to work with specialized mining technologies and equipment.

Several participants said they considered the mining industry’s market-driven cyclical nature to be a drawback.

Barriers

- Remote location of sites
- Physical demands of some jobs
- Training required to integrate workers from other industries
- Shift-work schedules

Solutions

- Assessment for physical fitness
- Skills training
- Offer flexible schedules, and part-time or contract work
- Transition into supervisory, training or coaching roles

Solutions Recommended

To attract and keep mature workers, employers can provide retraining opportunities, and offer different types of work for employees who are no longer able or willing to meet the physical demands of the work.

They can also offer benefits and working conditions that are more suited to older workers. Participants mentioned that they would welcome a career path that would help them transition to less physical work, such as trainer or consultant. A mentoring program or engaging mature workers as trainers of the new generation of workers would be very attractive to many.

A few participants suggested that incentives for retention might include such factors as getting a bonus for committing to the company for a defined period of time, or being offered stock options.



PROFILE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	
DEFINITION	Living in Canada for less than five years (excluding temporary workers)
NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS	17
CURRENT STATUS	11 currently employed in the mining industry 6 interested in finding employment in the sector
LOCATION	Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario
GENDER	14 men; 3 women
OCCUPATION	Employees' occupations included engineer, supervisor, and tradesperson
LENGTH OF TIME IN INDUSTRY	For those currently employed in mining: average length of time in the industry was 4.5 years For the interviewees as a whole: ranged from never worked in the industry to 20 years
LENGTH OF TIME IN CANADA	Potential employees: ranged from 2 months to 1 year Current employees : ranged from 6 months to 5 years
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	Australia, Cameroon, Eritrea, India, Iran, Jamaica, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru, South Africa, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela

“More could have been done to integrate into the Canadian life. You are left to your own devices to fit into Canada – setting up banking; buying houses; etc.”

3.3 New Canadians



Themes from the Literature

Previous research has described several employment-related barriers faced by new Canadians across a range of industries. Primary barriers include:

- Difficulties in obtaining recognition of credentials obtained outside Canada
- Language skills and “relevant” experience (often “Canadian”) that do not meet employers’ stated requirements
- Employers’ and new Canadians’ lack of awareness of often subtle cultural differences important in recruitment, retention and advancement processes, such as educational qualifications, résumé styles, communication patterns during interviews and expected management styles, etc.
- Employers’ limited awareness of effective recruitment practices when conducting outreach and attempting to attract new Canadians
- Racism, discrimination, stereotypes or a lack of inclusion in the workplace
- Organizational policies and practices that do not appropriately respond to cultural differences

Recommended solutions have often included:

- Streamlined processes for foreign-credentials recognition
- Awareness-training and skills-based training for addressing cultural differences
- Training in English or French as a Second Language (ESL or FSL), particularly job-related
- Targeted outreach mechanisms
- Transition support, including mentoring, to effectively navigate Canadian workplace culture and norms
- Revised policies and practices to create an inclusive workplace

“Employers should provide help for the family. Many times the worker is happy, but the family members are not.”



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“Going through a website can be very difficult for a new immigrant. I have not applied because of the impersonal nature of applying through a website.”



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The research team interviewed 17 recent immigrants to explore these themes and any other barriers specific to the mining industry.

Advantages of Mining

Compared to other mining countries, Canada is well perceived by new immigrants for job opportunities because of its reputation for safety and good working conditions. Interviewees stated that Canada's lifestyle, potential for adventure and travel, and attractive remuneration were also determinants in choosing Canada over other countries.

Barriers Identified

Our research shows, however, that the experience of new Canadians integrating into the mining sector may vary, depending on such factors as their country of origin, language skills, credential recognition, and racial and ethnic background.

Participants who originally resided in Europe, the United States or Commonwealth countries have had different experiences than new Canadians from developing countries. Accreditation acceptance did not seem to be an issue for those individuals from Europe, the United States and Commonwealth countries. The opposite was true for those from India and countries in Africa, where accreditation often required that they go back to school in Canada.

The participants' experience also varied depending on whether they had found employment prior to immigrating to Canada. For example, some respondents stated that their employers were very helpful with the immigration process and were very welcoming. However, others stated that more assistance could have been given with their integration, such as providing more information on Canadian culture and on the practical side of living in Canada (e.g., health care, taxation). Interviewees mentioned that some of the families had problems finding work or integrating into smaller communities. They suggested that if employers could provide support for their families (e.g., helping spouses find work), integration would be much easier.

Immigrants who were unemployed prior to arriving in Canada faced many challenges. The process was very long and different from what they were used to. For example, many were not accustomed to applying online and found it impersonal. Participants stated that the industry appears to hire on the basis of “connections,” which makes it difficult for “outsiders” to find work. Many found that the job opportunities were “hidden.” Others reported finding that they faced biases during interviews and that the industry would benefit from receiving cultural training.

As is the case for many immigrants to Canada, interviewed participants found accreditation to be an issue when seeking employment. Many had to return to school or accept work beneath their qualifications. Employers placed great emphasis on “Canadian experience”; several participants perceived that employers were concerned they were not properly qualified, despite their education and prior experience. One participant noted that, compared to his country, Canada's expectations regarding the roles of professionals were different; in his home country, for example, computer use was the domain of secretaries, and the employer provided a driver to transport him to work.

Barriers

- Difficulty in gaining recognition of qualifications
- Language and communication
- Integration into Canadian culture
- Immigration processes
- Adapting to Canada's recruitment system
- Demand for Canadian experience
- Different roles and expectations for professionals in Canada
- Lack of more-senior opportunities
- Working conditions

Solutions

- Opportunities for mobility and advancement
- Openness to new perspectives from immigrants
- Greater flexibility and “high touch” in recruiting
- More-practical integration information and family support
- Help with credential recognition and immigration
- Advertising of benefits of industry and living in Canada

“Work life balance is a really good thing in Canada – it should be highlighted and marketed better.”

Language is also a barrier. This refers not only to the ability to speak French or English but also to the terminology used in the Canadian mining industry.

Most interviewees stated that Canadians were very helpful and welcoming once the newcomers found employment. Others suggested, given that they had experienced some misunderstandings with their colleagues, it would have been beneficial for Canadian organizations to provide cultural training.

Solutions Recommended

Many new Canadians from developing countries are accustomed to more personal interactions throughout the hiring process. Consequently, some of the new Canadian job seekers suggested that it would be useful for employers to attend job fairs, and to acknowledge receipt of applications and provide job seekers with feedback on their applications.

Several new Canadian job seekers also suggested that potential employers offer up to three months' trials or internships as a way to both help them gain Canadian work experience, and to give the employer an opportunity to assess them as future employees.

For many new Canadians, a structured career path and opportunities for upward mobility are important. They mentioned that senior management was often white, male and more mature; they would like to see more diversity.

Regarding work culture, feeling accepted and being heard were identified as important retention factors.

Some participants recommended that employers provide more support for spouses and family, especially if the job requires settling into a remote community. Other participants noted that sometimes the employee feels well integrated but their family members do not.

Additional respondents' recommendations for helping the industry to attract and retain new Canadians included greater industry support for credentials recognition, attainment of professional designations, and greater involvement in the immigration process.

New Canadians particularly those from developing countries – noted that employers could better market the Canadian lifestyle when advertising jobs overseas. For example, they could highlight proximity to cities, recreation opportunities for families, and the benefits offered by the great Canadian outdoors.

PROFILE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS	
DEFINITION	Persons with physical disabilities only
NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS	8
CURRENT STATUS	1 current employee in mining 7 representatives of employment agencies or associations serving persons with physical disabilities
LOCATION	Ontario, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan
GENDER	3 men; 4 women
OCCUPATION	The mining employee's occupation was in supervision Organization representatives' occupations included rehabilitation counselor, educational or vocational counselor, project manager, regional services coordinator, ergonomist and director Organizations' areas of focus included: providing rehabilitation and employment services to persons with specific physical disabilities; providing services to injured workers and conducting research; providing services for employers looking to recruit; and assessing the physical demands of jobs and workplaces
LENGTH OF TIME IN INDUSTRY	The mining employee interviewed had been in mining for 27 years

“It is important for an organization to not drop the ball once a person with a disability is hired. Some employees with a disability might like a check in once they’ve gotten settled, others not.”

3.4 Persons with Physical Disabilities



Themes from the Literature

Previous research has described several employment-related barriers faced by persons with disabilities, across a range of industries. The primary barriers are:

- Workplace environments that are not fully accessible
- Non-inclusive practices within workplaces (meeting processes, etc.)
- Stereotypes and misconceptions among employers and work colleagues regarding persons with disabilities
- Employer concerns and lack of awareness regarding accommodations for disabilities
- Limited awareness on the part of persons with disabilities, employment counselors, and agencies, etc. regarding opportunities in particular industries
- Workplace and HR practices, programs and policies that do not meet the needs of persons with disabilities (flexible work hours and locations, accommodation in hiring processes, etc.)
- Lack of targeted outreach to persons with disabilities
- Hesitation on the part of some persons with disabilities to declare their disability and to seek helpful and appropriate accommodation

Recommended solutions have often included:

- Making the workplace accessible
- Thorough review of job requirements to identify any requirements that are not *bona fide* and that can pose systemic barriers; introduction of appropriate accommodation
- Implementation of inclusive work practices, policies and programs
- Active outreach for recruitment
- Sensitivity and awareness training within the workplace

“Sensitivity training with the current workforce takes away from the shock and awe when a person with a disability comes to the workplace.”



‘Someone at the HR level has to delve in to WSIB claims to see that persons with a disability generally make fewer claims and take less sick time than other employees.’

The researchers conducted eight interviews to explore these themes and any other barriers specific to the mining industry. Most interviewees were representatives of agencies providing employment-related support to persons with disabilities. For the purposes of this research, the interviews focused exclusively on persons with *physical disabilities*.

Advantages of Mining

Similar to other groups profiled in this research, members of this group identified good salaries, and opportunities for learning and growth, as attractive features of a career in mining. Interviewees also cited the range of jobs in mining that can utilize the education and skills of a person with a disability. The nature of some of mining jobs was also identified as attractive, because – depending on the nature of their disability – some people may favour solitary work.

Barriers Identified

Interviews with employers, industry stakeholders and organizations working with persons with disabilities revealed that proactive attraction and retention of persons with physical disabilities is relatively unexplored territory for the mining industry.

Many employers do not consider this target group due to several factors, including lack of awareness on the part of employers regarding what constitutes a physical disability; the qualifications and capabilities of persons with disabilities; and the degree of effort involved in accommodating and integrating such employees into the workplace.

From the perspective of persons with disabilities outside the industry, two issues may be contributing to the perception that a career in mining is not feasible. The first issue is lack of awareness about the variety and range of jobs offered in mining; the second, perceptions that the work environment is unsafe and not accessible. These factors may have contributed to the difficulty in recruiting members of this target group for this research.

Within the mining industry, one particular group of persons with disabilities consists of workers returning to work after a disabling injury. For injured workers, a major hurdle to retention is the lack of comprehensive return-to-work programs. According to one organization representative, “Putting a miner with a back problem in a desk job is the worst thing you can do.”

Solutions Recommended

Participants recommended that employers partner and consult with organizations that specialize in working with persons with physical disabilities. Such organizations can offer much insight to companies that seek to attract and retain more employees with disabilities, including offering job matching and job- and workplace-assessment services to these employers. Some organizations also said they could facilitate communication between employers and prospective employees, by having representatives participate in the interview process.

None of the organizations consulted felt that mining employers were actively reaching out to persons with disabilities, or taking advantage of the services offered by organizations serving this target group. Some organizations suggested that employers who hire a person with a disability – without first seeking professional advice – sometimes set themselves up for failure by not dealing with the required advance preparation and education. A single negative experience by an employer can deter any future efforts to recruit persons with disabilities.

Barriers

- Lack of awareness among persons with disabilities of range of careers in mining
- Employers' perceptions related to myths and stereotypes about persons with disabilities and about how to accommodate them
- Work-environment barriers
- Employers' recruiting processes

Solutions

- Partnerships with professional agencies
- Assessment of jobs and work environments
- Disability-awareness training for employers
- Job carving, part-time and flexible work
- Targeted recruitment campaigns

“Organizations sometimes get hasty and want to do fast hiring – but ground level work needs to done – they (industry) need to be sensitized first.”

Part of any employer's strategies to attract and retain more persons with physical disabilities should involve the following activities:

- Sensitivity and awareness training for managers, employees and human resources, including education on appropriate terminology; dispelling myths; communicating with persons with various physical disabilities; and understanding how to be inclusive and how to fully engage the talents of persons with disabilities
- Targeted recruiting campaigns, including participation in job fairs; advertising in newsletters and websites of organizations serving persons with disabilities; and promoting their companies as organizations willing to hire persons with disabilities
- Review of recruitment procedures and consideration of alternative approaches, such as supplementing interviews with hands-on tests
- Workplace assessments to ensure a barrier-free office with accessible facilities
- Job assessments to determine capabilities required for each position
- Ongoing support for employees with physical disabilities

Funding is available in some provinces to assist with job accommodation, job shadowing, public transportation (in urban areas) and pre-employment training.

For injured workers, appropriate physical retraining – and a comprehensive assessment of other jobs an individual could move into – are essential for successful re-integration. One organization representative noted that ongoing proactive measures that help to integrate persons with disabilities (such as investing in ergonomics) could also lead to cost savings down the line, with a reduction in claims for disability.

Several organizational representatives mentioned that it is important for mining companies to network with and educate employment counselors from organizations serving persons with disabilities. The employment counselors can then educate their clients about job opportunities in mining. One suggestion was to have mining companies offer presentations to staff from these organizations to “open their eyes.” One participant had worked in a major mining centre, at two different organizations offering employment-related services to persons with disabilities, and “felt there was not an opportunity to investigate mining as a career” for her clients.

When trying to attract candidates with disabilities, employers should promote mining as an open-minded industry that is friendly to persons with disabilities, and highlight the fact that a range of job opportunities is available: under and above ground; in remote and other locations; and that may or may not be physically demanding.

With respect to the conditions of employment, employers should highlight any available flexible or part-time scheduling, teleworking, and job carving⁴ or job-sharing opportunities. Such opportunities may be attractive to persons with certain kinds of physical disabilities, or individuals returning to work after rehabilitation for an injury.

4 Job carving is “analyzing work duties at a job location and identifying specific tasks that might be assigned to an employee with disabilities. This type of job creation is helpful with individuals who...may not be in the market for full-time employment”. Source: Griffin, Cary. *Job Carving as a Job Development Strategy*, in *Facing the Future: Best Practices in Supported Employment*. 1996, Page 36. See page 43 of the following for more info: http://www.sarcsarcan.ca/links/Employer_Guide.pdf

“One of my clients says he knows more about mining than his supervisor, yet he has been continually passed over for promotion.”

The mining employee with a disability who was interviewed for this study noted that the disability he acquired led him to move into a supervisory (rather than production) position. Having an occupational nurse on site that stays in touch with one’s GP was noted as very helpful. An organizational representative suggested that offering medical services on site to individuals who need care during the day would be a retention factor. Having the opportunity to move into another position or retrain was also noted as useful. Several respondents also highlighted the importance of part-time work, benefits and flexible hours to accommodate personal or family illness.

In the area of retention, organizations emphasized that demonstrating understanding is key: persons with a disability are “real people with real strengths and weaknesses.” It was noted that many persons with disabilities are pleased to get an opportunity for stable employment, and that employers could reap the rewards of having loyal, eager employees in their workforces.

Finally, several of the interviewees in this study emphasized that the industry would be well-served by focusing on all types of disabilities – physical and non-physical; visible and non-visible. Mining employers should be seen as open and welcoming to *all* persons with disabilities.



PROFILE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

DEFINITION

Young men and women between the ages of 17 and 24

NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS

9

CURRENT STATUS

4 individuals currently permanently employed in the mining industry

5 individuals interested in getting a permanent job in the sector

LOCATION

British Columbia, Ontario, Saskatchewan

GENDER

6 men; 3 women

OCCUPATION

Employees' occupations included engineer, engineer-in-training, tradesperson and computer science

LENGTH OF TIME IN INDUSTRY

For employees, the average length of time in the industry was 2 years

“They (industry) need to train better, have senior staff act as mentors to junior employees, offer more permanent roles, flexible schedules, and a good work-life balance in order to retain young people in the industry.”



3.5 Youth



Themes from the Literature

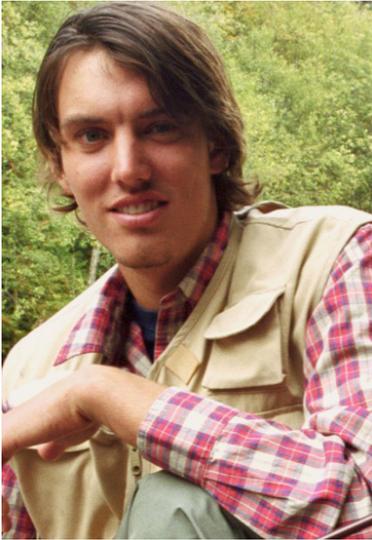
Previous research has described several employment-related barriers faced by youth across a range of industries. Primary barriers include:

- Youths' lack of full awareness of career opportunities available in an industry, and their misconceptions and perception of a negative “brand” for an industry
- Knowledge that is incomplete – or acquired too late in the education process – about required skills and appropriate educational programs, which leads to poor preparation for particular occupations
- Difficulties in gaining access to entry-level positions and relevant work experience
- Slow or cumbersome recruitment processes
- Generational conflicts or misunderstandings in the workplace
- Restrictions in work practices (flexible schedules, locations, etc.)
- Limited feedback, training and advancement opportunities that do not meet the expectations of youth
- Recruitment practices that do not target the interests and behaviours of youth; lack of outreach to youth

Recommended solutions have often included:

- Proactive career awareness through educational institutions, career counselors and direct outreach activities
- Targeted outreach for recruitment
- Increased use of co-op and school-to-work transition programs
- Training and increased awareness of generational differences in the workplace
- Mentoring youth
- Flexibility

“Capturing the kids in post-secondary and giving on-site industry experience is very important.”



“There is not a lot of information on the industry. People only know the bad things – e.g., it is dirty. They (industry) should advertise the benefits of the industry (lots of challenges and career opportunities).”



- Work practices that include young people
- Investments in skills development and training

With respect to mining in particular, the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE) *Campus Recruitment and Benchmark Survey-2010* highlighted that unattractive job location is a barrier to attracting youth to specific sectors. The CACEE survey found that in response to this concern, 100% of mining companies involved in the research offered their recruits a relocation package, as compared to an average of 30.2% for all industries.

For this project, researchers conducted seven interviews with young people (under 25 years of age) to “hear their voices” regarding these themes and any other barriers specific to the mining industry. In addition, several representatives of secondary and post-secondary training institutions were also interviewed for their perspectives.

Advantages of Mining

Younger workers are attracted to the mining industry by the opportunities for learning and growth, good salary and benefits, and the prospect of working globally. Many were drawn to the industry because “it was in the family”. They were familiar with the benefits and the opportunities the industry offered because family members already worked in the industry. In addition, some co-op programs were offered to the children of employees.

Younger participants who were involved in co-op programs liked the experience. They were given the opportunity to work on their own projects and get real life experience. Remuneration and a good relationship with their boss also contributed to a positive experience.

Barriers Identified

Nevertheless, the mining industry still suffers from an image problem for many younger workers. It is still viewed as a “dirty”, “unhealthy” and physically demanding industry. The variety of career opportunities available in mining is largely unknown to this cohort. Young people find out about these opportunities only at an advanced stage in their education (e.g., at the end of first year in university when they have already chosen their discipline). Some of the participants stated that there was a lack of career counseling and encouragement to take courses in math, physics, sciences, etc. Although some of those interviewed were attracted by the shift schedule and remote locations, others were not. Some stated that they were concerned with living conditions, the lack of a social network, and the way the industry is perceived by the public.

Some interviewees said they were aware of the opportunities in the mining industry and wanted to find work, but found it hard to get in. They made statements such as, “You need to know people”. Often, they said, they were not hired because they lacked industry experience, which made getting that first chance often difficult.

Some felt that it could be difficult to integrate once they found work, and they felt disrespected because of their lack of experience. Others reported that older workers were not willing to teach them, which they found very frustrating.

Barriers

- Lack of awareness about jobs available and working conditions
- Remote location of sites
- Lack of career counseling
- Difficulties getting first job experience
- Generational differences in expectations and styles
- Co-op placements not offering “real work”

Solutions

- Employer support for accommodation, food and transportation in remote locations
- Challenging work and opportunities for learning
- Demonstrated equality of treatment with other workers
- Education about industry to students at all levels
- Facilitation of social integration in workplace
- More interaction/face time with employer
- Offers of internships for non-engineering/trades careers

Image of mining: “rock coffin”.



Solutions Recommended

Employers have many opportunities to attract members of this cohort. Many participants suggested that the industry promote a more positive image of mining. Employers should emphasize the overseas opportunities, mining’s positive contribution to society, safety, good pay and benefits, and the many career options (e.g., not just underground work, and not just for those from mining-related disciplines).

Participants also said that mining companies should advertise job opportunities early in the education system; promote opportunities and offer internships in careers beyond mining engineering and trades; and attend more career fairs and improve follow-up with interested young professionals they meet at these fairs. Jobs should be posted on university and college websites, and via individual departments.

According to interviewees, employers should be more willing to offer youth practical and varied work experience through co-ops, apprenticeships and mentoring programs. Managers and supervisors should be provided with the skills to work with this new generation of workers. Some participants commented on the “old people” who they felt were closed to their ideas or hindered their ability to advance.

Lifestyle is very important to this cohort, and they cited the need for attractive and appealing living conditions and accommodation. Several participants expressed appreciation that their accommodation was taken care of during their time on a remote site. Many interviewees stated that they wanted their work to be fun and challenging. They expressed a desire to work and to have the opportunity to meet with people of their own age, in particular if working on a remote site for extended periods. Some suggested that younger workers should be part of the hiring process, for example, by providing suggestions on job postings and sitting on interview boards. Several participants expressed a desire for improved responsiveness from, and better access to, company representatives, including during the recruiting phase with HR representatives, and while on-site with supervisors or persons in charge of accommodation.

Input from Secondary School Educators

The majority of participants recommended that education on the mining industry start before post-secondary or even earlier. Although the focus of youth in this research is individuals between the ages of 17 and 24, the prevalence of this recommendation prompted further investigation into the barriers and solutions for youth at the secondary-school level.

Among the key findings:

- False understanding of the industry prevails at the secondary school level; emphasizing the variety of opportunities available and the role of technology would help attract youth.
- For students under 18, age can be a barrier to participating in a placement at a mine; good-practice employers find ways to allow students to be involved in some way.
- Offering minimum wage to secondary students in summer placements would make the opportunities more attractive.
- Co-ops should be meaningful, for example, by involving students in real tasks.

“Good conditions and salary... opportunities of advancement... good work environment... and mainly a company that has the same values that I have.”

- Many mining programs at the secondary-school level are available in more-northern regions. Employers could encourage similar programs in southern schools through proactive networking and education.
- Good practices include employers giving input into program design; offering mine visits; providing a guest speaker in classrooms to help teachers deliver content; and offering real materials and models for use in programs.
- Industry support for and participation in youth events at mining conferences is important. Having events in smaller locations, such as mining centres, would provide opportunities for more youth to participate.
- Research shows that students start thinking about a career in grades 6, 7, and 8; it is important to stop misconceptions at this stage.



PROFILE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

DEFINITION

Women, formerly or currently employed, or self-employed in the sector

Also included in this research were:

- Employers in the sector
- Female students currently enrolled in post-secondary mining and exploration-related programs
- Educators teaching in post-secondary mining and exploration-related programs of study

NUMBER OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

385

CURRENT STATUS

353 women were currently working in the sector, while 32 had left mining and exploration

OCCUPATION

Almost 70 per cent of respondents were middle and line managers, supervisors or professional women

“The mining industry has treated me very well. I took off the maximum amount of leave for two children and returned to promotions and pay increases both times.”



3.6 Women⁵



Advantages of Mining

Female students who chose mining and exploration indicated they selected the sector because they were aware of career opportunities, competitive pay and benefits.

Barriers Identified

The image of the mining and exploration sector as unfriendly to women may be influencing the educational and career choices of young women as much today, as in the past. Similar to the target groups interviewed for this report, MiHR’s earlier research shows that perceptions that mining involves extremely physical work within a noisy, dirty and harmful environment may continue to deter some women from considering a career in the industry.

Two-thirds of women currently or previously employed in the sector – and one-third of industry employers – identified numerous barriers to career success. Barriers reported by employers as “most critical” were also acknowledged as barriers by women participants but women had a different view about which barriers were most critical.

Women participants identified flexible work practices as a primary working condition that needed to be addressed. That said, women are ready, able and willing to fulfill the rigorous demands of mining and exploration occupations, provided they have sufficient flexibility and support.

Work culture was the second-ranked challenging work condition for women participants, but was identified by only three out of 67 employers. Women also identified the “male-dominated” environment as the foremost issue at all phases of their career, from their successful transition to careers in the sector, and throughout their career development and advancement.

⁵ As noted, women were not included in this research. Findings from Women in Mining (WIM) Canada’s and MiHR’s partnership project, *Ramp-UP* report are included here for comparison purposes. For additional information, see *Ramp-UP: A Study on the Status of Women in Canada’s Mining and Exploration Sector* available at <http://www.mihrc.ca/en/publications/resources/Ramp-UPFinal2010.pdf>

Barriers

- Working conditions, such as “male dominated” work culture; lack of flexible work arrangements; absence of prior notice of travel; absence of child care support; and insufficient parental leave
- Lack of field experience for certain occupations
- Advancement hindered by work culture; lack of mentors and social networks, perceptions of their abilities; and work-life conflicts

Solutions

- Scholarships to attract and recruit women; targeting recruitment efforts specifically to women; and tapping into external professional women’s networks
- Supportive practices for advancement, including supervisor and senior leadership support; supportive colleagues and teams; professional development and training; and mentorship programs



Two-thirds of women participants identified gender-specific barriers to career advancement but fewer than 30 per cent of employers agreed. Women reported that career advancement was most difficult in technical occupations, skilled trades and senior leadership roles. They also reported that having female executive role models helped.

Solutions Recommended

Research participants recommended that mining companies more strongly emphasize training and career development for women. Industry associations could assist employers to access available funds for programs in such areas as outreach, training, mentorship, and career and leadership development.

Implement policies with input from women that address gender-specific barriers.

More flexibility and time are needed for all employees to arrange remote or international assignments.

The research showed that eliminating assumptions about women’s ability to manage field work is vital. Employers also need to address current practices that collectively contribute to perceptions of a male-dominated culture, including through awareness training, closing the wage gap and implementing mentorship programs.

The industry should also encourage mining organizations to report diversity measures in their sustainability and annual reports.

The mining industry needs to encourage women to pursue careers in the sector. Post-secondary alumni groups, women’s networks and industry associations should be supported to build awareness of the sector among mature skilled women and Aboriginal women. Employers should also help organize work placements for young women and female post-secondary students.

Promoting a positive image of the sector is essential. To heighten awareness and dispel public misconceptions about the sector, the mining industry’s professional women’s associations should be encouraged to advocate for the exploration and mining industry through testimonials and through speaking presentations to groups.

Industry’s sponsorship of awards programs will enhance the profile and celebrate the progress of women in the industry. Such events recognize and encourage world-class practices, and identify and applaud organizations’ milestone achievements, while also promoting women’s accomplishments from operational and trades levels to senior leadership.

According to the research, tackling gender diversity will provide the mining and exploration sector with an opportunity to show leadership on a pressing social and economic issue. Increasing the representation of women across all occupational areas and levels will improve business performance and ensure that the mineral sector has the flexibility, adaptability and focus to meet the needs of tomorrow in a highly-competitive global industry.



“To retain quality employees, there needs to be strong role models in the work place. These individuals would make excellent mentors/coaches.”



Based on the research findings to date and the experience of the researchers, the following preliminary recommendations have been provided to assist mining companies to be more inclusive of all possible sources of talent.

This research was conducted to inform upcoming diversity-tool development and plan implementation to be led by the recently formed *Take Action for Diversity Network*, described on Page 8.

It is important to note, some of the recommendations may detail activities that some industry leaders are already implementing, although such activities are not being implemented consistently across the sector.

4.1 Key Practices for Inclusion

1. Develop and implement diversity and inclusion strategies that:

- Make an explicit connection with the organization’s strategic mission and business strategy
- Have the buy-in, support and commitment of senior management
- Are developed in collaboration with, and have the support of, unions and members of the target groups
- Include employment goals towards better reflecting the demographic composition of the local community at all levels of the organization
- Include policies pertaining to equal opportunities for advancement of all employees
- Include formal monitoring mechanisms to hold the workforce accountable by relating performance objectives to diversity and inclusion
- Include mechanisms for engaging and informing employees of the initiative, its business rationale, and their role

2. As part of the overall diversity and inclusion strategy, develop, implement and support respectful workplace practices, including:

- an identification of clear standards of respectful behaviour
- zero tolerance policies against racial, sexual, gender, cultural, religious and all other forms of harassment, and discrimination in the workplace
- a process for reporting discriminatory acts that is safe and flexible to the needs of employees, including multiple entry points for reporting and a focus on quick intervention and resolution

4.1.1 Employers and Stakeholders

1. Establish aggressive strategic human resources plans that target diversity populations such as Aboriginal peoples, new Canadians, mature workers, youth, persons with physical disabilities and women. Strategic plans could include:

- Clear articulation of anticipated business benefits
- Identified priorities and sources for targeted recruitment and referrals
- Focused employment targets and related reporting mechanisms to track progress and measure the achievement of related business benefits



“The expectation from the mining sector is to adapt and conform – they expect everyone to be the same, have the same values, etc. These expectations are unrealistic of diverse individuals.”



- Ongoing dialogue, and explicit agreements and partnerships with relevant organizations and communities
 - Identified champions and accountable individuals to support, initiate and implement strategic planning
 - Assessment and prioritization of gaps and needs for supporting tools and training for managers, supervisors and employees
2. Segment the needs of each target group and create tailored outreach and communication approaches to increase each group’s familiarity with careers in the mining sector. The approaches could include, for example:
 - On-the-job exposure and experiences
 - Targeted orientation packages
 - Outreach visits by employees and company representatives
 3. Include reporting on successes of diversity and inclusion plans through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) models:
 - Continue to build “community relations” that support sustainable development to create more referrals and community connections, thereby also raising a company’s profile as a community leader.
 - Donate to support sustainable development, post-secondary institutions, research programs on disabilities, etc.
 4. Refine recruitment and selection processes to be best-in-class in order to compete for the best talent. Be “easy to do business with” from the perspective of diverse candidates. For example:
 - Simplify interview processes and shorten the qualification and interview stages.
 - Recruit representatives from agencies and organizations serving diversity populations to sit on hiring boards. These representatives can advise and assist with recruitment, language needs, interview questions and assessment of qualifications.
 - Recruit company employees representative of diversity populations to sit on hiring boards.
 5. Support integration and inclusion of members of target groups into the work environment. For example:
 - Create on-site mentors and buddy systems, or “success counselors” for youth, mature workers, new Canadians, Aboriginal peoples and persons with physical disabilities to help with adjustment to relocation, corporate culture and expectations, and orientation.
 - Create opportunities where mature workers can support youth, and youth can learn best practices from mature workers.
 - Review and create work environment accommodations that will support religious, spiritual and cultural on-site opportunities.
 6. Create retention strategies focused on mature workers who have physical limitations that are constraints to working in operational roles. For example:
 - Create orientation and awareness packages to support mature workers transitioning out



of mine-pit sites to administrative positions (while informing them that this option may mean a pay reduction).

- Provide more readily available physical-assessment analysis for mature workers in highly physical jobs, to determine their abilities and considerations for the future.
7. Create supports for potential labour pools – well in advance of recruitment/application – to build general readiness. Examples include educational upgrading, language skills, credential recognition and physical fitness. Make it a priority to educate new employees about the career opportunities in the mining industry.
 8. Although this study did not directly explore barriers to advancement, the issue has often been cited in previous research and was mentioned by some interviewees in this study. Specifically, some participants noted that there was a shortage of role models in more senior positions, indicating concerns about advancement processes and possibilities. As workers from the traditionally under-represented talent pools become more prevalent in the workforce, advancement issues are likely to become a greater priority.

4.1.2 Post-secondary Institutions

1. Build awareness of the sector among students, particularly those enrolled in relevant programs. For example:
 - Create better career-counseling opportunities that provide students with information about the career benefits and opportunities in the sector.
 - Institute information sharing with a mining-sector representative and myth-busting sessions with students to talk about types of jobs, global travel, safety, current events (e.g., commodity prices, new projects).
 - Partner with diversity representatives from various organizations to help recruit and inform youth about the mining sector.
 - Work with MiHR and mining industry representatives to establish a greater on-campus and classroom presence, to increase the sector's visibility to students.
2. Support foreign credential assessment.
3. Target apprenticeship training to youth-only (in some cases) so that they are not competing with mature workers.

4.1.3 Unions

1. Support the recruitment and hiring of diversity candidates in the mining sector – with individual employers as well as with MiHR.
2. Promote the availability of excellent careers in this sector.
3. Support credential recognition from foreign countries.
4. Support more training and orientation for job transfers and transitioning.
5. Discuss the benefits of a career in mining with youth.



“Depending on the education level, you could get pigeon-holed – with only GED/Basic Education it will be difficult to move out.”



Across the board, research participants agreed that the mining sector offers careers of choice. The benefits of working within the industry far outweigh any of its more challenging features.

It was also clear that employers are very eager to attract a larger pool of more diverse talent to the sector; however, they also recognize that they require assistance and guidance to be successful in this endeavour.

Connecting industry stakeholders, communicating information, and providing education about the industry are the kinds of activities most frequently mentioned by participants in this research. Providing the tools and processes to support diversity hiring was the next priority.

Participants frequently acknowledged MiHR as an organization that is needed and appreciated for its efforts to reduce employment gaps within the industry. Companies acknowledge that to be truly effective, they will require strategic plans with specific targets to support their goals. MiHR – with its expertise, tools and ability to facilitate connections between stakeholders – is well-positioned to ensure that the mining sector will increasingly reflect diversity and represent populations in the regions where sites and offices exist, while also securing the talent to meet its labour needs.

A vast number of careers and opportunities are available in the mining sector, ranging from trades, to environmental management and international engineering support. Canada’s mining industry has a lot to offer, with one of the strongest safety records in the world, and good benefits and salaries. Furthermore, the industry continues to grow, as does its range of exciting career opportunities.

TARGET GROUP	SUPPORT
General	<p>Explore for More: http://www.acareerinmining.ca Information on the industry, careers and jobs, including resources and tools such as videos, employment profiles and career paths.</p> <p>Virtual MineMentor Program: http://minementor.acareerinmining.ca Provides students from post-secondary mining programs with positive, virtual-mentoring relationships with exceptional workers from the industry. It also provides experienced workers with an opportunity to mentor young professionals.</p>
Aboriginal Peoples	<p>MiHR Portal for Aboriginal Communities: http://www.aboriginalmining.ca Intended for Aboriginal organizations, career planners, community leaders and individuals, this site provides basic information about career opportunities, and about training and education requirements for individuals considering employment in mining.</p> <p>MiHR Guide for Aboriginal Communities: http://www.aboriginalmining.ca/en/downloadableguide.asp A comprehensive guide for any Aboriginal person interested in obtaining employment and developing a career in mining.</p> <p>Mining Essentials: A Work Readiness Training Program for Aboriginal Peoples: http://www.mihr.ca/en/news/MiHR_enews_May2010.asp A twelve-week Work Readiness Training Program to increase the involvement of Aboriginal peoples in the sector and to help employers gain access to a larger pool of work-ready individuals.</p>
Mature Workers	<p>Explore for More Speakers Bureau: http://speakers.acareerinmining.ca An automated online system where industry representatives can register to speak about the exciting career opportunities in mining.</p> <p><i>Also see information on the MiHR Physical Demands Analysis below.</i></p>
New Canadians	<p>Canadian Mining Credentials Program: http://www.miningcredentials.ca Provides all industry players with comprehensive, objective ways to verify the skills, knowledge and experience of workers, target training requirements, and enable workers from other industries to make smooth transitions to jobs in the Canadian mining industry.</p> <p>Mining Immigration Reference Guide: http://www.mihr.ca/en/publications/resources/MiningImmigrationReferenceGuide.pdf This guide will serve as a reference document to help mining companies better understand the process of foreign worker recruitment, immigration and settlement and to assist them in navigating and managing the process.</p>
Persons with a Disability	<p>MiHR Physical Demands Analysis: http://www.mihr.ca/en/priorities/PhysicalDemands.asp?_mid_=2900 A comprehensive analysis of the physical skills required for three key occupations in the mining industry: Underground Miner, Surface Miner, and Mineral Processing Operator Tech Occupational Categories.</p>

TARGET GROUP	SUPPORT
Youth	<p>Student on the Job Board: http://www.acareerinmining.ca/en/careers/jobboard.asp A free online job board administered by MiHR which allows employers to post mining co-op, apprenticeship and entry-level positions.</p> <p><i>Also see information on the Virtual MineMentor Program and the Speakers Bureau above.</i></p>
Women	<p>Ramp-UP: A Study on the Status of Women in Canada's Mining and Exploration Sector: http://www.mihr.ca/en/publications/resources/Ramp-UPFinal2010.pdf Research on the barriers to and facilitators for attracting, retaining and advancing more women in the mining sector. MiHR partnered with Women in Mining (WIM) Canada to conduct this study.</p>
Tools for Industry	<p>MiHR Innovate: http://www.mihrinnovate.ca A collaborative platform for sharing knowledge and effective HR practices and initiatives, in the interest of working towards addressing the HR challenges specific to the mining industry.</p> <p>Canadian Mining HR Professionals and Innovators Group on LinkedIn: http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=3366701 A discussion group created to further connect mining HR professionals and to foster the development of a Canadian mining human resources community of practice.</p> <p>Mining for Diversity: An Employer's Guide to Attract, Recruit & Retain a Diverse Workforce: http://www.mihr.ca/en/publications/resources/MiningForDiversityKit2_english.pdf A user-friendly guide that puts the research into action. It includes a series of examples, tools and techniques that HR departments can use to better attract, recruit and retain members of diversity population.</p>