



H PERSPECTIVES

The newsletter of the HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit Sector

INTRODUCING THE HR COUNCIL

The HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit Sector is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to building a skilled, committed labour force. It works on behalf of this sector's 69,000 organizations and 1.2 million paid employees whose efforts in small and large communities throughout the country improve and enrich Canadians' lives every day.

The HR Council is the vehicle for voluntary/non-profit employers and employees to work collaboratively on HR-focused research, strategies and action. It is led by a volunteer Board of Directors whose strength is in their diverse perspectives, experience, wisdom and talent. The Board brings together people who govern, manage and work in sector organizations across the country as well as labour unions and educators.

Our roots

The idea for an HR Council for the non-profit sector first came to light in a 1998 study by the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy and the Canadian Policy Research Networks. The momentum for creating it got a boost in 2002 when Community Foundations of Canada (CFC) and United Way of Canada – Centraide Canada

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Some years back, I was settling into my seat on yet another airplane when the man sitting next to me, after a few perfunctory remarks about the

weather, asked me what I did. I replied that I worked as an executive director for a voluntary organization, at which point the conversation ended rather abruptly and he went back to reading the business section of the Globe and Mail.

This may well have been the beginning of my desire to raise awareness about the existence and the value of paid employees who work in voluntary and non-profit organizations across the country. Most Canadians believe that this sector's organizations are still made up solely of volunteers. There are in fact about 1.2 million paid employees in some 69,000 organizations. They constitute roughly 7% of the paid workforce in Canada. These are real people with real jobs whose real skills and knowledge make it possible for organizations to achieve their goals and objectives. Paid employees are key to enabling organizations to attract volunteers and to secure financial resources.

The creation of the HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit Sector provides us not only with a unique opportunity to increase recognition of the value and importance of paid work

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Board of Directors

Hilary Amit (New Glasgow, NS) is the Executive Director of Highland Community Residential Services

Morna Ballantyne (Ottawa, ON) is managing director of union development at the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)

Céline Charpentier (Montréal, QC) is the Executive Director of the Comité sectoriel de main-d'œuvre de l'économie sociale et de l'action communautaire du Québec

Neil Cohen (Winnipeg, MB), Executive Director of the Community Unemployed Help Centre.

Beverly Crossman (Regina, SK) is the Executive Director of Operations for the Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union/National Union of Public and General Employees (SGEU/NUPGE)

Debbie Douglas (Toronto, ON) is the Executive Director of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)

Jennifer Ellis (Whitehorse, YT) is a self-employed communicator, capacity builder, facilitator and trainer who works extensively with voluntary organizations

Eldon Emerson (Edmonton, AB) is the Manager of the Muttart Foundation's Human Resources Cluster Project

Justin Ho (Vancouver, BC) is a coordinator at the Secretariat for the BC Social Economy Roundtable

LaVerna McMaster (Calgary, AB) co-chairs the Women's Centre of Calgary and is a Senior Manager with the Government of Alberta for aboriginal child protection

Pierre Métivier (Québec, QC) is CEO of Centraide Québec

Elda Savoie (Shédiac, NB) is the Executive Director of the Centre for the Prevention of Family Violence in the district of Kent

Yves Savoie (Toronto, ON) is Executive Director of the Family Service Association of Toronto.

Keith Seel (Calgary, AB) is Director of the Institute for Non-profit Studies at Mount Royal College

Uzma Shakir (Toronto, ON) is Executive Director of the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians

Dick Stewart (Georgetown, ON) is a Board member and President of Community Development Halton

Vincenza ("Vincie") Travale (Hamilton, ON) is a retired educator and board member of Community Foundations of Canada

Veronica Utton (Toronto, ON) is the Director of Human Resources, UNICEF Canada

Lynne Toupin (Ottawa, ON) is the Executive Director of the HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit Sector

Observers

Eric Perreault, Senior Analyst, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

Linda Searson, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Voluntary Sector, Centre for Health Promotion, Public Health Agency of Canada

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(UWC-CC) collaborated on *Developing Human Resources in the Voluntary Sector* (HRVS). This project, supported by the Voluntary Sector Initiative, raised questions about how to sustain a focus on paid employment in the sector and it revived interest in an HR Council.

In 2003, with funding from the Government of Canada's Sectoral Partnerships Program at Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, CFC and UWC-CC continued their joint leadership with the Feasibility Study that led to the creation of the HR Council. They convened an Advisory Committee drawn from sector organizations across the country to guide the work and gathered insights from voluntary sector organizations in 43 consultation meetings in 37 communities across Canada and a web-based survey that attracted nearly 1200 responses.

Sector input to the Feasibility Study drew attention to key challenges such as retaining staff, attracting young people to the sector and diagnosing and meeting changing skill needs in the sector. People and organizations throughout the sector agreed that paid employment needs sustained attention to ensure that non-profit organizations and the people who work for them can better serve their communities.

The road ahead

Our efforts in 2006-2007 will focus largely on planning and laying the groundwork for the future. We will begin a major study of paid employment in the sector. We will build new online information resource centres for sector employers and employees, and will add content to the HR Management Tool Kit. In response to sector input to the Feasibility Study, the HR Council will identify available HR management training and learning opportunities for small non-profit organizations.

Neil Cohen, Chair of the Board of Directors



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in the sector. It is also a vehicle we can use to address some of the issues and challenges of this particular segment of the labour market. While the sector itself is large and diverse, there are nevertheless HR issues that are common to many organizations, such as the need for affordable and accessible training and learning opportunities for staff, the need for effective HR management tools and practices geared to the particular context of voluntary organizations, as well as issues of compensation, recruitment and retention of staff.

And then there are the looming questions about what the exodus of working baby-boomers will mean. Like the workforce in the public and private sectors, we too are getting older. It is hard to foresee the impact a wave of retirements will have on our sector. How will we replace people with all those years of experience? Will voluntary/non-profit organizations be able to attract the talent we need? What new recruitment strategies will we need to attract this talent from an increasingly diverse labour force?

As we begin to identify the priorities of the HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit sector, there are many questions but few clear answers. The good news is that we are hearing from both individuals and organizations across the sector who are willing to help us frame the issues, to get more information about the characteristics of our workforce and to begin to help us identify some solutions. The modus operandi for this council will be outreach and engagement. We want to develop a broad set of relationships and partnerships across the country and invite you to be an active part of our evolving network. In the months to come, we will be soliciting your views and perspectives on a range of HR issues and topics, in person, through surveys, and on our website (www.hrcouncil.ca). HR PERSPECTIVES has become one of many venues for information, discussion and debate about the opportunities and challenges of this essential part of the Canadian labour force.



Lynne Toupin, Executive Director

BUILDING ON A LEGACY – THE HR MANAGEMENT TOOL KIT

The HR Council for the Voluntary/Non-profit Sector is a new organization, but it is in fact rooted in a project called Developing Human Resources for the Voluntary Sector (HRVS), which started in the Fall of 2002.

During the Voluntary Sector Initiative, the Capacity Joint Table identified an urgent need for practical HR management tools, resources and information for small and mid-sized voluntary organizations. Because of their size and modest budgets, it is not possible to have a qualified HR specialist to manage all aspects of HR for the organization. Instead, the function is generally divided up between various positions such as the Executive Director, the office administrator, the receptionist or a board member. While they may not have in-house HR expertise or knowledge, employers know that good HR management practices are key to both hiring and retaining employees.

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FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT PAID EMPLOYMENT IN THE VOLUNTARY/ NON-PROFIT SECTOR

The sector's labour force is large

The voluntary/non-profit sector employs about 7.2% of Canada's paid labour force. This is approximately the same number of people that are employed in the combined labour forces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland and Labrador.

The voluntary/non-profit sector is complex

The sector includes a wide variety of work in many areas of activity: Social services; Health; Development & Housing; Sports & Recreation; Religion; Education & Research; Arts & Culture; Grant-making, Fundraising & Voluntarism Promotion; Environment; Law, Advocacy & Politics; and International.

Identifying the largest sub-sectors, depends on whether you want to find most of the employers or most of the employees. Based on the number of employers, the largest sub-sectors are religion, social services, and arts and culture. Together they make up 61% of the sector's employers. Based on the number of employees, the largest sub-sectors are social services, health, and development and housing (combined total is 58% of the sector's employees).

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Community Foundations of Canada, in partnership with United Way Canada-Centraide Canada, responded to this urgent need for practical, just-in-time HR tools and resources that would take into account the particular characteristics of small and mid-sized organizations. Funded by Human Resources Development Canada, www.HRVs.ca was developed as the 'go-to' site on HR management in the voluntary/non-profit sector. Over the last two years, information, tools and templates were systematically added so that the site now comprises well over 500 pages.

When the HR Council came into existence last summer, the HR Management Tool Kit www.HRVs.ca was transferred over to the HR Council's new site and it can now be easily accessed by going to www.HRCouncil.ca. Drawing on the many suggestions and ideas of employers and employees in the sector, this sub-site is designed as a one-stop shop with a wide range of information, tools and templates to

make the HR generalist's job easier. For example, there is a section that links the reader directly to employment related legislation for each of the provinces and territories. Another section includes examples of HR policies and procedures in 37 different topic areas and a guide for developing such policies. Other sections include information on Staffing, Training and Development, Compensation and Benefits, and People Management.

The site currently gets over 20,000 visits per month. Those who use the materials have expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the content. But stay tuned. Over the course of the next year, the site will be re-branded and re-designed to add more content and make it bigger, better and more accessible. This HR Management Tool Kit will be a permanent feature of the HR Council's site, helping organizations across the country to implement good HR policies and practices.

In the voluntary/non-profit sector, very small workplaces are common and large workplaces are rare. About three-quarters of sector organizations have fewer than 10 employees and only about 3% of them have 100 employees or more. But there are some noteworthy differences from one area of activity to the next. For

example: religious organizations with fewer than 5 employees are particularly common; Social services and health organizations are more likely to have at least 10 employees; Health is the only area where workplaces with 10 or more employees are the majority.

More facts and figures are available at www.hrcouncil.ca

Source: Cornerstones of Community: Highlights of the National Survey of Nonprofit and Voluntary Organizations, Revised version, June 2005. Ottawa: Minister of Industry, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 61-533-XIE.

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