

Op-Ed: Spring, 2007

Word Count: 674

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## **Broadbanding Human Capital: Get with a program!**

The Canadian media landscape is morphing at top speed, as broadcast markets deal with another round of consolidation, and as digital media markets continue to grow exponentially. These two realities are creating new demands on media labour markets and creating new workforce trends that are collectively shifting the rules of engagement for employment. If left unattended, these trends will seriously impact the future career success of Canadian media professionals, the day-to-day reality of HR professionals *and* the shared capacity of broadcast and broadband players. The short-term need is for talent recruitment and retention, and the accompanying mid to long-term range need calls for emphasis on professional development, workforce planning and human resource management.

Amidst the economic and technological confusion, the sector is also dealing with demographic confusion - in today's media labour markets, there are three distinct groups operating concurrently: retiring elders and workaholic boomers, working alongside the "on-demand" platforms of the X, Y and C generations. Over the next few years, broadcasters will be sorely pressed dealing with the effects of a retiring *and* transitioning workforce, and the current market will take another few years for the up and coming creative class to begin taking command positions within digital environments. And each of these three groups, elders, boomers and the X, Y, C cluster will require different levels of skills development and skills deployment.

Like all aspects of business, our human resource processes must keep pace with new business realities. On the recruitment front, concerted attention needs to be given to developing strategies for attracting and retaining top talent. The creative industries are already grappling with tighter labour markets and it's slowing growth in small enterprises – companies who are not as capable as large players to pay fair market value, or better. And urban centers are drawing on more talent, making the regions suffer as the new generations are not relocation-friendly – why would they be, in such promising mobile environments? And on the learning front, executives are demanding more consistent training and industry-focused learning programs with innovative delivery formats, with related accreditation. Straight across the boardrooms of the nation integrated HR programs are being tabled, with more emphasis being placed on career development and career options, and where learning is tied to employee advancement. In the anticipated revamp of our industry's top tier, re-deployment of boomers as champions, coaches and mentors to the new generations will also be critical.

For media professionals of all demographics, it's good news, with a twist: employers will be more and more inclined to retain and reward their workforce, *but also maintain it at capacity*. In large enterprises, there is a greater likelihood of focus on staff development and recognition, and therefore greater employee satisfaction and retention. But it will require serious effort on the part of our workforce to keep step with the depth and breadth of the growing digital markets, and deliver concrete results at the same time. Talent will need to prepare for tougher competition in a better-than-ever workforce, and qualitative retention programs will lead to less mobility across organizations. Media professionals will want to ensure they develop their portfolios and clusters of skills to compete, and place more emphasis on strategic job searches, pursuing companies whose product, values and development opportunities match the goals of a given career – over the long term. For the HR decision makers, the mash-up of demographics and its training needs will provide a refreshing challenge: outsourcing trends allow more room for innovation, and also

the opportunity to develop industry-specific training programs to help bridge the upcoming skills and knowledge gaps.

Media organizations of the future will increasingly be looking to “onboard” staff to a much deeper degree – and all media professionals will need to get much more strongly onboard with new media knowledge and digital management practices in order to remain standing. The rules of engagement for the media labour markets are shifting – positively – valuing skills, creating new value propositions, and challenging all to get with a peak performance program.

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## Issues Facing Canadian Media Labour Markets 2007 mediaINTELLIGENCE.ca – Background

Characteristics of labour force/ issues cultural industry is facing:

- Impact of technological change and global competition on the labour force
- Impact of current and future demographic patterns on the labour force and organizational performance
- Strategic recruitment and retention of skilled workers (strategies for attracting and retaining top talent)
- Attracting creative professionals to work outside of the major urban centers
- (Toronto/Montreal/Vancouver/Halifax)
- Retaining knowledge of contract employees
- Strategies for developing and retaining professional managers or persons in managerial roles
- Use of mentoring as tool for training, ie., using retiring elders as champions and mentors in training
- Plans for lifelong learning and skills upgrading ie., professional development
- Need for specialized training in management and in management hiring
- Fostering a diverse workplace and aiding new Canadians in knowledge acquisition
- Need for upgrading the workforce’s understanding of broadband communications tools.