

Labour Market Information

When looking for any job it is important to evaluate the labour market. The term "labour market" represents the relationship between those who sell their skills (job seekers) and those who purchase it (employers). This "market" is just like any other. There are ups and downs in different areas, just as supply and demand change. As with any market there are external factors that influence those ups and downs. One of the most publicized of these is demographic change within our society. This trend is the aging population as "Baby-Boomers" grow older and near the age of retirement. This single trend spells "opportunity" to those who understand its implications. The same is true of other influences such as innovations in technology, globalization of economies, shifts from standard stable jobs to non-standard part-time work, etc.

For example, an aging population presents more opportunities in the areas of health and personal care services.. As "Baby-Boomers" grow older society must provide them with adequate living and housing opportunities which incorporate features to assist the elderly. That means that more people will be employed in finding innovative solutions to meet their needs. As a result demand for visiting homemakers/housekeepers who provide ongoing or short term home support services will grow. Demand for these workers will be particularly strong on Vancouver Island and in the Okanagan, Greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley. This is because many people move to these regions to retire.

Another factor is that Governments are trying to contain health care costs by minimizing the time that patients spend in hospitals. This will increase the reliance on home care for patients of all ages. There is also a growing belief that treatments can be more effective in familiar surroundings rather than clinical surroundings. This is also increasingly possible because of the development of portable medical equipment for in-home treatment. Elderly patients often do not need the extensive services of an acute care setting but need support services to remain in their own homes.

What does this mean in terms of training ? More schools will offer resident care or home support certificates, and more people will enroll in classes. That means a demand for more trainers and trainees.

So if you know how to operate portable medical equipment, have the required training and experience, live in the designated area, and understand the trends involved your chances of gaining employment are much higher.

For those who are still starting out or thinking of transitioning into this field you now have the knowledge to better make those decisions. Examining the outcomes will help you decide what courses to take and predict what job opportunities you will have after completing training or gaining experience.

By examining each factor job seekers can better predict where the jobs will be as well as arm themselves with skills for future job opportunities. Even though this "market" is a place where services are bought and sold, employers may not be fully aware of their needs and gaps are apparent to those who are able to "think outside the box" so-to-speak.

There are many ways of understanding and gathering labour market information, from reading the newspapers, to analyzing economic reports and examining employers needs. One very useful website for basic information is at: www.workfutures.bc.ca .

At this site you can examine some of the statistics and commentaries on the growth and requirements for specific jobs.

An even better way to gather information is by asking questions of a person who already works in the industry you are investigating. This process is called "Informational Interviews". An information interview is just like any other interview except you are asking questions about employment prospects, ways to find job openings, correct qualifications and schooling, etc. and the person answering has first-hand knowledge in the field.

An informational interview is a simple yet powerful way to gather those first-hand facts about the labour market situation in an industry. And these facts can have an impact on the choice of training and the types of jobs you apply for. Without gathering and understanding labour market information a job seeker is captain at sea without a map.

Labour market information can be a very dry and unpalatable subject. Attending a workshop can be a great introduction to the topic. Many job search centres offer free workshops on understanding labour market information.

TIP:

Information interviews are a great way to network with people in the industry you want to work in. A good habit to cultivate is to always send a thank-you note after the interview.

Due to my workload the website list has not been uploaded to www.pepjob.com this past week. I will be formatting and posting it this week for all those who inquired. I apologize for the delay. If you have any topics or feedback you would like to give please feel free to contact me at: jakes@pepjob.com or call 581-6117.