

**MAKING GOVERNMENT
THE BEST PLACE TO WORK:
BUILDING COMMITMENT**

A REDISCOVERING PUBLIC SERVICE PROJECT

By

Monica Belcourt, PhD, CHRP
Professor, Human Resources Management, York University

Simon Taggar, M.B.A., PhD
Associate Professor, Human Resources Management and
Organizational Behaviour, Wilfrid Laurier University



NEW DIRECTIONS - NUMBER 8

©L'Institut d'administration publique du Canada, 2002
The Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 2002

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED/TOUS DROITS RÉSERVÉS

The Institute of Public Administration of Canada

The Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) is the leading Canadian organization concerned with the theory and practice of public management. Its scope covers governance from the local to the global level. It is an association with active regional groups across the country. The Institute recognizes and fosters both official languages of Canada

IPAC/IAPC
1075, rue Bay Street
Suite/bureau 401
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 2B1 CANADA

Tel./tél: (416) 924-8787
Fax: (416) 924-4992
e-mail/courriel: ntl@ipaciapc.ca
Internet : www.ipaciapc.ca

L'Institut d'administration publique du Canada

L'Institut d'administration publique du Canada (IAPC) est la principale institution canadienne qui s'intéresse à la théorie et à la pratique de la gestion publique tant au niveau local qu'au niveau mondial. C'est une association composée de groupes régionaux actifs à travers tout le pays. L'Institut reconnaît et promeut les deux langues officielles du Canada.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This IPAC project was made possible by the following:

The Government of Canada

The Government of Alberta

The Government of Ontario

The Government of Saskatchewan

The Government of British Columbia

The City of Vancouver

The Canadian Centre for Management Development

PriceWaterhouseCoopers

and

The members of IPAC, who are dedicated to excellence
in public administration

Thank you

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	vii
Sommaire exécutif	ix
Part 1: Building a Committed Public-Sector Workforce	1
Part 2: The Roundtables	
Intuit Canada: “Wowing” Employees	8
Employee Relationship Management at RBC Financial Group	11
E-Learning Strategies at Sasktel	14
Attraction, Motivation and Retention in a High-Performance Environment: IBM	16
The City of Richmond: Love ’em or Lose ’em	18
Culture, Culture, Culture at Sierra Systems	20
CUETS: HR, the Strategic Enabler	22
Building Buy-in from the Top: The Public Service Commission in Alberta	25
Wisconsin State Government: Better People, Better Programs, Better Government	27
Part 3: High-Performance Work Systems and Prescriptions	32
Appendix A: The Working Model to Build Commitment	36
Appendix B: Measures Used in the IPAC Survey	39
Notes	41
Participants	43

Abstract

L'attraction et la conservation du personnel sont l'une des grandes préoccupations des gestionnaires, tant dans le secteur public que le secteur privé. Toutefois, après examen des faits, il semble que ces deux éléments ne soient pas un problème majeur confrontant le secteur public. Dans ce rapport de l'IAPC, nous donnons un aperçu de neuf organismes qui ont été reconnus pour être les meilleurs employeurs et qui ont présenté leurs points de vue et stratégies lors de nos discussions de tables rondes. Ensemble et individuellement, les organismes offrent de nombreuses leçons.

Addressing a frequently perceived human resources crisis in the public service, this publication shows that this is not so much a recruiting problem as a commitment problem. Certain categories of public servants – young, professional and technical works particularly – exhibit a low level of commitment to their work, and to their employer. This study, drawing upon the lessons learned by nine award winning employers, demonstrates that the key solution to this situation lies in organizations making substantive commitments to their employees. Only then can they expect to see that commitment returned.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Many organizations are trying to determine what they can do to attract, motivate and retain employees. Unplanned, unwanted attrition can attack and damage even the most successful organizations. This is especially true for organizations, such as those in the public-sector, that rely on human capital to accomplish their goals. Public-sector organizations will not achieve their service and advisory goals if employee motivation is low and attrition is high.

Attraction and retention are on the minds of managers in both the public and private sectors.

Regina participant: *“What we are looking at is the revitalization of the whole government.”*

However, upon examination of the facts, it appears that attraction and retention may not be the key issues for the public sector. Except for certain occupations experiencing labour shortages, the public sector seems able to attract and retain qualified employees. Across Canada, a job with the government is a good job, and any job posting attracts hundreds of applicants and dozens of qualified candidates. Moreover, the turnover rates in government are extremely low compared to the private sector. Yet, despite these hard realities, there is a widespread concern that government is a vulnerable employer. The Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) conducted a series of roundtables with senior public servants in 2001 and 2002 to air out some of the concerns and, based on feedback and a thorough search of the literature, conducted its own survey. The overarching conclusion to be drawn from the research and the roundtables is this: The key human resources issue in the public sector is a lack of engagement (referred to by researchers as “affective commitment”) among a certain group of employees.

Our research shows that younger public-sector employees and those in occupations in high demand (scientific, professional and technical) have relatively low “affective” and “normative” commitment. They are generally not engaged or motivated by their work, their bosses, or their work context. Younger employees and those in certain occupations show what human resource specialists refer to as a “high continuance commitment.” This means that they are staying in their jobs but are not happy doing so. They are not leaving the public sector, however, because the cost of quitting is perceived to be too high. The net effect is that the younger employees are not performing as well as they could because they are not motivated.

In contrast, the evidence shows that public-sector managers at the upper levels are extremely committed. These individuals are highly engaged and show high levels of affective and normative commitment.

Commitment is important because high levels of affective and normative commitment are associated with higher levels of performance and attendance. Affectively committed employees will make personal sacrifices, perform beyond normal expectations, work selflessly, endure difficult times and not desire leaving the organization for self-interest or personal gain.

The danger for governments is this: Younger, professional and technical employees in the public sector report fairly high intentions to leave, and governments may be facing a retention problem with this segment of its employee base in the near future. We conclude that any retention problem has to be solved by first solving the commitment problem. There is no point in mounting expensive recruitment and “brand-building” campaigns to attract candidates until the commitment problem is solved. The result would simply be a revolving door of employees or,

worse, an organization in which unmotivated employees deliver minimally acceptable performance.

Organizations can build high levels of employee commitment. In this IPAC report, we review nine organizations that have won awards as best employers and that presented their insights and strategies to our roundtable discussions. These organizations — some as big as governments some small like departments — have worked hard to engage their employees and reap the benefits of high commitment. There are many ways to attract, motivate and retain employees, as illustrated in these cases. Many of these techniques are created and managed by the human resources professionals in their organization. Collectively and individually these organizations offer many lessons.

The most important lesson, however, is that organizations must commit to employees before expecting employees to commit to them. This report concludes with recommendations, based on the research and the roundtables, to help the public sector build high-performance work systems that will, in turn, create commitment and increase performance. The net result will be a public sector that will continue to attract excellent individuals and that, better still, will keep them motivated to deliver the best services possible to Canadians.

SOMMAIRE EXÉCUTIF

Nombre d'organismes cherchent à déterminer comment ils peuvent attirer, motiver et conserver leur personnel. L'attrition non planifiée et non désirée peut attaquer et endommager même les organismes les plus prospères. Cela est particulièrement vrai pour les organismes, notamment ceux du secteur public, qui comptent sur le capital humain pour réaliser leurs objectifs. Si la motivation des employés est faible et l'attrition est élevée, les organismes du secteur public n'atteindront pas leurs objectifs en matière de service et de consultation.

L'attraction et la conservation du personnel sont l'une des grandes préoccupations des gestionnaires, tant dans le

“Ce que nous examinons, finalement, c'est la revitalisation de tout le gouvernement”

–Un participant à Regina.

secteur public que le secteur privé. Toutefois, après examen des faits, il semble que ces deux éléments ne soient pas un problème majeur confrontant le secteur public. À l'exception de certains groupes professionnels qui connaissent une pénurie de main-d'œuvre, le secteur public semble capable d'attirer et de conserver des employés qualifiés. Partout au Canada, un emploi dans la fonction publique est considéré être un bon emploi et les offres d'emploi du gouvernement attirent des centaines de candidatures et des douzaines de candidats qualifiés. En outre, le taux de roulement dans le secteur public est très bas par rapport au secteur privé. Cependant, une inquiétude générale est que l'État soit un employeur vulnérable. En 2001 et 2002, l'Institut d'administration publique du Canada (IAPC) a tenu plusieurs tables rondes auxquelles ont participé des hauts fonctionnaires en vue de discuter ouvertement plusieurs de ces préoccupations. Il a ensuite conduit sa propre étude en s'appuyant sur les commentaires recueillis et une recherche approfondie de la documentation disponible sur le sujet. La conclusion déterminante qui a été tirée de la recherche et des tables rondes est que le manque d'engagement – ou engagement affectif selon les chercheurs – parmi un certain groupe d'employés, est le grand problème auquel fait face le secteur public concernant les ressources humaines.

Les résultats de notre recherche indiquent que les jeunes fonctionnaires et ceux qui occupent une profession à forte demande (scientifique, professionnel et technique) ont un engagement affectif et normatif assez faible. En général, ils ne sont pas engagés ou motivés par leur travail, leurs chefs ou le contexte de leur travail. Le personnel plus jeune et celui exerçant certaines professions montrent ce que les spécialistes en ressources humaines appellent «un engagement élevé de continuation». Cela signifie que ces employés restent dans leurs emplois bon gré, mal gré. Ils ne quittent pas la fonction publique parce que le coût d'un départ serait trop élevé. Ce qui fait qu'ils ne sont pas aussi rentables qu'ils le pourraient s'ils étaient motivés.

Par contre, les gestionnaires publics qui occupent des postes de haute direction font preuve d'un très grand engagement – même s'ils ne sont pas pleinement satisfaits de leur travail. Ces personnes sont très engagées et montrent un «engagement affectif et normatif» très élevé.

L'engagement est un élément important parce qu'un engagement affectif et normatif élevé est associé à une assiduité et un rendement élevés. Les employés affectivement engagés font des sacrifices personnels, fournissent un rendement supérieur aux attentes, travaillent sans relâche, endurent des périodes difficiles et ne quittent pas l'organisme pour un gain ou des intérêts personnels.

Le danger que courent les gouvernements est de conserver leur personnel plus jeune, professionnel et technique qui manifeste l'intention – relativement élevée – de quitter le secteur public. Les gouvernements seront donc confrontés au problème de maintenir ce segment de leur base d'employés dans un proche avenir. Nous en concluons que pour résoudre le problème du maintien de l'effectif, il faut d'abord apporter une solution à la question d'engagement. Tant que cette question n'est pas résolue, les campagnes coûteuses de recrutement et de promotion de l'image de marque sont inutiles, car, elles aboutiraient à un problème de va-et-vient du personnel ou à un organisme dans lequel le personnel non motivé fournit un rendement médiocre.

Les organismes peuvent établir des niveaux d'engagement élevés pour leurs employés. Dans ce rapport de l'IAPC, nous donnons un aperçu de neuf organismes qui ont été reconnus pour être les meilleurs employeurs et qui ont présenté leurs points de vue et stratégies lors de nos discussions de tables rondes. Ces organismes – certains étant aussi grands qu'un gouvernement; d'autres étant plus petits, comme un ministère – ont consacré corps et âme à l'engagement de leur personnel pour arriver à un haut niveau de participation de l'effectif. Comme ces cas l'indiquent, il y a diverses façons d'attirer, de motiver et de conserver des employés. Nombre de ces techniques sont créées et dirigées par les professionnels des ressources humaines. Ensemble et individuellement, elles offrent de nombreuses leçons.

La leçon la plus importante à retenir est que les organismes doivent s'engager envers leurs employés avant de s'attendre à un engagement de leur part. Ce rapport se termine par des recommandations, basées sur la recherche et les tables rondes qui ont été conduites, afin d'aider le secteur public à créer des systèmes de rendement élevé qui, en retour, favoriseront l'engagement et le rendement accru. L'aboutissement final sera un secteur public capable de continuer d'attirer des personnes compétentes et hautement qualifiées, et de les garder motivées afin de dispenser les meilleurs services qui soient aux citoyens canadiens.

PART 1

BUILDING A COMMITTED PUBLIC-SECTOR WORKFORCE

THE RESEARCH

The Importance of Managing Human Resources

The management of human resources has assumed a fundamental importance in organizations. Participants at the IPAC roundtables agreed that employees have a profound effect on the ability of any organization to achieve its goals. The ability of an organization to attract, motivate and retain excellent people is critical to the success of the organization. There are many factors that influence recruitment, motivation and retention. These include the external economic conditions, the organization's image, pay, supervision, and the very design of jobs. It is critical that managers acknowledge and accept that they are accountable for managing the factors within their control to help recruit, engage and retain the most valued employees. The purpose of this study was to determine what these factors might be in the public sector and to get at the root causes rather than the symptoms of the problem. By getting at root causes, we hope to steer policy-makers away from band-aid solutions that address mere symptoms not ailments.

The Study

The Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) has long been interested in the issues of attraction and retention in the public sector as part of its "Rediscovering Public Service" initiative. The governments of Canada, Alberta, Ontario, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, the City of Vancouver, the Canadian Centre for Management Development and PricewaterhouseCoopers supported this study. The participants were engaged to study the issues primarily through a research survey and a series of roundtables.

The surveying of employee attitudes is standard practice in most large organizations. The results of these surveys are related to employee performance and, on a lagged basis, organizational performance. In other words, high levels of employee

Edmonton participant: "*We should attract young people to government by saying 'here's a two-year exciting project. You are going to do this – develop a policy or whatever. Then you are in; then you are out. It is not a government job. You are not here for life.'*"

engagement lead to increased productivity, which in turn lead to increased client satisfaction and improved organizational results. These surveys can be thought of as canaries in a mineshaft – early warning systems to alert managers to problems. The results signal to managers that there are pockets of dissatisfaction. Managers, working with the affected employees, can then develop strategies to deal with the problems before they become debilitating to the organization. Of course, over time, the survey results can be used as baseline data to determine if the organization is making progress in building higher levels of the right kind of commitment. The first part of

this report focuses on the results of the survey administered to public servants in the federal, provincial and municipal governments.

The Survey

While a few government departments have surveyed their employees, none of them have focused their research on the issue of commitment. Such a survey among a wide mass of employees might yield results that are difficult to interpret. We considered a variety of options and chose to test our theories about commitment on what arguably could be considered the most heavily committed public-sector employees: IPAC members.

IPAC tends to attract educated and informed civil servants who are deeply committed to the ideals of good government. The survey was sent to 854 members, of which 392 responded, for a response rate of 46%. The sample was highly educated, with 25% possessing an undergraduate degree and 45% a master's degree. Most were new in their jobs (37% less than three years), but nearly 75% had been with the government for more than ten years. Over 40% were earning more than \$80,000 a year. The sample consisted of representatives from the federal government (22.4%), municipal governments (12.8%) and provincial governments (60%). Appendix A outlines the theoretical models underlying the survey. The next section provides an explanation of organizational commitment, followed by the key results.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment has been widely investigated in the private sector because it affects individual attitudes and behaviour in the workplace. Among the types of behaviour, the focus has been on turnover and how it is strongly affected by commitment — that is, highly committed employees who wish to remain with their employing organizations. Organizational commitment may be thought of as having three distinct dimensions — affective, normative, and continuance:

Toronto participant: “*This year our ministry had three positions for communications specialists and we received 800 applicants – dozens from wonderfully qualified individuals.*”

- *affective commitment* describes the *emotional* attachment a person feels for the organization and is defined as the degree to which an individual is psychologically attached to an organization through loyalty, affection, belongingness,¹ etc;
- *normative commitment* describes the feelings of *obligation* a person has that compel him or her to remain with an organization;
- *continuance commitment* develops as employees become aware that they have accumulated investments with the organization that would be lost if they were to leave, and they recognize that comparable alternatives are limited.²

With all three types of commitment, the employee is “committed” to remain with the organization but for different reasons. Affective commitment shows the highest rate of returns in terms of decreased turnover and increase organizational citizenship behaviour (“going the extra-mile” for the organization). Normative commitment includes a moral component since it refers to the employees’ feelings of obligation or responsibility to remain within the organization.³ Research indicates that individuals will show certain types of behaviour because they believe it is the right and moral thing to do.⁴ Continuance commitment reflects a utilitarian perspective based on exchanges with the organization with the assumption that individuals invest in the organization, by staking something they value.⁵ It refers to a commitment related to the costs that employees associate with leaving the organization.

Unlike affective commitment, continuance commitment results from the exchange relationship between employees and the organization.⁶ Individuals become “continuously” committed to an organization because they have had side bets or because the benefits they accrue from continuing the relationship with the organization increase. Studies have found that there is either no relationship between continuance commitment and performance or a negative one. For example, one study found that nurses with strong continuance commitment were more likely to handle a dissatisfying situation by passively withdrawing rather than by attempting to change things.⁷

Individuals who score high on continuance commitment stay at their job because they have few alternatives or because of financial concerns. Recognizing that an individual might be relatively dissatisfied at work but might not actually quit, it is not surprising that continuance commitment is negatively (albeit modestly) correlated with job satisfaction.⁸ Indeed, it appears that the only similarity between affective commitment and continuance commitment is that each is associated with lower turnover.⁹

Regina participant: *“Last week we held a focus group with sixty people who said that what attracted them to government was the chance to serve the public and others talked about job security.”*

Survey Results

Results of the research indicated that, overall, the public sector fared quite well in terms of the key outcome variables, including employee commitment measures and satisfaction. Senior employees were particularly committed and satisfied when compared to benchmarked data from both public and private organizations. For them, government is indeed the “best place to work.” However, when subgroups were explored, we found that employees who had recently entered the public service (particularly those in professional and technical jobs) were relatively dissatisfied and uncommitted for several reasons and had fairly high intentions to leave.

Differences Between Groups

The aggregated results seem favourable. There were

- no gender differences — women are as satisfied and committed as men on all measures;

- no employee status differences — indeterminate/full-time employees are as satisfied and committed as term/casual/part-time employees on all measures;
- no employee education differences — highly educated employees are as satisfied and committed as employees with less education on all measures.

However, there were major differences between younger and older employees. Generally, continuance commitment problems (and therefore intention to quit and move) exist with younger (especially 20-29 age group) and short-tenure employees. Indeed, the younger the employee group, the greater the problem: the correlation between age and affective commitment is a statistically remarkable .22 ($p < .001$)!

Also, but to a lesser extent, the same problems exist for technical, supervisors, policy, professional and scientific employees – probably because younger employees were more likely to be found in these categories. Each of these employee groups has below-average means on affective commitment. For instance, the sample mean for affective commitment was 4.7, but for the technical employees it was 2.7. Technical employees intend to quit at twice the rate of other employees and have a very high intent to move from their existing department to another department.

Toronto participant: *“We don’t hire entry-level positions. We expect two to five years of experience and two degrees. Our deputy minister threw a wrench in our recruitment plans and asked: ‘why are you spending all this time on marketing? People want to work for us and we don’t have any positions to give them.’ ”*

Executives and managers, on the other hand, seem highly affectively committed.

Correlation analysis provides further insight into why younger employees have a greater intent to quit (mean for those at, or below, 39 years of age was 2.5) when compared to older employees (mean for those employees above 39 years of age was 2.0). The correlation analysis revealed that low affective commitment

Toronto participant: *“I work in a department where the average age is fifty-three, and we have hired three specialists under thirty. My bet is that they will never work for the civil service again, not because it is not interesting – it is their dream job – but because of the difficulty of working in such an aging work group.”*

employees in the public sector are not satisfied with training and development, salary, and their job duties and tasks. For example, in this particular survey, the benchmark for satisfaction with training and development is 24; the mean for younger public-sector employees is 15.7. These employees appear to want challenge and empowerment. Moreover, low-commitment groups were unhappy with their relationships with their co-workers and feel relatively low job security.

Given the importance of the right kind of organizational commitment, it may be constructive to compare the performance of our sample against private-sector samples with respect to the three

components of commitment. In private-sector organizations, the mean affective commitment levels can be expected to range from 4.12 to 4.72 (standard deviation may range from 1.34 to 1.36). In our sample of public-sector employees the level of affective commitment was 4.72 (standard deviation = 1.34). Continuance commitment was lower in the public-sector sample compared to the private sector – this suggests that relatively few employees in the public sector stay at their jobs simply because they feel they have no other alternatives or because they have made too much of an investment to leave. However, normative commitment was higher than one would like to see – that is, relative to private-sector organizations, our sample of employees was more likely to say that they stay at their current jobs out of a feeling of obligation.

Table 1. Comparative Means and Standard Deviations for the Three Components of Commitment

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Private-Sector Benchmarks</i>		<i>IPAC Public-Sector Sample</i>	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Affective	4.12-4.72	1.34-1.36	4.72	1.34
Continuance	4.38-4.50	1.25-1.90	3.57	1.32
Normative	3.66	.98	3.85	1.38

In terms of affective commitment, the picture is clarified when one looks at differences between groups. Generally, commitment problems (and therefore intention to quit and move) exist with younger (especially the 20-29 age group)/low-tenure employees (the younger the employee group, the greater the problem). For the 20-29 age group, affective commitment is only 3.52. Also, but to a lesser extent, the same problems exist for technical, supervisors, policy, professional and scientific employees – possibly because younger employees were more likely to be found in these categories. Each of these employee groups has below-average means on affective commitment. For instance, the sample mean for affective commitment was 4.7 in our sample, and for the technical employees it was only 2.7. Technical employees intend to quit at twice the rate of other employees and have a very high intent to move.

These results demonstrate that there is a problem with commitment among the younger generation of civil servants, particularly those in the professional and technical categories.¹⁰ The problem is probably greater than that reported here, in that this sample of IPAC members is more typically engaged in public-sector issues (*ipso facto*) than is a random sample of young public servants across the nation.

What can federal, provincial and municipal governments do to become the best place in which to work for the next generation? How can affective commitment be built? The next section of this document outlines what some award-winning organizations have done to be selected as employers of choice and the specific practices they have created to build employee affective commitment.

Vancouver participant: “Trust and relationship building are important. We cannot work in silos but must push horizontal initiatives.”

Why are governments not winning the hearts of younger or technical, supervisors, policy, professional and scientific employees? A multiple regression analysis reveals that in terms of the work context, the answer is as follows:

- *low autonomy*: Employees are asking for more freedom, independence and discretion in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used.
- *low cohesion*: Employees are asking for more opportunities to collaborate and share with their colleagues. They are looking to work in groups where people pitch in to help each other and show more team spirit. This generation has been raised on group projects and teamwork and so reacts negatively when placed in a work context devoid of collaboration.
- *low recognition*: Employees want to be recognized for their contributions. They want feedback on their performance, with employer discussions of their strengths and a pat on the back when performance merits it. They feel that the only time they hear about performance is when there are problems.
- *procedural justice*: Of even greater significance is that this younger group has low perceptions of procedural justice. They reported that they did not feel that the organization is making allocation decisions in a way that they perceive to be fair. According to this group, decisions are not made in a consistent manner, their input in decisions is not solicited, and accurate information is not always obtained prior to making a decision.
- *leadership*: Among all employees' perceptions, the effectiveness of leaders is generally poor (mean of 32 when the norm is 35), and, generally, those employees rating leaders poorest were new and younger employees. Employees want their leaders to give them the training, preparation and information necessary to do their jobs. They want the authority to complete tasks and the support and the trust of their supervisors so that they can accomplish this.

We used a measure of leadership that assesses behaviour and interactions between subordinates. Good-quality leader-member exchanges (LMX) involve giving subordinates enough authority to complete important assignments, preparing subordinates for difficult assignments and providing special information that is helpful for subordinates task accomplishment. We found that leaders do not interact with all subordinates equally. Over time, this results in the formation of LMXs that vary in quality. Increased levels of information exchange, mutual support, informal influence, trust, and greater negotiating latitude and input in decisions characterize interactions in higher-quality LMXs. Lower-quality LMXs are associated with younger employees in our sample and are characterized

Vancouver participant: *“The average deputy minister’s tenure was two and half years; now it is closer to four years, which allows us to develop a value system and deliver the big vision.”*

by more formal supervision, less support, and less trust and attention from the leader. LMX can predict job outcomes such as job satisfaction, performance and turnover.

- *psychological contract*: The management of “psychological contracts” is a core task for firms that attempt to develop a "people-building" rather than "people-using" organization in a climate characterized by trust. Younger employees who responded to the survey have expectations when they entered the public sector, and these expectations are not being met. They reported that their employment relationship is not what they were led to believe it would be. The survey did not allow the determination of the nature of these unmet expectations, and there is no way to determine if the promises made were explicit or implicit.

Edmonton participant: “A major problem we have is that, intuitively, I suspect that we have a large number of unhappy people who feel that they’re in a government job where their careers are moving too slowly, who have to wait for someone to retire to have a promotion.”

PART 2

THE ROUNDTABLES

Four roundtables were held in 2001 and 2002, in Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton and Regina. Participants (whose names are listed in Appendix B) consisted of leaders in the municipal, provincial and federal governments. Award-winning employers were invited to make presentations to the roundtables, after which questions and discussions focused on issues of attraction, learning, motivation and retention. The case studies described below represent a synopsis of those presentations and discussions. They are, to our knowledge, the only public description of the precise human resource management practices of award-winning organizations, all but one of them located in Canada.

Intuit Canada: “Wowing” Employees

Intuit Canada, headquartered in Edmonton, Alberta, is a leading developer of financial software, including that for personal finance management, small business accounting and tax preparation, with products like Quicken. Intuit, like other organizations profiled in this report, is a top employer: it is ranked second in Canada by *The Globe and Mail*'s survey and forty-fifth of the 100 Best Companies to Work for in America by *Fortune* magazine in 2002. What makes Intuit special is its success in a highly competitive industry. What makes Intuit a great place in which to work? There are many factors, but evidence of its success is its low attrition rate of 3%, which is remarkable in a sector where the average turnover is 20%. Ninety-four per cent of its employees report that Intuit is a “great place to work,” according to their annual surveys.

Betty Buysen, Manager of Human Resources at Intuit, attributes these results to deliberate strategies in recruitment, orientation, performance management, and the building of a dynamic work culture.

Recruitment

Intuit selects employees on attributes such as attitudes, reasoning that while skills can be developed, attitudes

Regina participant: “*Don’t advertise jobs in the government. In my focus group people don’t want to say that they are working for the government. Advertise projects – here is what you will be doing; here is what you will be learning.*”

cannot. Skills and experience are not ignored, but the principal hiring criterion is how an individual “fits” into the existing culture and the culture the company wishes to create. Every candidate undergoes multiple interviews (from eight to ten individual interviews) and intensive questioning to determine if the candidate fits. Once a match is found, then Intuit goes all out to “wow” the candidate. During the intensive interviewing, Intuit identifies the things that excite the individual. For example, Ms. Buysen reported on how one highly desirable candidate was a bicycle enthusiast. An Intuit employee who was also keen on biking was asked to go to a cycle shop and choose something special that would appeal to the candidate. Intuit enclosed the gift with the letter of offer. The candidate was “wowed,” and the offer was accepted. Another

example involved a candidate whose wife was expecting their third child during the time of the interviews. Intuit sent a gift basket containing toys for the children and a letter thanking the spouse for allowing the interviews during this time.

Another unique feature of the HR selection process is that the hiring manager does the reference checking. Intuit feels that the hiring manager is more attuned to the candidate and is able to “intuit” soft spots that can be targeted as part of the reference checking.

Is Intuit taking a huge risk in “wowing” the recruit”? A necessary part of recruitment is a realistic job preview. Candidates are told that there are periods, sometimes as long as two months, in which they will be working so hard that they won’t be able to see their families. They are asked for examples of times when they have indeed worked those kinds of hours.

If a prime candidate has unique skills that are in high demand but is not a fit, Intuit will still hire that person, but on a limited contract until the “absolute need” for that individual’s skills is over. Only those candidates who fit the core values of the company are offered permanent employment.

Recruitment activities at Intuit are not funded by an unlimited budget. The firm depends on less costly recruitment activities such as employee referrals, internal open houses (as opposed to job fairs), and advertising on the Internet.

Orientation

Intuit is very careful about the first few days of a new employee’s work life. There are too many stories about employees in other organizations showing up very excited about their new job, only to discover that no one remembers they were hired, that supplies and offices are not ready, and that the reporting manager is absent.

Edmonton participant: “*Check the data. If you look historically, except for the 1960s and 1970s, governments didn’t hire youth. Governments hire people with experience. Hiring people in their thirties has been a classic pattern of government recruiting.*”

Intuit is committed to “wowing” the candidate – now employee – on the first day. Upon arriving at work, new employees are greeted by name by the receptionist, who gives them each a stainless steel coffee mug engraved with their name. The hiring manager is called and arrives promptly. He knows the candidate and takes him or her to the workstation, showing the new employee the computer, telephone, and office supplies. The next step is to introduce the new employee to colleagues and other team members and a “buddy,” who has volunteered to guide the new employee and answer all questions for the next three weeks. New employees often struggle with simple questions like, how does the photocopier work? Do most people bring their lunches to work? The IT person arrives next and helps set up voice mail, e-mail, Internet, etc. Intuit considers it vital that when the new employee goes home that night and, in response to the universal question, “how was your first day on the job?” the reply should be “Wow, am I ever glad that I took this job!”

This informal orientation is completed by a formal orientation, in which information about the strategy, vision, plans, history, including war stories, and all the successes is shared. A key part of this orientation is a discussion of Intuit values.

At the end of the first week, and again at the end of the first month, feedback about the new employee's experiences is solicited: What worked, what was frustrating, how can the orientation be improved?

Performance Management

The popular image of performance management conjures up visions of annual reviews held behind closed doors with rarely seen managers who provide feedback on situations dimly remembered. At Intuit, the process is entirely different. Performance management starts with strategy, in a cascading manner. Every employee is aware of corporate strategy, business-unit strategies, departmental strategies, team strategy, and, ultimately, individual objectives. The process starts the first day, with a discussion of deliverables. It continues all the time. Each manager is expected to spend sixty to ninety minutes a week, in a one-on-one situation, discussing the objectives and strategy and providing feedback and coaching. Additionally, Intuit uses 360-degree performance reviews, so input is received from peers, subordinates, clients, as well as the manager. By the time of the annual performance review, the employee is completely aware of all the dimensions of his or her performance. The employee also completes a self-review.

Intuit has a pay-for-performance environment, so those employees who meet their objectives are rewarded for their achievements. Intuit uses a five-point rating scale for measuring performance, with 1 meaning basically that the employee "walks on water"; 2 indicates that the employee continually exceeds expectations; 3 means that the employee meets and occasionally exceeds expectations; 4 signifies that the employee occasionally does not meet expectations. A 5 is reserved for those employees who are consistently missing goals. Fives are normally terminated if there is no improvement in performance.

Culture

Intuit has operating values, such as "treat an employee or colleague in a manner in which you would want to be treated," which is reinforced every day. There is respect for people from other cultures, since many Intuit employees are from Romania, Russia, or China and other distant parts of the world. Values are not described in a manual that sits on a shelf. Leaders talk about the values. They describe everyday events that exemplify these values. As part of the annual survey, leaders and managers are measured on these dimensions. One practical value is to treat employees like adults. This philosophy is manifested by the absence of a sick-leave policy. Intuit knows its employees are dedicated and committed and work very long hours. If an employee is sick, no pay is deducted and no documentation is made, unless there is a recurring or serious illness, which would require a STD (Short Term Disability) or LTD (Long Term Disability) claim. Vacations are tracked because they are a financial liability, but there is so much untracked

overtime that employees and managers often agree on “time off in lieu” rather than official vacation days.

Managers are empowered in many important ways. One example is that each manager has a

Vancouver participant: *“In our department, we had breakfast roundtables with young people and the deputy minister. It was fantastic and the feedback was absolutely superb.”*

discretionary budget with which to reward, on the spot, exceptional performance. Those employees who worked all night may receive a gift certificate or tickets to a hockey game, as well as the ubiquitous “thank you.” Just as importantly, managers are judged in part on how well they represent the corporate culture in their own teams. Intuit makes heavy human resource management demands on its managers. It is considered to be a vital part of a manager’s commitment.

Intuit arranges for outside services on site, to make their employees’ lives easier. Services such as catering services, access to a massage therapist, and fitness instructors are all available on site. Sometimes paid for by the employee, sometimes covered by health plans, and sometimes funded by Intuit, they are all part of a benefits package that “wows” employees.

Employee Relationship Management at RBC Financial Group

Royal Bank of Canada provides personal and commercial banking, wealth management services, insurance, corporate and investment banking and transaction processing services. (RBC Financial Group is the brand name for Royal Bank of Canada and its subsidiaries). Consistently ranked as one of the best employers in Canada, RBC employs about 57,000 employees who service 12 million clients in 1,400 outlets around the world and generates about \$25 billion in revenue. RBC receives about 13,000 résumés each month and has invested over \$100 million on training expenditures in four of the last five years.

According to **Blair Pollard, Senior Manager, Human Resource Strategy and Technology at**

Regina participant: *“If we have trouble providing challenging environments for younger people, and they intend to quit, why can’t the public-sector be an incubator? Come in, work for us for a couple of years, learn the organization, then go out, work for the private sector, and then when we face these critical shortages in the senior executive ranks bring these people back in. They will have some public-sector experience and be credible. In other words, don’t attempt to retain them.”*

RBC Financial Group, becoming a top-ranked employer was the result of a deliberate strategy to change the paradigms that governed the employer-employee relationship. These shifts in perspectives occurred along the following dimensions.

The Bank vs. Dot.com

RBC management grew aware that being “The Bank” was viewed in the same way as people view “The Government.” It was not seen as a cool place in which to work. At one time, working for a large employer was the best employment option for graduating students. But lately, students

have wanted to work for very small companies, particularly dot.com companies, which were the cool place in which to work. How could a big bank, viewed as a bureaucratic government-like organization, hope to attract the best and the brightest? RBC strategically moved from being a bank to being a financial services group.

Reactive Culture to Proactive Culture

In the traditional bank culture, employees followed instructions, took orders and did what they were told. Now they are expected to be much more proactive, especially when dealing with customers.

Paternalistic Management to Business Partner

Banks, like governments, had a cradle-to-grave employment policy. Many people started with the local branch in their small towns (often the biggest local employer), and they intended to stay with the bank their entire working lives. Now employees are seen as partners who must help build the business and keep it competitive. This means changing from an attitude of security to an attitude of ownership. Eighty-five per cent of employees own shares in RBC. Rather than just buying into the rules, employees are being asked to buy into the vision, values and goals. They are being asked to help create a cutting edge company rather than a middle-of-the-road conservative company. In turn, employees' skills and experience will also be cutting edge, thus increasing their employability. Developing new skills allows employees to have multiple careers with RBC by moving across various businesses and functional groups.

Tenure versus Talent

Employees who stayed a long time were rewarded with service pins. The average tenure was thirteen years, and RBC has people who have never worked anywhere else; probably much like employees of the government. While long-term employees are valuable and valued, the reward structure encourages skills development and performance rather than tenure. In other words, RBC celebrates and rewards achievements, not longevity. Bonuses are given for performance, not just for endurance or just showing up.

Regina participant: “*What governments do extremely well is attracting women. Women who have tried to hack it out in the private sector come to government realize, ‘I like a life, I can have interesting work, I can have reasonable hours, flex-benefits, work and family balance—all of those things.’*”

One Size Fits all HR Policies

Previous employment policies were geared to a mass-market of employees, but now customization is possible. Cafeteria benefits are a prime example, individualized “learning accounts” are another customization possibility.

Building the Brand

When considering issues of attraction, engagement and retention of employees, RBC worked to have a brand that makes people want to join the company, stay committed to the company and achieve high performance. Pollard says, “People don’t wake up in the morning and say ‘I’m set to create shareholder value.’ It is not a rallying cry.”

RBC wanted to increase the engagement of employees, and so it studied the drivers of commitment. Working with a service provider and conducting a fairly long annual survey of employees, RBC knows now that the attitudes of employees have a direct effect on customer service results and financial results.

The drivers of employee engagement are clustered into two groups. First come the work experiences, which are things that matter to the employee in the location in which they work. The second is organizational functioning that includes corporate leadership. The leaders play a bigger role than previously thought in this regard. Employees want to work for a winner: they want an organization that is going to help them build careers and make them employable, and they need to know where the organization is going. As Pollard notes, “We all sign onto an organization to help realize some sort of a dream.”

RBC felt that there should be equity, that is, a balance between what an employee contributes (inputs) and what employees receive from the system (outputs).

Vancouver participant: “*Employees first. Take care of your employees and your employees will take care of the citizens.*”

RBC wanted a performance-based environment that would not deliver the same results for everybody. Specific HR programs to create a performance culture at RBC include the following:

- *measurement*: Employee attitude are linked directly to performance measures such as customer service and financial results;
- *building the brand*: RBC communicates to its employees its records in IT innovations and in corporate donations. It coaches employees on how to deal with “bank-bashing” criticisms;
- *incentive compensation*: Reward employees at all levels for achieving corporate goals;
- *flexible HR policies*: Individuals are encouraged to manage their own careers and are given choices about benefits, training and succession management. Employees have access to Internet calculators to determine the value of their benefits, bonuses and shares;

- *research*: RBC conducted focus groups with potential applicants, asking them which employers attracted them and why, reasons for not wanting to work for RBC, and a forced-choice ranking of values important to them;
- *feedback*: Local management is critical. A 360-degree feedback program, which will hold managers accountable for their teams, has been implemented. Currently the feedback is used for personal development and not performance management; and
- *customized training programs*: RBC established the Personnel Learning Network, an Internet-enabled learning system, which is competency driven. Employees can go on-line, do a competency assessment, determine their career plan, and their learning needs, and then access a variety of activities, from books, to videos, to classroom training, to close the gaps.

E-Learning Strategies at Sasktel

Saskatchewan Telecommunications (Sasktel) is a provincial Crown corporation. It is the seventh-largest employer in Saskatchewan, with 3,700 employees. Remarkably, this organization, which has embraced electronic business (e-business) and electronic learning (e-learning), is also one of the oldest, having served the public for over ninety years.

Why is e-learning so important at Sasktel? According to **Jaime Lothian, Director of E-Learning Solutions**, the answer is, “First and foremost, Sasktel is an e-business company, and we’d better practice what we preach. If we are going to our clients and talking about using e-business, we’d better be using it as well.”

E-learning has become an essential part of the work culture at Sasktel. It is, without a doubt, a learning organization that goes far beyond slogans. Indeed, e-learning is integrated into everything Sasktel undertakes and it supports the business strategy. As Lothian points out, it is not about turning pages of content by clicking on the mouse. E-learning at Sasktel engages the employee through high inter-activity and simulation, collaboration and mentoring, on-line instructors, and self-assessment tools.

The organization supports e-learning at many levels. It was introduced to employees through videos of two to five minutes each. The program to market e-learning targeted the executives first. The CEO was one of the first to go on-line and complete a course. Early on-line courses addressed the need to build e-skills and knowledge. The goal was to energize employees and increase their comfort level with on-line learning. Nearly every employee has a computer at work; Sasktel subsidized the purchase of home computers and access-to-Internet accounts.

The overall goal is to have a participative, well-informed and educated employee base. Lothian estimates that an employee, over a twenty-five-year career span, who undertakes the required training at Sasktel will have the equivalent, in time and money, of two or three university degrees.

Sasktel has experienced the following advantages in moving to e-learning:

- *time savings*: Within the first three months, 1,500 employees completed the basic Internet course, and 3,500 completed the e-business course. Typically, it would have taken one year with two full-time facilitators travelling across the province to train 2,000 people.
- *cost savings*: Hard savings include travel and hotel costs and people's time on the job. Soft costs are more difficult to calculate. However, in Sasktel's experience, employees spend the majority of their e-learning time on their own time.
- *family/work balance*: Employees are happier because they do not have to spend weekends at seminars or travel from home to learn.
- *fair and equal access for all employees*: Employees across the province, even those in remote locations, have the identical learning opportunities as their urban counterparts. Also, those who are isolated due to the nature of their jobs have access to the ideas of others in the company, through discussion groups.
- *timeliness*: Information and new skills need to be transmitted quickly. Employees can no longer wait until the employer identifies a training gap, prepares a course, and then slowly gives workshops across the province. Employees obtain the skills they need as skills are needed – just-in-time training. Employees have to feel comfortable going on-line at work to learn. At the start, some may have thought that employees who took time to do this did not have enough real work to do. Other employees felt free to interrupt this learning. One solution was to create a sign that read, "Learning in progress; do not disturb." Another was to give every employee a personal set of headphones.
- *employee empowerment*: People want to be self-directed. They do not want to wait for the HR department to make decisions. Employees are responsible for their own career development. When the programs first started, employees were asking HR to tell them what their careers should be. Others felt that HR was shoving career management down their throats. Some culture change was necessary. Competencies were developed for most positions, and employees could review these and determine which set of knowledge and skills were needed in order to prepare for the next job.
- *Employee choice*: Sasktel provides employees with a variety of learning options because it asks them what they want. Currently, about 47% of the curriculum is on-line, with some 549 on-line learning opportunities. However, there are still courses given in

Edmonton participant: "Employees need to understand that they have a career path – not just promotions. It could be project work; being identified as the expert in a particular field – the go-to person. They just want to know that they are not in a rut and our role as managers is to make sure that they get that coaching and feedback so that they can grow, stretch themselves."

classrooms, information given through video conferencing, lunch-and-learn sessions, etc. Employees also appreciate the chance to go in and out of a course, as they need the information. In other words, the courses become reference tools.

Sasktel uses e-learning to support the achievement of corporate objectives and to assist individuals with their career development plans. Training is not done for the sake of training (i.e., there is a training budget; just spend it). E-learning is linked to corporate strategy and to employee objectives. Each position has a set of competencies, and employees are measured on these. Learning pathways are developed to help meet unit goals. Every manager is evaluated annually on the personnel development plans of their employees and the achievement of their objectives.

Attraction, Motivation and Retention in a High-Performance Environment: IBM

Diana McNiven, Manager of Staffing at IBM, says that a first priority at her company is to attract, motivate and retain the best talent in a very competitive industry. Other business priorities cannot be realized without the achievement of that priority. The senior managers at IBM are strongly committed to this principle and that, in turn, makes a difference in IBM's ability to implement HR programs. As Lou Gerstner, the past chairman of IBM, has stated publicly, "HR programs are not chores that managers have to administer like an annual ritual. These are powerful levers to reward performance and encourage the behaviours of managers willing to succeed."

The first element of attraction is marketing. In today's market, candidates have to be wooed, and this is done through branding: differentiating IBM from other companies and advertising IBM's strengths.

IBM believes strongly in the vitality and energy of campus recruits. In 2001, about 400 of the 2,400 Canadian hires were campus recruits. Additionally, another 500 co-op, summer and interns were placed. The ability to attract students to IBM is critical for their image. IBM, after a period of downsizing, appeared to have an image of being overly "corporate": old-time, stodgy, bureaucratic. Now, after four years of activities in building the brand on campus, students are again turning to IBM as the company for which they wish to work. This conscious effort of building the image of IBM was done through job fairs and the use of ambassadors on campus.

Candidates are attracted to IBM for the competitive salaries, which include bonuses, stock options, and other benefits. But these

Edmonton participant: *"The Government of Alberta has had about a ten-year absence from the recruiting game."*

are givens in the IT market. Organizations have to have them, otherwise they don't even get to play in the game. So IBM focuses on the

real differentiators. For example, most companies have flexible work arrangements to some degree. IBM has a full sweep of flexible arrangements and these are actively promoted and encouraged.

Much like with government, there are unlimited career development opportunities at IBM. Skill development, from day one, is a top priority. Every recruit attends a program called “Getting Connected,” a one- or two-week course, and, then, depending on the position, may participate in another two to three weeks of skills training. Each year, every employee creates individual development plans. IBM certifies a number of its careers, and there are levels of skills that have to be re-certified every three years. The opportunity to grow professionally through opportunities to work on new projects is key. A company web site offers on-line career assessment, skills assessments, reports on various skills competencies, and ways to increase skills on-line. All these programs are linked to flexibility: flexibility to do different kinds of work, at different times, different locations, with choices in pay and benefits, options in what to wear to work, etc.

The expectation at IBM is that learning is an integral part of the work culture. There is a lot of movement, and so employees are constantly learning new skills, in new environments, and networking with new people. Interestingly, one of the barriers to retention was thought to be the problem of continual change. But students in focus groups have often stated that this is what they want in a job: to work for an organization where they don’t know what they are going to be doing the following year.

Regina participant: *“Here, with the exception of a few types of occupations, we don’t have any challenges recruiting. The supply is greater than the demand.”*

The expectation is that employees have to continue building their skills, be creative and innovative, and look at new ways in which to approach business in order to continue towards success. That is what high performance is really about. Performance evaluations measure not just how the job was done but what improvements have been made.

A lot of research has convinced IBM that the role of the manager is key. An outstanding people manager will create superior environments for employees and drive business results and retain employees. All managers have ownership of the people processes. It is not just HR. Managers have the responsibility to engage employees, develop talent, evaluate performance, and recognize contribution. To assist managers, IBM has just developed a global e-learning model

Edmonton participant: *“I am wondering if there is a stigma amongst young people attached to the label ‘public servant’ and the culture we create around that label. For example, our deputy minister will not allow us to have flex-time because he is concerned that a taxpayer would notice that a public servant was home on a Wednesday afternoon. Nobody questions why a taxpayer is home on Wednesday afternoon. Do different rules apply? Are young people saying ‘Why would I want to work in a place where I am treated like a servant and where I am not treated equally with other employees?’”*

for management development, which has won a number of awards in Canada, the United States and Europe. The program has several levels for learning managerial skills. The first is the “quick view,” whereby a manager with a problem can go on the Internet web site, go to “frequently asked questions,” and obtain quick, snappy descriptions on how to handle an issue. The next level is the interactive learning module, whereby managers actually go through simulations, try out different situations, and receive feedback on their performance.

The third level is collaborative learning, where managers group in team rooms and solve problems together. Every individual goes through a basic program upon being appointed to management. For example, a new manager is asked to solve a problem using the quick views. Then, over a six-month period, including two classroom sessions and coaching from their own managers, the new managers solve problems as a group.

The investment in career development for employees and management development for managers ensures that employees want to stay with IBM. As Diana McNiven asks, “Do you lose them on the outside or on the inside? We are trying to find reasons for them to stay.”

The City of Richmond: Love 'em or Lose 'em

The City of Richmond was rated as one of the top employers in a Mediacorp survey and was one of only three municipalities in Canada to achieve this distinction.

A new CAO arrived with a great deal of experience from the private sector and he wanted things done quickly, says **Mike Kirk, General Manager of Human Resources**. The first item of business was to change the HR department. In his mind, HR stood for “huge roadblock.” When he wanted something to happen, HR could find different ways to make sure that it didn't happen. HR was the police, and the new CAO wanted that to change.

The survey results showed that the City of Richmond had a group of motivated senior managers and groups

Toronto participant: “*We did a focus group with interns and learned that they did not feel part of organization and wanted to have a network to learn more about departments.*”

of less-motivated employees. The employees and the union felt that all the decisions were made at the top and they were not included. So, one of the first things to change was an increase in participation in the development of the strategic plan, no matter what the title or position. Employees were asked if they wanted to participate, and about 100 responded. Ten strategic teams were formed, with people representing every division and every layer in the organization. For example, a team could include a lifeguard, a fire chief, and a foreman. These strategic teams have been a huge success, and the process was repeated about four years later, to include more people in the process.

Secondment onto teams working on special projects was another key process to increase involvement. Employees who are deemed to be creative and technologically savvy are seconded from their regular jobs and are asked to work for a year on special assignments. They are faced with problems such as “how do you dig a ditch without digging a ditch?” The pipe buyer was seconded to HR for a year to develop a succession plan.

Related to this is a new program in which the City of Richmond staff experts assist other smaller municipalities that may not have the resources to hire specialized expertise. The employees of the City of Richmond love the program because of the opportunity to try out other jobs, such as

the project engineer who became a city administrator for three days. The City of Richmond pays the salaries; the host municipality covers expenses such as travel.

Integral to increasing involvement is the job shadow program. The idea came from an administrative assistant, who felt that she dealt frequently with people and had no idea of what their jobs involved. The benefits were twofold: employees saw this as a meaningful opportunity to learn about the organization and the jobs that interested them, and, secondly, those who were being shadowed felt honoured that their jobs interested others. Interestingly, the number-one “job shadow” choice is occupational health and safety officer. In the first year, only twenty people participated; the latest year saw 260 employees participate in one of the three annual days during which job shadowing occurs.

To give further meaning to the role of participation, the CEO meets every single employee, all 1,100 of them, every year. Meetings with groups of twenty employees are arranged, but there is no agenda or presentations. He deals with all legitimate issues raised by immediately phoning the appropriate department head on his cell phone and getting a resolution. It drives managers crazy. It is part of a retention strategy that, simply put, is expressed by the slogan “love 'em or lose 'em.” The City of Richmond tries to treat employees properly by talking with them, finding out what interests them, what their issues are, and having managers resolve these as quickly as possible. Commitment and retention are not just HR issues.

Other programs aimed at retention include increased training and personal coaching. The training budget has been doubled from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. For a local government, this is significant. Managers can select from a list of performance coaches to help them build the capabilities they need.

Another change that was addressed was relations with the union. Before the new CAO arrived, HR was perceived to be corporate, and its job was to battle with the union. One of the first acts of the new CAO and vice-president of HR was to tell managers not to win grievances on an interpretation or to fight to

be technically right. As Kirk states, “You are

Vancouver participant: *“One of the biggest problems is that we don’t provide individual feedback to people.”*

probably saying, ‘Yeah, that’s easy, you just roll over and there’s no grievance.’ Let me give you an example. A crew was working overnight and did not receive a meal allowance. The manager was saying that technically, he was the only one authorized to sign for meals. Technically he was right, but the crew was working overnight, and many meetings with many people were used to fight over the issue of authorization of meals.” So, more money was lost by fighting this grievance on a technicality than would have been lost on the small cost of meals. The new attitudes resulted in grievances being reduced from fifty to twelve in one year (1998). Sick time has also been reduced substantially.

Because of the empowerment and involvement of the employees, the City of Richmond has gone from a departmentalized, low-morale organization to a cohesive, energized organization. The principal message from these strategic changes has been, “Take care of your employees and the employees will take care of the citizens.” The councillors have embraced the changes, to the

extent that each incumbent campaigned on the city's successful achievement of the mission statement *"To be the most appealing, liveable and well-managed community in Canada."*

Culture, Culture, Culture at Sierra Systems

Sierra Systems is without a doubt one of the best employers in Canada, having won many awards to this effect. This Vancouver-based technology company placed thirtieth in the annual survey of the fifty-best companies, conducted by Hewitt Associates, and was rated one of the top-ten employers by *Maclean's* magazine, one of the top-fifty employers by *The Globe and Mail*, and fifth on the list of twenty-five best employers in British Columbia. Sierra Systems is one of North America's leading systems integration and businesses consulting firms, combining business knowledge with the latest information technologies, with annual revenues of \$127 million (2001). Sierra Systems sells business solutions, not products, and is the only IT consulting firm in Canada that has been in its present incarnation for thirty-five years. All of the others have merged, been sold, or disappeared. Located in fourteen offices across Canada, this successful firm experienced rapid growth in the 1990s, growing from 200 to 900 employees in a decade.

Edmonton participant:
"Where does culture come from? Does it come from the top? Does it come from HR? Where does the culture reside? Who drives the culture? Who maintains it?"

According to **Sheila Page, Vice-President of Human Resources at Sierra Systems**, the reason for this success as an employer is simple: "culture, culture, culture." To her, culture is everything in terms of making an organization a place to which people want to belong. Culture needs to be reinforced on an ongoing basis, in everything that is done. It is not a job given to HR; everyone owns the culture: every manager, every employee. HR is, simply, the custodian of culture. HR is there to make sure that the organization preserves the culture, and this is done by monitoring the pulse of people, conducting annual report cards, conducting biannual employee surveys, and giving feedback to every unit in the organization in order to close any identified gaps.

The core values of integrity and honesty are integral to Sierra's success. Above all, and in every dealing with employees, clients, vendors, and everyone else, Sierra employees and managers do what they say they are going to do, and do the right thing. Coupled with this emphasis on integrity and honesty is an emphasis on treating everyone with respect and being loyal to clients, partners, vendors, employees, etc. These two lynchpins are the fundamental values that define the culture at Sierra.

How is this culture manifested and maintained?

Communication

All information, except that of a truly personal nature, such as salaries and performance issues, is shared with everyone. Every single employee knows the organization's financial status: revenues, profits, successful projects and the money-losing projects. Besides being an active

participant in the recruitment and orientation of new employees, the president does an annual “state of the nation” address to each of the fourteen branches. Everything is shared—successes, failures, revenues, profits, etc. There are frequent and regular project-status meetings, with the clients, with other teams, and with the partner at the branch, so that everybody is in the loop and receives feedback and recognition.

A Flat and Informal Organization Structure

The organization is flat, with only three levels: consultants, principals and partners. There are no positions, just roles, which can change. Someone who is project manager today may be project consultant tomorrow; the head of the department may also take on the role of career adviser. Employees are encouraged to talk to anyone who might have the answer to their problems, and this person might be the project manager, the partner, another employee in another branch or the president. The president’s door is wide open, and he answers his own telephone. There are no secretaries screening phone calls, or preventing people from walking into his office.

Supportive Environment

Sierra believes in empowerment and accountability. Employees are encouraged to do the right thing, and there are not a lot of formal policies to guide these decisions. So there is a culture of support. Employees know that it is not a sign of weakness to ask for help. The supportive environment is manifested in many ways. Employees have access to the project manager, the network of peers, the head office and the career adviser. Supportive leadership is critical to the development and maintenance of the culture. Leaders “walk the talk”. Culture is observable in the way in which managers listen to the employees, spend time coaching them and identifying stretch opportunities for them. Successes are shared, every month, and most often with the client. If the branch has had a particular success, then this is showcased at month-end meetings and in a monthly national newsletter. This sharing is important for two reasons: it enables others to replicate the winning strategies, and everyone receives financial rewards for the team’s achievements. Mistakes happen, but there is no blame and no dwelling on the mistake. The only question is what was learned from the mistake. Indeed, the only real mistake is when nothing is learned from the mistake.

Toronto participant: “*We all see the leadership demonstrating a huge commitment in terms of time on the job*”

Recruitment

Culture can be diluted, particularly in a rapidly growing organization. All it takes is to hire a number of people who do not fit the culture or support the culture. So recruitment is taken very seriously at Sierra. Each candidate undergoes three interviews that test for technical skills, functional skills, job-specific skills and fit. But culture fit is the number-one criterion. For example, if the first interview reveals that the person is concerned with status and position, then the selection process is stopped. Employee referrals are used extensively, since that is a good way to ensure fit. Employees who know the organization really well tend to know who would

make a good fit. The company's web page reinforces the culture by describing the core values and culture. The hope is that candidates will not select the organization if there is no fit, but that doesn't always happen. When Sierra opens a new branch, and if Sierra hires a new branch manager, Sierra makes sure that a few really strong culture advocates from elsewhere in the organization are transplanted.

Training and Career Development

Culture is reinforced through training and career development. Every employee is subjected to a three-day orientation program in the branch office. The orientation program is delivered by the firm's leaders. The president himself spends three hours explaining the vision of the organization and its values. The president then has dinner with all the new recruits. Sierra has about thirty in-house training programs, and every one of them reinforces the organization's culture.

Employees are career owners. They are responsible for identifying the paths they wish to follow. However, Sierra is committed to helping everyone develop to his or her fullest potential, within the context of the business. It makes good sense because the more skills the employees possess, the higher are the consulting fees. Through project reviews, annual performance reviews and coaching sessions, managers are very aware of employee needs and plans. Every employee has a career adviser, but this is not an HR person. The role rotates among partners or branch managers. The career adviser gives performance feedback, helps develop the career plan, acts as an advocate for the employee, provides input on compensation decisions, etc.

Edmonton participant: *"The managers have a task to coach and mentor. How do you actually get them to do it? One HR person was told 'geez, I've got enough things on my plate. On top of that, you want me to mentor people?'"*

Sierra Systems believes that this culture is the reason for its longevity and financial success.

CUETS: HR, the Strategic Enabler

CUETS (Credit Union Electronic Transaction Services) is a joint venture between Credit Union Centrals of Alberta and Saskatchewan. With a workforce of about 400 employees, located at the head office in Regina, and at regional offices in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto and Moncton, CUETS offers card-related products and services to the Credit Union System. CUETS is the thirty-third largest company in Saskatchewan, as rated by *Saskatchewan Business* magazine.

According to **Robert Lane**, a former public servant who has worked at CUETS since 1991 and is now **Vice-President, Human Resources**, CUETS was not always a large or successful company. It started as a backroom operation, the electronic transaction processing arm of the credit union system. In the early 1990s, there was high attrition and low satisfaction and commitment. There was a limited corporate vision and stagnant market growth. However,

CUETS survived those critical learning years and grew steadily until the company is now one of the top-fifty in the province by revenue, which has topped the \$100-million mark. CUETS has also been on the list of the fastest-growing companies for five years in a row. The remarkable turnaround can be attributed to a CEO who had a different vision of the role of HR, among other things. No longer seen as a necessary evil, which was outsourced in every function, HR was brought back to the centre. It became a key player in business planning, tightly integrated at all levels of the organization. HR was positioned as a strategic enabler of the organization.

The executive circle developed a human resources vision: *CUETS had to be a leading Canadian company in workforce productivity, commitment and work satisfaction.* These are the core beliefs underlying the HR practice:

Toronto participant: *“Sixty students a year graduate with a master’s degree in public administration, almost all of them are functionally bilingual, and almost none can land an indeterminate position in the federal government. Fifteen years ago, every graduate student who wanted a full-time job in the federal government walked into one.”*

- “You get the kind of relationship with your employees that you deserve, and it can change quickly.”
- “Somebody, somewhere is doing it better; borrow from the best.”
- “It doesn’t have to be about money.”

CUETS managers started with the assumption that everything had to be fixed. Nothing was working well, except everyone got paid every second Friday. There were low levels of trust among employees, and, in 1995, even a risk of unionization. The role of HR was repositioned and transformed. No longer a tool of management to control employee behaviour, it was reshaped to function as a resource to employees. The HR consultants were trained in mediation and conflict resolution.

The key goal of CUETS was to achieve and maintain “employer of choice” status by implementing a comprehensive suite of best HR practices that included the following:

Selection

The strategy is to hire the best person for every job. Internal and external candidates are treated in the same way, with no favouritism. Adopting a promotion-from-within policy at a fast-growing company such as CUETS would have been a blind strategy. Best-practice selection processes include behavioural interviews in a panel setting with HR involvement in every interview and thorough reference and security checks.

Performance Management

CUETS has adopted a formal performance management system in which trained supervisors conduct mandatory performance evaluations on every employee, every year. Each employee has objectives for the year. Results are fed into the compensation scheme, as well as in the training and development plans. Using a web-based assessment system, employees have the opportunity to provide anonymous feedback to their managers. Safeguards are in place, in which identifiers are removed, and summary feedback is provided. There are team and project celebrations for milestones, long-service awards, and the “Spirit of CUETS” awards. Every manager has an allowance of \$100 per employee per year to recognize an employee on the spot (not to distribute to every employee). Each executive manager has a budget to fund divisional celebrations and key milestones.

Compensation

CUETS’s goal was to achieve mid-market positioning on total compensation with comprehensive benefits. The average salary of CUETS employees is \$41,000. This is low, considering the fact that about one-third of the workforce is professional (IT, marketing, accounting personnel with degrees). However, this figure represents the base salary, which is just slightly under the mid-market position of base compensation. Compensation is based on performance, a variable pay system that encourages employees to work for bonuses that may range from 6% to 25% of their salaries. Pay for performance programs attract high performers.

Vancouver participant: “*We apologize when we talk about public service and service to the public. But young people say that they value giving something to the citizens of Canada.*”

CUETS worked hard to get rid of a culture of clock-watching. As a fast-growing service company, it could no longer afford to have employees who worked from 8 to 4 and who, after a certain mental bell sounded, started charging overtime mentally or tangibly.

Although compensation is pegged at mid-market, benefits are generous. CUETS offers comprehensive medical, dental and vision care, excellent vacation entitlements (four weeks starting in year one), computer purchase plans, subsidized loans, etc. In an effort to improve home/life balance, employees have high degrees of job flexibility and earn an extra eleven days off annually. Every employee has access to a free YMCA membership and an array of other wellness benefits that appeals to the young workforce.

Career Development

CUETS offers career development workshops to employees. The organization is proud of its academic support program in which academic courses related to any job at CUETS are funded. CUETS also has a dedicated learning centre, an annual staff convention, and an award-winning career-laddering program.

Employee Care

There are internal courses to address violence and harassment prevention and professional business practices (ethics). Policies on expected behaviour are communicated in several ways right from orientation on day one.

The results are that CUETS has a very low attrition rate. Remarkably, this organization has not lost an IT person in three years, out of a staff of fifty to sixty. The attrition rate is 3% for professional staff and 8% for operational staff. Some degree of workplace diversity has been achieved, with women holding 60% of professional positions and 55% of managerial jobs. Positive scores are received on all forty-seven measures of employee satisfaction. Indeed, 97% of employees would recommend CUETS as a good place in which to work.

Building Buy-in from the Top: The Public Service Commission in Alberta

The Public Service Commission of Alberta is responsible for 20,000 employees in 150 locations. The corporate HR strategy proved successful as measured by at least two indices. Employee satisfaction has climbed to 85 % in 2000 from 68 % in 1997, and, in 2001, its new HR strategy won the top IPAC Award for Innovative Management. The Province of Alberta has faced the same challenges as most public-sector organizations, only Alberta may have faced them earlier than other governments. For example, the provincial government underwent a downsizing in 1992–96, during which the civil service was reduced by about one-third (about 9,000 employees). During this same period, the PSC recognized that 32% of its managers would be eligible to retire in 2003. With some analysis, that figure was reduced to 12%, that is, the actual number who would receive a full pension and an estimate of how many would really choose retirement.

Regina participant: “*Can Canadians afford to have government–municipal, provincial, federal–staffed by people who have average commitment?*”

Ruth Hofer, Manager of Staffing and Workforce in the Public Service Commission of Alberta, explained that because the major function of the PSC is strategic planning, efforts were made to undertake significant changes to meet these challenges. The Alberta PSC did not want just another HR strategy; it wanted the full strength and support of the government behind the changes. The public-service commissioner brought the deputy ministers’ council on board, and this group of deputy ministers developed a corporate HR strategy and became its champions. The minister’s steering committee is composed of four deputy ministers, one HR director, and the public-service commissioner. The HR strategy was not only endorsed by the deputy minister’s council but also became one of four government priorities (the others dealt with economic development, aboriginal issues and health, children and youth services). These are large public policy issues, and to have the corporate human resource development strategy ranked with these was a significant accomplishment. But these were not just words on paper; the

PSC wanted to ensure that managers were accountable for results. The importance of the human resource development strategy was thus reinforced by having its accomplishment determine a part of the variable portion (about 20%) of the deputy minister's pay.

The corporate human resource development strategy focused on three areas: learning, leadership and recruitment. The overall goal was to develop a strong public service. The following factors were influential in achieving the results:

Commitment from the Top

Cabinet and deputy minister commitment were really the driving forces behind the success. The process ensured executive buy-in from the beginning. Then the circle was widened. A cross-government coordinating team and working teams were responsible for developing the corporate supports that underpin the strategy. Communication plans were in place to ensure that all employees knew what was going on, what it meant for them, and how they could contribute to the success. There is an on-line information centre that explains the key government structure and processes, organizational values, initiatives and opportunities, the roles and expectations for employees, and how government works. Added to this, the PSC initiated job knowledge fairs, where the strategy was profiled using information booths and workshops, which were held throughout the day.

Performance Measures

At the beginning of each year, the deputy minister's council set the performance measures and targets for each of the four strategies. At the end of each year, the four cross-ministry priorities were reviewed by an external review team to make sure that the government was seriously committed and that some significant results were achieved. The external scrutiny, done by CEOs or VPs from across Canada was very important in terms of ensuring the integrity of the whole process and the outcomes.

Corporate Leadership Development

One step was to develop an inventory of all the leadership development programs being offered in all twenty-four departments of the Alberta

Vancouver participant: *"The average deputy minister's tenure was two and half years; now it is closer to four years, which allows us to develop a value system and deliver the big vision."*

government. The second step was to create a leadership profile, listing the four key roles of leaders and the competencies that are associated with each role. The leadership development programs are targeted to these roles and competencies. A multi-rater assessment program, that is, a 360-degree feedback, provides feedback to managers. Using this assessment, managers can either attend a development planning workshop as a group or work individually to obtain assistance in preparing a developmental plan. Tools have been developed to assist managers. Some examples consist of guides on their roles and responsibilities and an on-line leadership development tool kit, which provides information on coaching and mentoring, and self-assessment tools on leadership ability. There are departmental and individual learning accounts.

Building the Profile of Government

The PSC implemented an ambassador program. Ambassadors from all levels of the organization (administrative support to senior executive managers) promote and market the Alberta public service at career fairs and other events. Profiles of employees who have done really good jobs or who love working in the public service are offered weekly in the job bulletin and on-line. A sample of about 4,000 employees is surveyed annually to measure their job satisfaction and identify gaps. Targets are set for continual improvements.

Internships are used as an attraction and retention tool. However, in the beginning, the retention rate for interns was only 48%. A focus group was held with interns to determine the cause of this high attrition. Based on the intern feedback, a network of interns was put into place and more corporate training and support was provided.

Wisconsin State Government: Better People, Better Programs, Better Government

The Wisconsin State Government has achieved a national reputation for innovation and has received awards for its HR practices from the Ford Foundation, the International Personnel Management Association, the National Center for Public Productivity, and the Society for Human Resources Management, among others. *Governing* magazine has consistently rated Wisconsin one of the best-managed states in the nation for its personnel practices.

The Wisconsin State Government, like all governments in Canada, operates within two basic

Vancouver participant: “*Often I hear people say ‘you know, they went out and hired a consultant and I could have done that job. I had those skills.’*”

frameworks: merit and collective bargaining. Wisconsin State Government (WSG) is a large and diversified employer. About 90% of Wisconsin’s 40,000 permanent civil-service employees are members of nineteen different unions. The unions were always involved in this change process. Considerable time and resources were invested in moving from a confrontational approach to consensus bargaining (also known as interest-based bargaining).

Robert Lavigna, Administrator of Merit Recruitment in the Wisconsin Department of Employment Relations (DER), explained that his department creates the system-wide HR policies and practices for fifty state agencies. The innovations began in the early 1990s as the DER embarked on studies to determine how to attract and hire skilled and dedicated public servants who would provide responsive, effective and efficient service to its citizens. The goal was to end civil-service paralysis by creating more responsive selection systems. The starting point was a customer satisfaction survey that would assess recruitment and hiring effectiveness. The feedback indicated, in the words of one employment relations manager, “that the department was slowly providing poorly qualified candidates to agencies.” The overall conclusion was that HR systems were inflexible, slow, unresponsive, and user-unfriendly.

Reform was not easy. In a comment about reforming the civil service, the chairman of the House Post Office and Civil Service committee said, “I am not interested in a reform that makes it easy for an agency manager to hire his neighbour’s son or daughter over a more qualified applicant. Simply giving greater discretion to managers is a recipe for bringing back the spoils system.” But reform was needed. The WSG used to go to job fairs and discuss all the exciting job opportunities to potential candidates. However, job offers took six to twelve months because of the rigid hiring process. Candidates who were interested in a job were told to wait until a vacancy was announced, then to apply, wait for six weeks for a response, then take a multiple-choice test with 180 items, on a Saturday morning, then wait another few weeks to see if the score was among the top-five, then wait two to three months for an interview, and then wait for a job offer. The hiring process was described as a system aiming to “identify the best of the desperate.” This was not a competitive way to attract the best candidates, especially when over 60,000 job applications are received each year for the 3,000 to 4,000 hires and promotions.

However, as a result of the determination to overhaul the selection process, the Department of Employment Relations was able to achieve these changes:

- the delegation of HR decision-making to operating agencies;
- increased flexibility and responsiveness;
- the development of creative and user friendly candidate assessment techniques;
- the expansion of recruiting activities to optimize the pool of qualified candidates;
- the use of on-site job interviews;
- the intensive use of technology to improve access, efficiency and timeliness.

Delegation

The Department of Employment Relations has delegated all HR decision-making that used to be centralized: classification, compensation, evaluating candidates, creating and maintaining employment registers, and making specific pay decisions. The DER is no longer perceived as the personnel police whose motto is “Just say no.” The DER now focuses on developing new system-wide approaches to staffing. It now has five full-time recruiters, including an IT recruiter, compared to only one five year ago. Their job has changed from creating tests and rating candidates to marketing and promoting the WSG as an employer. These recruiters are selling the opportunity to make a difference, whether in welfare reform, transportation policy or cutting-edge IT projects. The WSG has 2,400 different job classifications, and so sells the opportunity to have seven to eight different careers with the WSG. HR managers soon discovered that candidates were not looking for thirty-year careers, so the recruitment pitch is about the different jobs and careers with one employer. It was a marked contrast to previous pitches that told candidates that there were good benefits and that employees couldn’t be, and wouldn’t be, fired. These recruiters have attended over 100 recruiting events, including sixty campus events and community job fairs.

Close relationships with communities have been developed because these tend to serve minority populations such as the disabled or veterans. The goal is to get them to work with the WSG as recruiters, not just to post jobs. The DER also targets sites where the WSG is experiencing

shortages. For example, there was a shortage of social workers, so the WSG established a working relationship with Loyola University in Chicago, which has the largest social work program in the United States.

Improving Flexibility and Responsiveness

Civil-service examinations were eliminated, where education or certification could be used as a proxy, for jobs such as professional engineer and certified nursing assistant. If the candidate has that certification, then he or she is deemed qualified for an interview and is interviewed immediately. For positions where there are labour shortages, screening is now done on a pass/fail basis, eliminating the time-consuming tasks of ranking and rating every candidate and assigning them a civil-service score. The WSG is lobbying for more statutory changes. For example, there is a proposal to waive all HR and personnel and civil-service laws and regulations for a one-year experimental period in order to try out new approaches. If the results are positive, then the WSG will try to enact permanent legislation. For example, under current legislation, new hires have to wait six months before receiving benefits. The DER wants to repeal that requirement, as it is non-competitive in a tight labour market.

Toronto participant: *“Our focus group with university graduates told us that the job would attract them to government-specific jobs and specific careers, not the brand of government.”*

Managers have much more flexibility in varying starting pay, depending on qualifications and competitiveness. For example, the compensation for a senior manager ranges from a low of \$49,000 to a high of \$99,000. Under the old guidelines, the offer to a candidate had to be at the minimum of the pay rate; now the hiring manager has a \$25,000 range in which to make an offer. The DER has to give permission, but it has done so in every case. Also, if an employee has a competitive job offer, managers now have the power to match that offer. Fairness does not always mean treating everyone in the same way; it means treating people according to their performance, their knowledge, skills and ability.

The WSG can now offer those hired at the senior level the same annual- and vacation-leave balances that they had in their previous job, instead of starting them from zero.

Regina participant: *“I think a challenging job is a draw in public service. I offer twenty-one-year-olds a challenging job and they’re in.”*

- *creative and user-friendly candidate assessment techniques:* Under previous civil service laws, the DER had to provide the names of the top-five candidates for every position. The law was so rigid that if two candidates basically tied for fifth place (i.e., had scored within 1/100th of a point on the exam), candidate number six could not be referred. The DER, with the support of the unions, was able to change that rule, so that the hiring managers could decide on the appropriate number of candidates to interview.

The new content-valid approaches to assessment include skills inventories, résumé reviews, achievement history questionnaires, and other “take home” exams. For those jobs in which testing is still the best way to evaluate job candidates (e.g., blue collar positions where there are a large number of applicants), the DER has implemented walk-in testing, where applicants simply show up at exam sites, without having to apply in advance. Walk-in testing has eliminated three weeks from the hiring process. To ensure that minorities have the best chances to succeed in the hiring process, the WSG provides expanded certification to applicants from protected groups. Under this statutory program, candidates from protected groups can be added to the list of qualified candidates, based on high civil-service scores. The DER developed a creative summer program whereby state agencies hire women and minority interns to expose them to state government, formal training and on-the-job experience, which in turn increases the number of qualified candidates for permanent positions.

- *expanding recruiting activities:* The DER developed two programs: the Entry Professional Program (EPP) and the Critical Recruitment Program (CRP). Under these programs, major changes in hiring systems – elimination of the exam and the rule of five, on-the-spot interviews and offers – were allowed for the first time. Referral bonuses have been implemented whereby an employee who refers another employee receives a bonus if that person is hired and passes the probationary period.
- *on-site job interviews:* Line managers and recruiters are now empowered to conduct immediate interviews at job fairs and college campuses, and they even have the power to make an immediate job offer. Hiring managers use a fast-screening process, in which candidates are asked key questions, and if candidates answer yes to all the key questions, then the interview can take place. Hiring managers wanted more control over the hiring process, and they now have it.
- *using technology in recruitment and selection:* Applicants can apply on-line 24/7. Hiring managers can also access these applications at any time. All state vacancies will be on-line in the near future. When testing is necessary, this is done on-line.

Four criteria measure the recruitment and selection process: timeliness, diversity, turnover and quality of applicants and hires:

- *timeliness:* The goal is to provide the hiring manager with a list of qualified candidates on demand, and that goal is achieved 80% of the time.
- *diversity:* The goal is to have a state workforce that matches the diversity of the states citizens. Currently, the proportion of hired women and minorities exceeds the availability of these groups in the overall labour market. Minority candidates are hired at twice the rate in the overall labour market, and at four times the availability of graduating minorities from Wisconsin’s colleges and universities.

- *turnover*: The WSG annual turnover rate is 5%, making it one of the states with the lowest turnover rate in the United States. By implementing broad-banding and allowing for managers to determine bonuses, turnover among IT staff has been reduced from 17% to 5%.
- *quality of applicants and hires*: Hiring managers are surveyed and are asked to evaluate the quality of the candidates interviewed and those hired. To date, about 75% of the hiring managers rate the candidate pool as good or very good, and 95% rate hired candidates as good or very good

The evaluation criteria and the awards indicate that the Wisconsin State Government has achieved its goals of HR reform. However, the DER is still not satisfied. It has started a benchmarking project with 360 public-sector jurisdictions to identify HR benchmarks and best practices. The WSG thought that its hiring process was dramatically faster than before and then it discovered that some jurisdictions have moved to a one-week competition. Jobs are posted on Monday, candidates apply by e-mail or fax, and the posting ends on Friday. The hiring manager gets a list of candidates on Monday.

The Wisconsin State Government, through the Department of Employee Relations, will continue to survey hiring managers to improve its HR practices and will benchmark externally in an attempt to replicate best HR practices. The commitment to provide an efficient, effective and responsive service continues, because these programs have resulted in better people, better programs and better state government.

Vancouver participant: *“We don’t need more consultants to tell us what we already know; what we need is the desire to make changes.”*

PART 3

HIGH-PERFORMANCE WORK SYSTEMS AND PRESCRIPTIONS

The participants at the IPAC roundtables who heard these presentations were stimulated by the new approaches presented by these award-winning employers. The blend of government and private-sector agencies showed that change is possible and that cost need not be a factor. It is our hope that public-sector managers will review these cases and select those practices that can be applied in their contexts to engage employees in the interesting work of government.

Develop High-Performance Work Systems

The participants at the roundtables could agree that one thing was clear from the case studies: The best employers do not simply implement one or two best HR practices. As one Toronto participant put it, “One thing we know is that piecemeal approaches don’t work. What do we need to put together to obtain critical mass to make the transition?”

The roundtable participants heard that the best employers aim for a high rate of performance from their employees. To reach their objective, they will combine HR practices, policies and processes that maximize employment knowledge, skill and commitment. Increasingly, the research on human resource management practices establishes the effectiveness of a combination of progressive HR measures to achieve the gains of improved knowledge, skills, and abilities among employees, increasing their motivation and productivity, and reducing attrition. This combination of best practices is known as High Performance Work Practices (HPWS).¹¹ The key is the combination or system. The HPWS integrates the technical and social aspects of work and is grounded in four powerful principles:

- *shared information:* Organizations depend on employees to react quickly to problems and opportunities, unlike the past practices where employees were expected to work in narrowly defined job duties and were given no information beyond that necessary for the immediate job performance. The principle of shared information moves from a command-and-control mentality to one in which employee commitment is central.
- *knowledge development:* Employees need a broad range of technical, problem-solving and interpersonal skills in order to be able to work in teams and develop innovative solutions to new problems. Continual training and development opportunities are critical.
- *performance-reward linkage:* Employees are more likely to pursue outcomes that benefit them, and so ways must be found to align employee interests with organizational goals. If rewards are connected to performance, supervisors no longer have to monitor employees to make sure that they are doing the right thing. Employees will go beyond the call of duty to make certain that the goals are achieved, that others receive the assistance they need to help achieve organizational goals, and that clients and citizens are satisfied.

- *egalitarianism*: In many organizations, an us-versus-them battle exists between managers and employees. The elimination of status and power differentials tends to increase collaboration and teamwork. Moving power down the system requires the use of employee surveys, suggestions systems, quality circles, employee involvement groups and union/management committees. Workflows can be designed to give employees more control over decision-making. Three common approaches towards increasing employees' power to influence decisions, make suggestions for change or take action on their own are job enlargement, job enrichment, and the establishment of self-managing work teams.

These practices must be combined in a way that ensures vertical and horizontal fit within the organization:

- *vertical fit*: The best employers ensure that the practices implemented have both vertical and horizontal fit. Vertical fit means that the practices are aligned with organizational strategies. If the organization prides itself on innovations in science, then all HR functions (i.e., selection, socialization, compensation) should align with that strategy. Similarly, if superior service or efficiencies are goals, then a different blend of HR practices is required. The HR toolkit enables the organization to attain its strategies.
- *horizontal fit*: This refers to the bundling of HR practices that are consistent with each other. All the internal elements of a work system should complement and reinforce each other. For example, if the government decides (with an efficiency strategy) to deliver its services via the Internet, the selection processes must change to allow testing for computer-literate personnel, and training programs must build on this technological aptitude.

The case studies of the best employers reveal that they have included the four powerful principles and have strived to achieve horizontal and vertical fit.

Commit to Commitment

The most immediate HR strategy in the public sector should be to improve affective commitment among younger employees and those in professional and technical positions. That is, any strategy that improves employee affective commitment to public-sector organizations will serve both recruitment and retention goals well. A tangible focus on employee commitment can be expected to help produce a stable core of employees, thus increasing the probability that the public sector will meet the needs of its stakeholders. Roundtable participants noted that the culture of public-sector organizations is changing.

Measure

When organizations lose men and women who represent diverse talent because of indifference or insensitivity, attracting diverse talent in the future becomes an even greater challenge. Almost invariably, younger employees will pass along the word that an organization provides little challenge and development opportunities and therefore is not a good place in which to work.

With this type of reputation, an organization should consider a detailed assessment to discover the underlying factors in its corporate culture that should be changed.

Identify areas where commitment is low. One obvious way to start is to track turnover by unit and by occupational category. A major frustration of our current research was the inability to obtain turnover data. Participants at the roundtables indicated that turnover was low – perhaps as low as 1% to 3%. There was anecdotal evidence that the governments were engaged in little hiring. So measuring turnover and recruitment success may indeed be a waste of time.

The issues are not recruitment and retention. The issue is commitment, and this is the factor that should be measured. There are validated and reliable surveys of commitment, and these should be used. Results should be shared, on an aggregate basis, with employees. Managers should be held accountable and rewarded for increases in affective commitment.

Then Manage

How can managers increase commitment? There are several steps. The first step is to understand the concepts underlying commitment and their critical impact on productivity and performance. These lessons could be part of any management-training program. The second step is to identify the actions necessary to increase the commitment indices. Managers should attempt to increase the autonomy, cohesion and feedback to their employees, according to results from our study.

Here are some examples from the practices of the best employers of how this can be done:

- *increase autonomy*: Share knowledge. At Sierra Systems, every single employee knows all the non-personal information about the organization. A flat and informal organization structure, with roles being frequently rotated ensures that employees know the organization very well. The Wisconsin State Government empowers its managers to conduct on-the-spot job interviews at fairs and gives them more flexibility in compensation decisions.
- *increase cohesion*: Employee involvement processes (quality circles, task forces, quality improvement teams, and suggestion programs) offer the opportunity to train employees in participative decision-making, problem-solving, team skills, and quality control. These processes produce greater job satisfaction and reduce absenteeism and turnover problems. The City of Richmond offers some wonderful ideas for involving employees, such as secondments, job shadowing, and wide participation in strategic planning.
- *increase feedback and recognition*: Nearly every case contains examples about how feedback is a continuous process and how recognition is an integral part of this daily and weekly process. For example, the Public Service Commissions of Alberta measures employee satisfaction and profile in job bulletins employees who have done outstanding work. Intuit managers spend sixty to ninety minutes a week with each employee reviewing goals and performance.

Target Recent Employees (i.e., younger and in areas with labour shortages)

It is no secret that Canada's workforce is rapidly greying. Workers who are fifty-five years of age and older are the fastest-growing segment of the workforce in North America, with the median age of the workforce projected to reach about forty by 2010. The public sector is being affected by similar trends. Succession planning is important to ensure that there are younger employees who are adequately trained to take on management position when the existing managers, about 80% of whom are in the forty-five to fifty-five age group, retire. The results of this study show that the focus of any intervention related to recruitment and retention should be on younger (below thirty-nine years old, especially the twenty to twenty-nine age group)/low-tenure employees. These employees are the most dissatisfied and, more importantly, have the lowest affective commitment and thus are the most likely to quit. Put another way, in terms of a diversity management program, the future focus should be on age diversity management. This involves recognition that the notion of diversity and its consequences extend beyond the obvious issues of race and gender – other forms of diversity, such as age, need recognition.

Conclusion

As Peter Drucker suggested, think of employees as volunteers. Yes, they are paid to work, and for that money they can be expected to put in a minimally acceptable performance. However, to tap their motivation and higher levels of performance, they should be treated as volunteers. Focus on their strengths. Provide development opportunities for them. Appreciate the work they do. Recognize them often. Create opportunities for them to work in teams and on new projects, in order to develop new skills. The most important job of any manager is to manage, and resources and rewards should be given to those who do it well. The presentations made to the IPAC roundtables show vividly that this can be done.

APPENDIX A

THE WORKING MODEL TO BUILD COMMITMENT

The path to building employee commitment is complex. It starts with the job. Certain characteristics of the job affect how an individual experiences the work (psychological states). These psychological states affect important outcomes such as motivation and turnover. Employees come to organizations with certain expectations, and, when these are not met, they face a violation of their psychological contract. This contract violation affects their loyalty to the organization. Another factor in building commitment is leadership, the managerial style of both the immediate supervisor and those in higher levels. The context of the work is vitally important, as are the perceptions of fairness about decisions being made. All of the factors combine to produce employee commitment. Each of these factors – the job, critical psychological states, the psychological contract, the leadership, the work context, and procedural justice – are described more fully below.

The Job

Although numerous theories attempt to explain the impact of various job characteristics on employee attitudes and work behaviour, the most widely discussed and researched of these theories is the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) proposed by J.R. Hackman and his colleagues in 1976.¹² According to the model, five core dimensions (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback) influence three critical psychological states (experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work, and knowledge of the actual results of work activities). These states, in turn, affect four outcome variables (high internal work motivation, high-quality work performance, high satisfaction with the work, and low absenteeism and turnover).

The JCM is fairly comprehensive as an explanation for employee behaviour and performance. It starts by specifying five core characteristics of the job that significantly influence employee behaviors and attitudes:

- *skill variety*: addresses how much the job requires the employee to perform activities that challenge his or her skills and to use diverse abilities;
- *task identity*: addresses how much a job requires a worker to complete a “whole” and identifiable piece of work;
- *task significance*: addresses how much the job is perceived to affect the lives of other people;
- *autonomy*: addresses how much a job gives an employee control over his or her work schedule and how he or she does the work;
- *feedback*: addresses how much information a worker receives about the effectiveness of his or her performance.

Critical Psychological States

Three psychological states – experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility, and knowledge of results – affect personal and work outcomes. These outcomes include internal work motivation, “growth” satisfaction, general job satisfaction, and work effectiveness. Skill variety, task identity, and task significance influence the extent to which an employee experiences the job as meaningful. As workers use their diverse abilities, complete entire tasks, and view their work as having an impact on the lives of others, they are more likely to consider their jobs as being meaningful. Autonomy in the job influences the extent to which a person believes he or she is responsible for the outcomes of the job. Feedback in the job increases the person’s knowledge of the actual results of the work activities. Increasing the amount of information available to job holders increases their ability to determine their effectiveness.

The Psychological Contract

Psychological contract was a new variable we added to the JCM. It indicates employees' beliefs about the reciprocal obligations between their organization and themselves.¹³ The psychological contract is a perceptual belief about what employees believe they are entitled to receive or should receive.¹⁴ After entering the organization, members evaluate whether the organization has fulfilled the contract, which affects their behaviour or attitudes towards the organization. Research on the psychological contract suggests that the implicit agreements made between an individual and the organization is important in guiding both behaviour and future success.¹⁵ That is, when employees feel that their employers failed to fulfil their obligations, the employees tend to reduce their obligations through absenteeism and a decreased level of affective commitment.

W.H. Turnley and P.C. Feldman, using a sample of over 800 managers, found that psychological contract violations result in increased levels of exit, voice, and neglect behaviour and decreased levels of loyalty to the organization.¹⁶ In one study, with a sample of employees over seventeen firms, the researchers found that a good fit of the job with the psychological contract was consistent with reduced intent to turnover, higher reported job satisfaction, and lower levels of political behaviour.¹⁷

The Leadership

What is a good leader? We added an additional leadership measure to the JCM. Researchers have specifically characterized good-quality leader-member relations as involving giving subordinates enough authority to complete important assignments, preparing subordinates for difficult assignments, and providing special information that is helpful for subordinates’ task accomplishment. Subordinates who enjoy high-quality exchange relationships with their supervisors are more likely to be receiving the trust, informational and positional resources, training and preparation, and authority that are prerequisites of delegation.

The Work Context

Researchers recommend examining the effects of work context using a measure of psychological climate, so climate measures were also added to the JCM. Climate can be described as employees' perceptions of the work environment.¹⁸ There are eight key dimensions of psychological climate¹⁹:

- *autonomy* (the perception that one has individual authority over work procedures, goals and priorities);
- *trust* (the perception that one can communicate openly with supervisors and expect confidentiality with regard to communication);
- *cohesion* (the perception of closeness, sharing, liking, and collaboration between organizational employees);
- *pressure* (the perception of time-demands in relation to tasks and performance expectations);
- *support* (the perception of supervisor tolerance for member behaviour, including tolerance for error);
- *recognition* (the perception that the organization commends member contributions);
- *fairness* (the perception that the practices of the organization are equitable); and
- *innovation* (the perception that risk-taking change and creativity are encouraged).

Procedural Justice

Fairness in how decisions are made is extremely important to employees. Procedural justice refers to how a decision is made and is different from distributive justice, which refers to the fairness of the decision outcome. Employees assume that if a leader is acting fairly, then the decision is fair and the authority is legitimate. Treatment perceived as procedurally unfair has been found to result in organizational retaliatory behaviour. A violation of procedural justice against one member of a group may be perceived as a violation against the entire work group, that is, people incorporate other people's injustices into their own system of injustice. Procedurally fair treatment results in increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

APPENDIX B

MEASURES USED IN THE IPAC SURVEY

Job Diagnostic Survey

The five core job dimensions, the three psychological states, and several outcome variables (general satisfaction, internal motivation, and growth satisfaction) were measured with the Job Diagnostic Survey. Overall job scope was expressed with J. Richard Hackman and Greg R. Oldham's multiplicative Motivating Potential Score indicating the ability of a given job to provide internal work motivation). This is the most widely used perceptual measure of job scope. A seven-point response scale is used to determine job scope (1 = low, 7 = high). The reader is referred to Hackman and Oldham, for a listing of the items for each scale, and to Fried and Ferris and Taber and Taylor for reviews on the psychometric properties of these measures. Other questionnaire items tapped job tenure, educational level, and the extent to which pay and promotions were perceived to be instrumentally related to performance.²⁰

Fit to Psychological Contract

This three-item scale from L. Larwood, T.A. Wright, S. Desrochers, and V. Dahir assessed whether the firm had violated its psychological contract as perceived by the respondent (i.e., "What I am doing here is what I expected when I was hired," "The organization has lived up to what I was promised when I started," and "I have been very pleased at the extent to which the organization kept its promises to me.").²¹ Items were measured by a five-point scale ranging from 1 (generally true) to 5 (generally not true), with low scale values indicating a better fit. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was .75.

Psychological Climate

Psychological climate was measured using D.J. Koys and T.A. DeCotiis's forty-item psychological climate questionnaire.²² Response options ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree on a seven-point Likert scale.

Procedural Justice Climate

To provide a group-level measure of the procedural justice climate, employees responded to nine items modified from Moorman's individual procedural justice scale. In addition to making the modifications noted in the description of the individual procedural justice measure, we adapted these items to reflect a work group reference. Sample items included the following: "As a whole, the people in my work group feel that around here consistent rules and procedures are used when making decisions; our input is obtained prior to making decisions; accurate information is used to make decisions." We aggregated responses to this measure within each work group to generate a group-level procedural justice measure.

Leader-Member Exchange

Schriesheim, Neider, Scandura, and Tepper's six-item leader-member-exchange scale was used to measure subordinate-perceived LMX in the current investigation. This instrument is based on the conceptual work of Dienesch and Liden, and it has shown high convergence with the commonly used LMX7 scale; the latter is presented in Scandara and Graen and was developed by Graen, Novak and Sommerkamp.

Organizational Commitment

Affective, normative and continuance commitment were measured using John P. Meyer, Natalie J. Allen, and Smith's eighteen-item commitment scale. This scale has been widely used in the field and has median reliabilities (assessed using coefficient alphas) across many studies of .85 for affective commitment, .73 for normative commitment and .79 for continuance commitment. A detailed discussion of the construct validity of this scale is found in Allen and Meyer.²³

Outcome Variables

Two additional outcome variables not covered by JDS scales were also measured (on seven-point scales). Turnover cognitions were assessed by averaging four questionnaire items that probed frequency of thoughts about quitting, probability of job search, probability of quitting, and the importance attached to remaining in the employ of the utility company.

NOTES

- 1 J.R. Hackman, K.R. Brousseau and J.A. Weiss, “The interaction of task design and group performance strategies in determining group effectiveness,” *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 16 (1976), pp. 350–65.
- 2 E.W. Morrison and S.L. Robinson, “When employees feel betrayed: a model of how psychological contract violation develops,” *Academy of Management Review* 22 (1997), pp. 226–57.
- 3 S.L. Robinson, “Trust and breach of the psychological contract,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 41 (1996), pp. 574–99.
- 4 P. Makin, C. Cooper and C. Cox, *Organizations and the Psychological Contract* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996).
- 5 S.L. Robinson, M.S. Kraatz and D.M. Rousseau, “Changing the obligations and the psychological contract,” *Academy of Management Journal* 37 (1994), pp. 437–52.
- 6 W.H. Turnley and D.C. Feldman, “The impact of psychological contract violations on exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect,” *Human Relations* 52 (1999), pp. 895–923.
- 7 L. Larwood, T.A. Wright, S. Desrochers and V. Dahir, “Extending latent role and psychological contract theories to predict intent to turnover and politics in business organizations,” *Group and Organization Studies* 23 (1989), pp. 100–23.
- 8 G.R. Ferris and D.C. Gilmore, “The moderating role of work context in job design research: A test of competing models,” *Academy of Management Journal* 27 (1984), pp. 885–92.
- 9 D.J. Koys and T.A. DeCotiis, “Inductive measures of psychological climate,” *Human Relations* 44 (1991), pp. 265–85.
- 10 While the issue of commitment has not been systematically surveyed, a review of most previous public-sector surveys on employee issues show that dissatisfaction with the employer is not a new issue. See, in particular, the federal government’s 1999 Survey of Public Service Employees and the survey conducted by the Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada (the July 2000 “Survey of the Leaders of the Public Service of Canada on their Vision of the Development of the Public Service”), at http://www.apex.gc.ca/about/surveyreport_e.pdf. See also David Zussman and Jak Jabes, *The Vertical Solitude: Managing in the Public Sector* (Halifax: IRPP, 1989).
- 11 For a full discussion of HPWS, consult <http://www.belcourt.nelson.com>, and click on Chapter 17.

- 12 Hackman, Brousseau and Weiss, "The interaction of task design and group performance strategies in determining group effectiveness," *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*.
- 13 J.P. Meyer, N.J. Allen and C.A. Smith, "Commitment to organizations and occupations: Extent and test of a three-component conceptualization," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 78 (1993), pp. 538–51.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 B. Weiner, "The emotional consequences of causal attributions," in M.S. Clark and S.T. Fiske, eds., *Affect and Cognition* (Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1982), pp. 185–210.
- 16 Turnley and Feldman, "The impact of psychological contract violations on exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect," *Human Relations*.
- 17 Meyer, Allen and Smith, "Commitment to organizations," *Journal of Applied Psychology*.
- 18 See R. Hackett, P. Bycio and P.A. Hausdorf, "Further assessment of Meyer and Allen's 1991 three-component model of organizational commitment," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 79 (1991), pp. 15–23.
- 19 Meyer, Allen and Smith, "Commitment to organizations," *Journal of Applied Psychology*.
- 20 J. Richard Hackman and Greg R. Oldham, *Work Redesign* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1980).
- 21 Larwood, Wright, Desrochers and Dahir, "Extending latent role and psychological contract theories to predict intent to turnover and politics in business organizations," *Group and Organization Studies*.
- 22 Koys and DeCotiis, "Inductive measures of psychological climate," *Human Relations*.
- 23 John P. Meyer and Natalie J. Allen, *Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research and Application* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1997).

ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

TORONTO

Frances Abele
Director, School of Public Administration,
Carleton University

Michel Applin
Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers

Monica Belcourt (Chair)
Professor, Human Resources
Management, York University

Luc Bernier
Professor, École nationale
d'administration publique

Carla Cassidy
Chair, Department of Politics and Public
Administration, Ryerson Polytechnic
University

Patrice A. Dutil
Director of Research, Institute of Public
Administration of Canada

John Fleming
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Community,
Family and Children's Services,
Government of Ontario

Joseph Galimberti
Executive Director, Institute of Public
Administration of Canada

Mike Garrett
Chief Administrative Officer, City of
Toronto

Terry Gibson
Regional Director, Transport Canada
OFC Champion for Middle Managers

Suzanne Herbert
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education,
Government of Ontario

Brigitte Hohn
Regional Executive Director, Industry
Canada
*OFC Vice-Chair and Champion for
Workplace of Choice*

Ruth Hofer (Presenter)
Manager, Staffing and Workforce, Public
Service Commission, Government Alberta

Jill Hutcheon
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Labour,
Government of Ontario

Frank Ingratta
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs, Government of
Ontario

Robert Lavigna (Presenter)
Administrator, Merit Recruitment,
Department of Employment Relations,
Wisconsin State Government

Graeme R. McKay
General Manager, Ontario Public Sector,
IBM

Diana McNiven (Presenter)
Manager, Staffing, IBM

Blair Pollard (Presenter)
Senior Manager, Human Resources
Strategy and Technology, RBC Financial
Group

Tom Sinclair
Senior Vice-President, Executive
Recruitment, PriceWaterhouseCoopers

Linda Stevens
Deputy Minister, Public Sector
Restructuring and Associate Secretary of
Cabinet, Centre for Leadership

Peter Stoyko
Policy Analyst, Canadian Centre for
Management Development

Simon Taggar
Associate Professor, Human Resources
Management and Organizational
Behaviour, Wilfrid Laurier University

Ben Yang
Associate Director, Career Centre-
University of Toronto

Wynne Young
Chair, Public Service Commission,
Government of Saskatchewan

VANCOUVER

Carolina Ashe
Policy Analyst, Public Service Employee
Relations Commission, Government of
British Columbia

Monica Belcourt (Chair)
Professor, Human Resources
Management, York University

Daniel Cohn
Professor, Department of Political Science,
Simon Fraser University

Greg Conner
Director, Human Resources, Ministry of
Human Resources, Government of British
Columbia

Patrice A. Dutil
Director of Research, Institute of Public
Administration of Canada

Tom Easterbrook
Deputy Chief, Vancouver Fire and Rescue
Services

Bill Fosdick
Public Service Employee Relations
Commission, Government of British
Columbia

Mike Kirk (Presenter)
Director, Human Resources, City of
Richmond

Sherry Lampert
Council Manager, Pacific Council of
Senior Federal Officials, Public Works and
Government Services Canada

Brenda Leslie
Director, Staffing and Executive Liaison
Public Service Employee Relations
Commission, Government of British
Columbia

Lesley Matthews
Manager, Human Resource Services, City
of Vancouver

Sheila Page (Presenter)
Vice-President, Human Resources, Sierra
Systems

Ardath Paxton Mann
Assistant Deputy Minister, Western
Economic Diversification

Debbie Peterson
Advisor, Human Resources, Ministry of
Education, Government of British
Columbia

Bob Rich
Inspector, Vancouver Police Department

Mitch Romanhook
Manager, Staff and Organization
Development, Human Resource Services,
City of Vancouver

Grant Smith
Vice-President, Executive Search,
PriceWaterhouseCoopers

Yvonne C. S. Smoljanovic
Office Coordinator, Public Service
Renewal Project, Government of British
Columbia

Julie Spiteri
Project Consultant, Public Service
Renewal Project, Government of British
Columbia

Sharon Stewart
Director of Personnel, Ministry of Forests,
Government of British Columbia

Lynda Tarras
Director of Personnel, Office of the
Attorney General, Government of British
Columbia

Allan Tupper
Vice-President, Government Relations,
University of British Columbia

Mike Zora
General Manager, Human Resource
Services, City of Vancouver

EDMONTON

Wendy Antoniuk
Consultant, Corporate Human Resource
Development, Personnel Administration
Office, Government of Alberta

Monica Belcourt (Chair)
Professor, Human Resources
Management, York University

Betty Buysen
Manager, Human Resources, Intuit Canada

Barb Daigle
Executive Director, Human Resources
Development, Personnel Administration
Office, Government of Alberta

Patrice A. Dutil
Director of Research, Institute of Public
Administration of Canada

Janet A. Finlaison
Director, Technology Support and
Infrastructure, Department of Energy,
Government of Alberta

Wilbert Flinterman
Consultant, Corporate Human Resource
Development, Personnel Administration
Office, Government of Alberta

Lois Hawkins
Assistant Deputy Minister, Information
and Strategic Services, Alberta Learning

Keray Henke
Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and
Support Services, Department of
Children's Services, Government of
Alberta

Rose Mary Holland
Vice-President, Executive Search,
PriceWaterhouseCoopers

Cynthia Hyslop
Senior Manager, Strategic Human
Resources, Ministry of Finance,
Government of Alberta

Nancy Kerrigan
Director, Human Resources, Capital City
Savings & Credit Union

Gisela Kwok
Senior Policy Coordinator, Strategic
Planning and Policy, Department of
Seniors, Government of Alberta

Edward LeSage
Professor, Department of Political Science,
University of Alberta

Nancy Monaghan
Manager, Client Relations, Personnel
Administration Office, Government of
Alberta

Herb Martin
Director, Human Resources, Department
of Finance, Government of Alberta

Lynn Oscroft
Executive Director, Human Resource
Services, Department of Municipal
Affairs, Government of Alberta

Rodney Schneck
Professor, Business School, University of
Alberta

Janet Seve
Director, Organization Effectiveness and
Employment, City of Edmonton

Jane Shaheen
Retention Team, Personnel Administration
Office, Government of Alberta

Rick Tyre
Advisor, Strategic Human Resources,
Human Resources Planning and Corporate
Priorities, Department of Human Re-
sources and Employment, Government of
Alberta

Ron Weisenburger,
Chief Knowledge Officer, Department of
Agriculture, Food and Rural Development,
Government of Alberta

Mike Wevers
Group Leader, Budget and Business
Planning, Department of Finance,
Government of Alberta

Dianna Wilk
Manager, Human Resources Planning and
Program Development, Human Resource
Services, Alberta Learning

Scott Wright
Director, Department of Agriculture, Food
and Rural Development, Government of
Alberta

REGINA

Monica Belcourt (Chair)
Professor, Human Resources
Management, York University

Doug Borrowman
Assistant Commissioner of
Corporate Services, Correctional Services
of Canada

Karen Bright
Director, Human Resources, Information
Services Corporation

Pam Clarke
Regional Director, Justice Canada

Wanda Conway
Manager, Human Resources Strategic
Policy, Sasktel

Patrice A. Dutil
Director of Research, Institute of Public
Administration of Canada

Rhonda Eckstrom
Manager, Business Development, EDS
Systems

Shana Flottorp
Leader, Change Management, SaskPower

Garnet Garven
Professor, Faculty of Administration,
University of Regina

Terry Gibson
Assistant Deputy Minister, Western
Economic Diversification

Robert L. Haynes
Vice-President, Human Resources,
SaskEnergy

Claire Isman
Executive Director, Human Resource
Development, Public Service Commission,
Government of Saskatchewan

Doug Kenney
District Director, Saskatchewan District
Public Service Commission, Government
of Canada

Robert Lane (Presenter)
Director, Organizational Support, CUETS

Jaime Lothian (Presenter)
Director, E-Learning Solutions, Sasktel

Gloria Miller
Professor, Faculty of Administration,
University of Regina

Lynne Pearson
Dean, College of Commerce, University of
Saskatchewan

Janine Reed
Senior Policy Advisor, Personnel Policy
Secretariat, Department of Finance,
Government of Saskatchewan

Sanjeev Sharma
Manager, Justice Canada

Elma Shoulak
Vice-President, Human Resources and
Aboriginal Affairs, Saskatchewan Gaming
Corporation

Jocelyn Soulière
Director, Staffing and Classification
Services, Public Service Commission,
Government of Saskatchewan

Tracy Sletto
Acting Director, Intergovernmental
Relations Unit
Post-Secondary Education and Training,
Government of Saskatchewan

Jason Vogelsang
Academic Advisor, Faculty of
Administration, University of Regina

Alannah Whipler
Policy Advisor, Public Service
Commission, Government of
Saskatchewan

Ron Wight
Vice-President, Corporate Services,
Saskatchewan Property Management
Corporation

Sandra Woods
Director, Policy, Public Service
Commission, Government of
Saskatchewan

Wynne Young
Chair, Public Service Commission,
Government of Saskatchewan

Marian Zerr
Executive Director, Saskatchewan Council
of Senior Federal Officials

The New Directions Series

The Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) has, for many years, sponsored issue-oriented working groups of public servants and academics to find practical solutions to emerging issues. The Institute assembles groups of experts working on public-sector reform and public policy to discuss, compare, analyse, document and advance the understanding of critical issues and themes. While these reports are published in the language in which they were written, the executive summary is provided in the other official language.

The projects continue to explore a wide range of issues. In its continuing commitment to exploration and exchange, IPAC launched this series. Publications in this collection highlight critical findings and analysis from our action-oriented research activities. Besides advancing the understanding of current best practices, this work also serves to advance the understanding of what these initiatives mean with respect to the broader concerns of public-sector reform. These reports are available free of charge to IPAC members. Orders can be placed by contacting the IPAC national office in Toronto (www.ipaciapc.ca).

La Collection *Nouvelles Directions*

Depuis plusieurs années, l'Institut d'administration publique du Canada (IAPC) commandite des groupes de travail axé sur les grandes questions en administration publique. Composés de praticiens et de théoriciens, ces groupes d'experts se réunissent pour apporter des solutions pratiques aux nouveaux enjeux qui confrontent les administrateurs publics. Spécialisés dans les secteurs de la réforme administrative et des politiques, ils discutent, comparent, analysent les problèmes et questions critiques qui sont soulevés et documentent leurs observations, faisant ainsi avancer la compréhension dans ces domaines. Des rapports découlant de ces études sont publiés dans la langue dans laquelle ils sont soumis. Un sommaire exécutif est présenté dans l'autre langue officielle.

Nombreuses questions d'actualité sont continuellement étudiées dans le cadre d'activités de recherche. L'IAPC a donc lancé cette collection afin de poursuivre son engagement d'explorer et d'échanger. Les publications qui paraissent dans *Nouvelles Directions* mettent en relief des conclusions et analyses importantes qui sont tirées de notre recherche active. Tout en faisant avancer la compréhension des meilleures pratiques en vigueur, ces études permettent de mieux saisir leur importance en ce qui a trait aux préoccupations plus générales concernant la réforme du secteur public. Ces rapports sont offerts gratuitement aux membres de l'IAPC. Pour obtenir des exemplaires, prière de communiquer avec le bureau national de l'IAPC à Toronto (www.ipaciapc.ca).

Other Reports in the Series/ Déjà parus dans la collection

1. *Management and Performance Measurement in the Jewellery Industry: A Golden Opportunity?* By Ann Rauhala.
2. *Performance Management: Linking Results to Public Debate.* By John English and Evert Lindquist.
3. *From Controlling to Collaborating: When Governments Want to be Partners.* By Jim Armstrong and Donald G. Lenihan.
4. *Improved Reporting to Parliament.* By Jim Thomas.
5. *Crossing Boundaries: Privacy, Policy, and Information Technology.* By Harvey Schachter.
6. *Collaborative Government: Is There a Canadian Way?* Edited by Susan Delacourt and Donald G. Lenihan.
7. *Business Planning in Canadian Public Administration.* Edited by Luc Bernier and Evan H. Potter.
8. *Making Government the Best Place to Work: Building Commitment.* By Monica Belcourt and Simon Taggar.
9. *To Better Serve Canadians: How Technology is Changing the Relationship Between Members of Parliament and Public Servants.* By Jonathan Malloy.
10. *Service North of 60.* By Frances Abele and Katherine Graham.