

Develop a compensation plan with newly released WCBC reports

The results of the Labour Force Survey released by **Statistics Canada** in October indicates that full-time employment rose by 61,000 in September, 2011.

This increase pushed the national unemployment rate down to 7.1 per cent, the lowest rate since December, 2008. Meanwhile, employment in B.C. rose by 32,000 causing the provincial unemployment rate to decline to 6.7 per cent.

Although unemployment rates are higher than they were three years ago, a national survey just completed by **Western Compensation & Benefits Consultants (WCBC)** reports that many employers are experiencing challenges in attracting, motivating and retaining employees.

More than half (56 per cent) of the employers had difficulty in attracting professional/technical employees and 34 per cent had difficulty in recruiting middle managers and supervisors.

In the past 12 months approximately one-third of the employers lost employees which they hoped to retain. This turnover problem was most pronounced with respect to professional/technical and administrative support positions.

More than 80 per cent of the employers surveyed stated that offering competitive base salaries is their most effective tool in attracting employees, while about two-thirds of the employers believe that offering advancement opportunities, work-life balance

and competitive benefits are the next most effective recruitment strategies.

Lack of career opportunities and dissatisfaction with the cash compensation were the two reasons most often cited as the reasons for employee turnover.

The employers stated that their top priorities for managing retention will be ensuring that the organizations' compensation and benefits are competitive, and providing coaching or other development for their managers and supervisors.

Barry Cook, a Partner with WCBC says the typical organization increased its salaries by approximately three per cent over the past year.

In addition to salaries, most of the organizations have a short-term incentive plan, with the most common type of plan being an annual bonus plan. More than 80 per cent of the organizations with incentive plans expect to make payouts to employees for this fiscal year.

Employers expect to increase salaries by about three per cent in 2012, but the magnitude of increases varies by economic sector, type of position, industry and geographic location.

"Increases in Western Canada will be

among the highest, but the differentials between east and west will be less than they were in the previous few years," says Cook.

Increases in the public sector will be less than those in the private sector, he adds. Employees in the financial services sector and individuals employed by professional services firms can expect to receive raises that are

among the highest in the private sector.

As the economy continues to strengthen, employers face a greater challenge in attracting and retaining competent, engaged employees.

Compensation plans are the most effective attraction and retention tool and "employers should ensure that their plans are appropriately positioned relative to market and are aligned with the organization's business strategy," says Cook.

Editor's Note: WCBC has just released its 2011/2012 suite of compensation reports. Purchase any of these reports and receive up-to-date market data specific to Metro Vancouver and other cities. Savings of 15 per cent have been arranged for Board of Trade members. Information can be found at: www.wcbc.ca/surveys or call Nancy MacLeod at 604-683-9155.

"[Salary] increases in Western Canada will be among the highest, but the differentials between east and west will be less than they were in the previous few years."

Seaspan nets \$8 billion shipbuilding contract

The federal government has chosen **Seaspan's** Vancouver shipyards as the prime contractor to build the National Shipbuilding Procurement Strategy program's non-combat vessels.

The \$8-billion program will not only inject billions into the local economy, but it will create up to 4,000 jobs over the next eight years.

In addition, the government has plans for a further 17 vessels which should fall under the non-combat package.

"We have a long and established track record of working with the Canadian Navy and Coast Guard in building ships on time and on budget," said **Jonathan Whitworth**, Seaspan CEO. "Seaspan is committed to returning BC's shipbuilding industry to its once-thriving roots. This award is a direct result of that commitment."

Whitworth thanked Seaspan's supporters, including the province, local municipalities, local First Nations, shipyard unions and teaming partners from across Canada, for their dedication over the 18-month bidding process.

Although planning will begin immediately, construction on the new vessels will not likely start until late 2012.

Director Profile: Calvin Helin

BY JESSICA WONG

For **Calvin Helin**, author, lawyer, entrepreneur and director of **The Vancouver Board of Trade**, joining The Board was a way for him to help Aboriginal people achieve self-reliance through enterprise.

This year, the **Aboriginal Opportunities Committee (AOC)** was formed, largely due to the efforts of Helin, who was the driving force behind this committee and is currently the chair.

"We're looking at exploring issues and advocating policies on behalf of our members that are consistent with the goals of The Board of Trade and their membership," he says, "But we also want to create links to the Aboriginal community and potential business opportunities and basically try and foster a spirit of constructive partnership."

This year, one of the main goals of the AOC will be to raise awareness and understanding of Aboriginal peoples' increasing importance in terms of Canada's future economic development. According to Helin, it is "critical" for Aboriginals to expand their network to mainstream Canadians and non-Aboriginal businesses in order to "create better prosperity for the benefit of the entire nation."

Helin is also the founder of the **Shudokan**

Karate and Education Society, which is a not-for-profit club that gives free karate lessons. As a third degree black belt, Helin is a regular instructor and believes that these lessons help the students develop discipline, manners and self-confidence. Originally, the club was meant for Aboriginal children but

was eventually opened to anyone who was interested in the program. This club has created many opportunities for the students, the most recent being an athletic and cultural exchange in Germany where the students attended the FIFA Women's World Cup soccer match between Canada and Nigeria. The trip was paid for by the German government, except for the flights, which were fundraised by Helin.

"The students had an experience which, I am absolutely certain, is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all of them," says Helin,

"The Germans were incredible hosts."

With two books already under his black belt, Helin releasing his third book, *The Empowerment Mindset*. A follow-up to his previous book, *The Economic Dependency Trap*, his latest book offers detailed, straightforward information for not only those who are trying to escape economic dependence, but "for anybody who finds that their attempt to succeed at something eludes them."



Author, scholar, entrepreneur and Vancouver Board of Trade director Calvin Helin. SUBMITTED PHOTO



PACIFIC DAWN
ASSET AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SERVICES INC.

Your Property Management Specialists

Commercial

Office, Industrial, Retail & Shopping Centers

STRATA

Industrial, Retail & Residential

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Interior Design, Construction & Project Management

UNIQUE & HIGHLY

PERSONALISED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

301- 609 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 4W4
Phone 604-683-8843
Fax 604-684-1039
www.pacific-dawn.com

